Country ‘hyper-branding’ and the internationalization of Higher Education: Is the (r)evolution of interculturality coming?
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Abstract: In this article I use the current (r)evolution of interculturality to examine the logics, discourses and situated practices of internationalization in Higher Education. Based on a case study in Finland, different policies are analysed to see if and how the construction of internationalization takes place in these documents and what perspective(s) seem to be preferred. As the results show that no real ‘exhausted’ intercultural discourses and logics, called BOTHOPY in this paper, seem to emerge, I look at peripheral documents related to the internationalization of Higher Education in the specific context under review, namely the intersection between Finnish education export, country branding and the internationalization of universities. These documents prove to follow the usual essentialist and ethnocentric approach to the ‘intercultural’ and contradict somewhat the silencing of this dangerous treatment of self and other as found in the policies. The University under review seems thus to be torn apart between different perspectives on internationalization, which is representative of the global neo-liberal zeitgeist.

Keywords: Finland, education export, interculturality, discourses, situated practices, policy documents, internationalization

Introduction

“I wish I was in Finland. Don’t you?”
(Slogan on the official visitfinland website)

The word ‘intercultural’ is starting to be old and exhausted. Born out of American anthropology in the 1950s, used in different fields of research such as education, linguistics, business but also more recently health care, the ‘intercultural’ is increasingly deemed to be a polysemic, doxic and sometimes counter-productive notion – doing more harm than good in research and practice. Yet recent critical and reflexive work from scholars based in different geographical spaces has managed to renew and strengthen the notion and to make it an interesting tool for analyzing our era of accelerated globalization (Dervin, 2012; Dervin & Tournebise, 2013; Holliday, 2010; Machart et al., 2013; Zhu Hua, 2014; Haidari & Holmes, 2014). I refer to this strand of research and practice as the (r)evolution of interculturality.

In this article, taking on the position of an ‘amateur intellectual’ (Said, 1993), I use the notion of interculturality to examine the explicit and implicit politics of creating an international image at a Finnish university. I argue that it is a rich tool to enable us to unearth certain hidden and controversial practices of internationalization in an era of national (hyper-)branding.


“The intellectual today ought to be an amateur, someone who considers that to be a thinking and concerned member of a society one is entitled to raise moral issues at the heart of even the most technical and professionalized activity as it involves one’s country, its power, its mode of interacting with its citizens as well as with other societies. In addition, the intellectual’s spirit as an
amateur can enter and transform the merely professional routine most of us go through into something much more lively and radical; instead of doing what one is supposed to do one can ask why one does it, who benefits from it, how can it reconnect with a personal project and original thoughts”.

In other words, my position here is critical, political and radical rather than merely ‘usual’, ‘doxic’, or ‘routinesque’.

The internationalization of universities has become a buzzword around the world. With increasing competition between institutions of higher education, universities need to play its game. This is often accompanied by what I shall refer to as ‘hyper-branding’ through which universities need to devise a specific identity and presence to compete with others, sometimes in relation to how its geographical location (i.e. a country) is branded. This is achieved through websites, the use of social media, attendance at international higher education fairs, alliances with other universities and stakeholders, the creation of international master’s degrees, etc. The importance of the (r)evolution of interculturality is central in examining how universities ‘do’ internationalization especially in relation to the triad of logics/ideologies, discourses and situated practices of internationalization. As we shall see one of the most important aspects of interculturality is symbolised by power differentials. Does the triad reflect the usual power differentials represented by e.g. ethnocentrism and methodological nationalism in internationalization (Holliday, 2010; Dervin, 2015) or is there a shift in ideologies?

