

Language and power: reflections around the dynamics of exclusion and self-exclusion in simulation games

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www.redico.eu

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BMBF-Programm "Kleine Fächer: Zusammen stark"
(Small Subjects: Strong together)

- Aims:
1. scientific innovation
 2. strengthening Intercultural Communication as an academic subject

Study: Intercultural Competence and Communicative Practices within International Cooperation in Virtual Contexts.

March 2020 -----> Sept. 2021 -----> Apr. 2022



DATA COLLECTION

ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

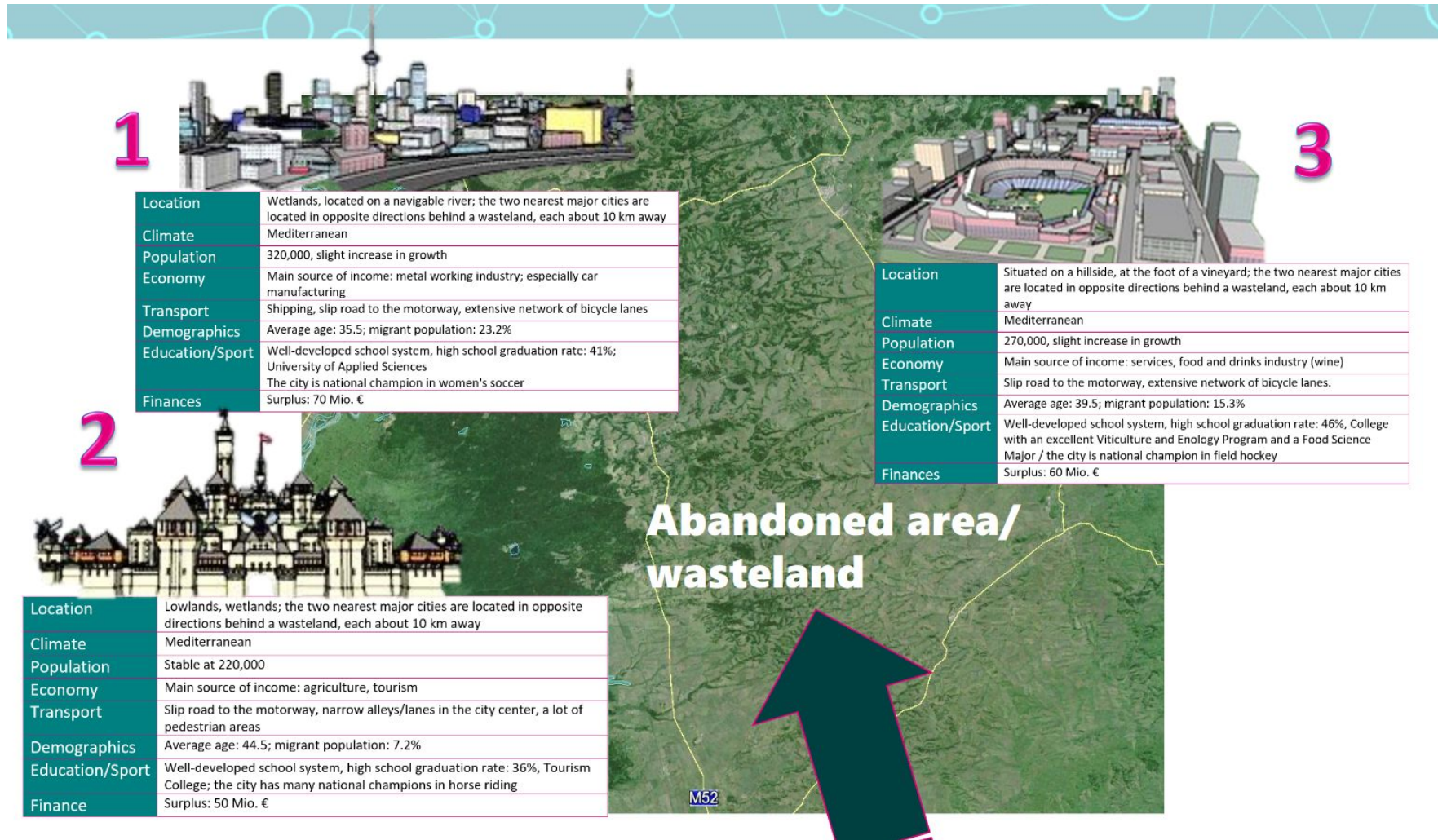
Data

Megacities - Simulation game by Jürgen Bolten (Bolten 2015)

Overview over the course of the simulation game:

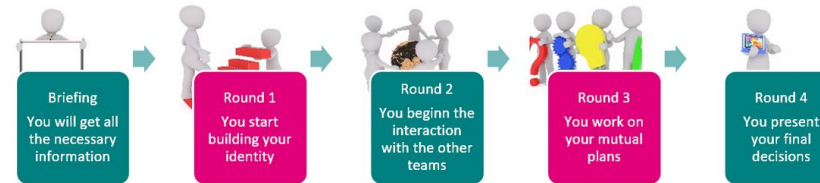


Data



Data

Megacities



Luisa Conti = 2 parallel games

1. in German: students from University of Jena, Hamburg and Udine (I)
2. in English: students from U Jena, Hamburg and Utrecht (NL)

Milene Mendes de Oliveira = 1 game

1. in English: students from U Potsdam, and UP Transfer (several exchange students)

Data

LC group 1

All: English as
lingua franca

LC group 2

German as foreign
language speakers
(minority)//
German as first
language speakers
(majority)

MMO group 1

All: English as a
lingua franca

Research topics

Moderation

Communicative strategies

Community formation

Patterns of (non-)participation

↙
as influenced by perceived differences in levels of proficiency

Corpus & Methods

Corpus

- reflection sheets (written data, 61 reports)
- reflection rounds (more than 28 hours of video data, considering all 3 games)
- interviews with selected participants

Methods

Content analysis

Mediated discourse analysis
(Scollon & Saint-Georges
2013)

1. Perceived difference in proficiency ReDlCo

Excerpt 1:

„Es ist für mich schwierig, alles zu verstehen, was andere Menschen sagen und mit ihnen interagieren und aushandeln, weil sie schnell sprechen und wir kein ausreichendes Sprachniveau haben. Ich bemühe mich, zu verstehen, was gesagt wird, aber es gelingt mir nicht immer.“

"It is difficult for me to understand all what other people say and interact and negotiate with them, **as they speak quickly** and we don't have a sufficient level of language. I try to understand what they say, but I don't always succeed."

Findings

Perceived difference in levels of proficiency

1. Less chances for participation offered by the ones who spoke fluently



Exclusion

Findings

Perceived difference in levels of proficiency

1. Less chances for participation offered by the ones who spoke fluently
2. Chances for participation not taken by the ones who didn't feel fluent enough

2. 'Missed' chances for participation

Excerpt 2:

„Um ehrlich zu sein, ich habe immer noch diesen Komplex auch wegen meiner Sprache wegen meiner Aussprache, weil ich Akzent habe und ich habe immer noch Angst, was falsch zu sagen [...] Ich will mir genau überlegen was ich sagen, ich will nicht was doofes sagen.“

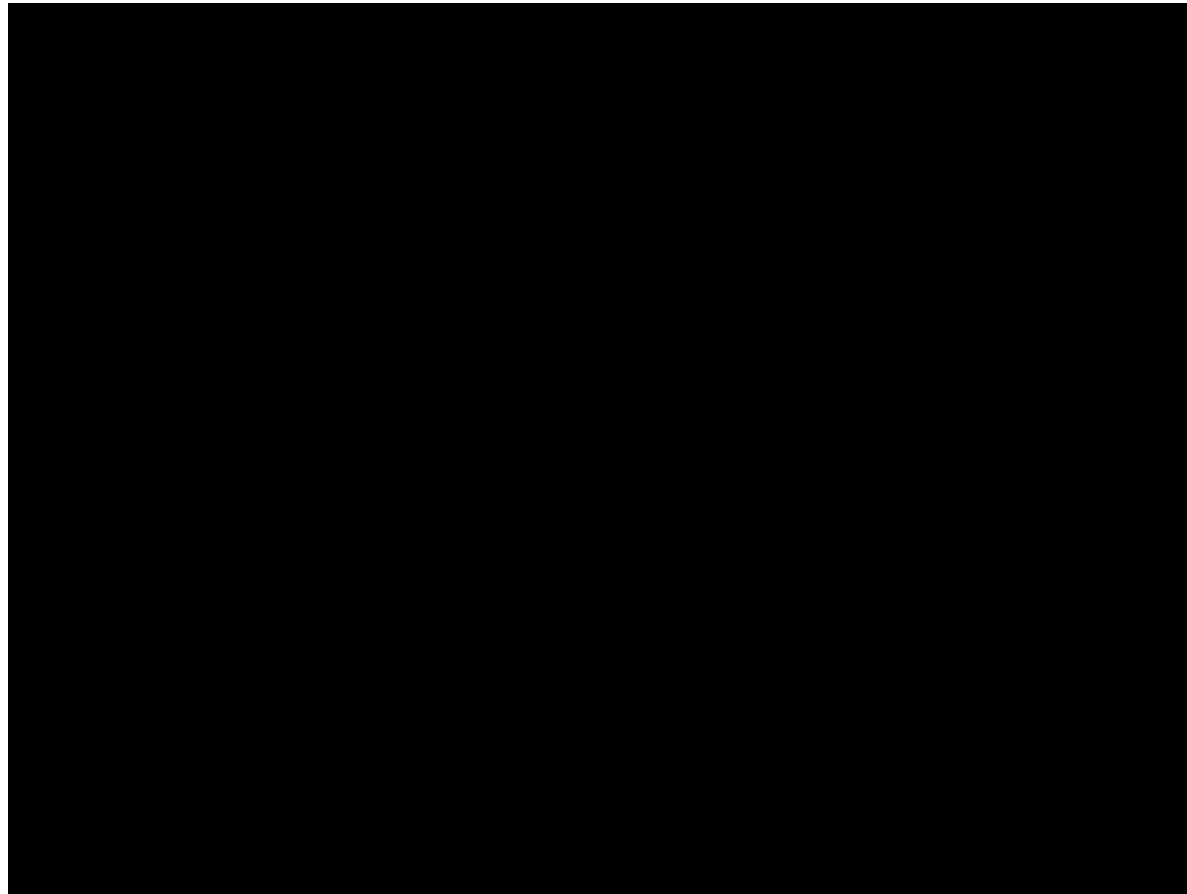
"To be honest, I still have this complex also because of my language, because of my pronunciation, because I have an accent and I'm still afraid to say something wrong. [...] I want to think carefully about what I say, I don't want to say something stupid."