My position of ‘amateur intellectual’ is also visible in the choice of my case study: the institution I work for, the University of Helsinki. Ambitiously the Finnish university has set as its goal to become one of the 50 best universities in the world by 2020. It is a typical neo-liberal institution which practises actively internationalization. What makes it interesting too is that it is situated in one of the most popular countries in the world as far as education is concerned. The OECD’s PISA studies, in which Finland used to perform excellently – before being overtaken by many Asian countries – have contributed to placing the country on the world map. This has led to massive ‘pedagogical tourism’ with hundreds of scholars, practitioners and decision-makers visiting ‘miraculous’ Finnish schools. Many exchange and international students also claim to have chosen Finland because of its excellent reputation. The slogan reproduced at the beginning of this article (“I wish I was in Finland”) thus seems to represent some ‘reality’. Finland has also been praised for other excellent performances: number 1 in the Global innovation Index (Bloomberg, 2012), number 1 in Highest R&D expenditure in Europe (Statistics Finland, 2012), number 1 in the International Property Rights Index (2012 Report), number 1 least corrupt country (Transparency international, 2012) and number best country to run a business in Europe (Forbes, 2013). The University of Helsinki has itself received a very prestigious prize in relation to internationalization in 2013: The European Association for International Education Award for Innovation in Internationalization. The reason why the University was awarded this award derives from its ECCE philosophy: Embedding, Cooperation, Communication and Excellence (subtitled the “University of Helsinki approach”). This approach will be explained below.

In this article, I interrogate the logics, discourses and practices of internationalization through the prism of critical and reflexive interculturality, using Helsinki as a case study. My approach is both discursive and based on an ethnographic approach. I examine different kinds of documents to get a more comprehensive understanding of how internationalization is constructed and practiced
in this context and what it does to self-others. The structure of the article is as follows: first I review the approach to interculturality that is used here as an analytical framework; second a short review of recent studies on practices and discourses of internationalization is presented and third different texts and paratexts related to internationalization from the Helsinki context are analysed. A paratext is a term used in literary interpretation to refer to material surrounding the main text (for example: a blurb on the back of a book or the illustration on the cover). Paratexts usually have a meaning and add to that of the text (e.g. a novel) (Åström, 2014). In a similar vein I also examine peripheral documents other than e.g. official policy documents that can contribute to constructing a certain image of how the ‘intercultural’ is used to internationalize.

**The (r)evolution of interculturality as a tool for analyzing logics, discourses and practices of internationalization**

Any approach to the ‘intercultural’, be it in research, practice or politics, is ideological willy-nilly (Holliday, 2010; Dervin, 2015). It is thus important for scholars to give details about their own ideologies about the notion for the sake of transparency and to allow dialogue with other educational actors. My own ideology is a counter-reaction to an acronym that I have coined: BOTHOPY. BOTHOPY stands for four different phenomena that have been identified as problematic, see dangerous for the analysis of intercultural encounters: 1. (BO) Bovarysm, 2. (T) Tyranny of the past, the frontier and the “sin of foreignness” (Rushdie, 2013: 26), 3. (HO) Hostipitality (Derrida, 2000) and 4. (PY) pygmalionism-cannibalism (Dervin, 2013). In what follows I introduce each component of BOTHOPY and discuss my own take on these elements. The (r)evolution of interculturality represents an approach that rejects BOTHOPY as its principles.

The idea of Bovarysm derives from a character from a novel by Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary* (1856). In the novel, Emma Bovary, who is married to a rich country doctor, has adulterous affairs and lives beyond her means in order to escape the banalities and emptiness of provincial life. Bovarysm thus describes “the tendency to see oneself as other than one is, and to bend one’s vision of other people and things to suit this willed metamorphosis” (Jenson, 2006: 167). In other words: constructing oneself better than one is at the detriment of the other. In intercultural terms bovarysm finds its incarnations in phenomena such as culturalism (where culture serves as the only explanation for what people do, think and like); ethnocentrism (where one’s country is deemed explicitly and/or implicitly to be better than others); linguacentrism (by which one’s language is seen as the best). In short bovarysm symbolizes all the -isms that intervene when dealing with the intercultural and that limit, hierarchize and politicize relationships between individuals.

Intercultural encounters and discourses are often influenced by the second aspect of BOTHOPY: the tyranny of the past, the frontier and the “sin of foreignness”. Interculturality is often based on treating the self and the other through ‘solid’ origins, (new-old) imaginaries, selective and short-term historical knowledge, as well as the fantasy of unicity (we are all the same within specific borders). All these elements lead to drawing imaginary frontiers between those who are deemed to be ‘in’ and those ‘out’. For example, in the usual discussions of democracy as being something having emerged from the West, one ignores the fact that e.g. India or Babylon (Southern Iraq) are not ignorant of this principle if one goes back centuries down the history lane (Sen, 2005). The tyranny of the past, which tends to leave the other in
certain categories (more primitive, less civilized, less polite, etc.) and to create hierarchical dichotomies, often leads to the Other feeling “sinful of her foreignness” (Rushdie, 2013).