2. 'Missed' chances for participation

Excerpt 3:

„Die Stadt, die wir da machen, ich denke, die anderen wissen besser als ich [...] also ich würde anders machen, ich würde eher eine moderne Stadt machen, es ist interessant zu sehen, wie sie das machen.“

"The city we are creating, I think, the others know better than I do [...] I would make it in another way, I would prefer to create a modern city, it is interesting to see, how they make it."



S1: You know this is right, and I also want to say it is also our Chinese students' problem. If.. yeah for me, if I, if i'm not have 100% for sure I can speak, yes, very correctly, then I will not speak. So, it's difficult for me to again to talk, to take a part in this, this discussion. This is for me the challenge.

2. 'Missed' chances for participation

Excerpt 4:

„Die Stadt, die wir da machen, ich denke, die anderen wissen besser als ich [...] also ich würde anders machen, ich würde eher eine moderne Stadt machen, es ist interessant zu sehen, wie sie das machen.“

"The city we are creating, I think, the others know better than I do [...] I would make it in another way, I would prefer to create a modern city, it is interesting to see, how they make it."

Findings

Perceived difference in levels of proficiency

2. Chances for participation not taken by the ones who were/felt no fluent enough



self-exclusion

“...the non-native speaker as a permanent learner, always falling short of the unattainable target of native-like proficiency” (Franceschi & Vettorel 2017: 134)

English as a lingua franca

Excerpt 5:

„Wenn alle auf Englisch reden, mir geht es besser, ich fühle mich nicht verunsichert, ich kann mich äußern, meine Ideen einbringen, da fühle ich mich auf einem gleichen Niveau. (.) Auch wenn alle sagen, Sie haben in 5 Jahren Superdeutsch gelernt, trotzdem habe ich irgendwie so Angst aktiv zu sein und zu sprechen.“

"When everyone speaks in English, I feel better, I don't feel insecure, I can express myself, contribute my ideas, I feel on the same level. (.) Even if everyone says that I've learned super German in 5 years, I'm still somehow so afraid to be active and speak."

English as a lingua franca

Excerpt 6:

“The circumstance of the game being that we used English as a lingua franca was very nice, because I didn’t feel so much pressure to do everything right and this way was able to participate more than I initially expected.”

Strategies used and evaluated as useful:

- Summaries
- Synchronous, visible minutes
- Small groups

Long-term strategies:

- **Participants with high proficiency:**
Awareness about lingua franca use and multilingualism; knowledge about strategies they can adopt...
- **Facilitators:**
plan in an adequate way, use tools and strategies...
- **Participants with low proficiency:**
empowerment about the importance of their participation; knowledge about strategies they can ask the group to adopt...

(Conti 2020, Conti 2021)

References

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Thank-you for your attention, for your questions and comments!

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