The HO of BOTHOPY is based on the interesting notion of *hostipitality* as proposed by Jacques Derrida (2000). For the philosopher, the portmanteau word indicates that there is always potential hostility behind hospitality. What this means is that the host often has more power than the guest, which leads to a certain imbalance from which the Other can easily suffer. Hostipitality in intercultural encounters often hides behind highly political and somewhat flawed discourses of integration, assimilation and ‘cultural adaptation’. In other words: *do as you are told/asked to do* or else… Of course not all others are treated the same way and some are more empowered and tolerated than others as ‘guests’ (e.g. the expat vs. the refugee). In a previous study with my colleague Heidi Layne we have examined discourses of hostipitality (2013) in Finnish higher education through the analysis of a booklet entitled “*Oh Behave!*” that was produced for international and exchange students in Finland. The booklet contained many examples of bovarysm and tyranny of the past which placed Finns as ‘superior beings’. These were the direct consequence of the ideology of hostipitality. It is thus important to look into such discourses in relation to the internationalization of the university.

Finally PY stands for pygmalionism and cannibalism (Dervin, 2013). These two notions refer to the usual approach to cultural diversity and mobility: the Other needs to become like ‘us’, adopting attitudes, habits and manners which are deemed to be ‘local’. This also applies to language: The Other is incited to speak like ‘us’ natives, like the ‘locals’. One can easily see how dangerous PY is. The Other is meant to become like ‘imaginary’ us, creating again a hierarchy between these two groups. The Other is thus swallowed by the host society and in many cases alienated.

Many components of BOTHOPY have been identified in internationalization strategies in Higher Education around the world (Knight, 2004; Leask, 2013; Dervin & Layne, 2013). In what follows I discuss briefly the consequences of the problematic points raised in this section. BOTHOPY can easily lead to moralistic judgments about the Other and creating borders between ‘them’ and ‘us’ (Holliday, 2010). As we shall see BOTHOPY can be (ab)used for marketing purposes in higher education and lead to such phenomena. BOTHOPY also tends to privilege concepts rather than ‘real’ individuals. I have called this phenomenon *anthropomorphism*. Concepts such as *culture*, *community*, *immigrants*, *diversity* but also the questionable notions of *tolerance* and *respect* are often used uncritically to talk about interculturality. The main consequence is that individuals disappear and the concepts are, instead, ‘agentivised’. More serious is the fact that the desagentivisation of individuals tends to create dichotomies between the ‘good’ and ‘bad’, the ‘civilised’ and ‘uncivilised’, the ‘same’ and the ‘other’ (Phillips, 2005; Dervin, 2012), which can be considered in many cases as forms of neo-racism.

What does the ‘renewed’ approach to interculturality propose instead of BOTHOPY? Bovarysm must give way to modesty, realism but also reflexivity and criticality from scholars, practitioners and institutions; the tyranny of the past and the frontier to defatalization – empowering people by giving them the choice to their present and identity; hostipitality to power shifts between the ‘host’ and the ‘guest’; finally pygmalionism and cannibalism should be substituted by a recognition of *mêlanges* and *mixes* and the acceptance of the ideological value of (cultural, ethnic, national) purity and implicit superiority. By identifying traces of either BOTHOPY
and/or of the (r)evolution of interculturality, one can determine specific approaches to the intercultural.

**Previous research on the logics, discourses and experiences of internationalization: from interculturality and multilingualism to marketing**

The following non-exhaustive literature review is based on three categories of publications that have to do with internationalization and the issue of interculturality: 1. internationalization and intercultural contents; 2. internationalization and multilingualism; 3. branding and internationalization. Interestingly the intercultural has been marginally examined in relation to the internationalization of higher education while hundreds of studies have been published on language policies and use in this context. I have thus decided to add this dimension to my discussions of interculturality.

In relation to interculturality a few conceptual papers have been published. In *Developing an intercultural curriculum within the context of the internationalisation of higher education: terminology, typologies and power*, Ciarán Dunne (2001) critically discusses the meaning of an ‘intercultural curriculum’ in a so-called international higher education context. The author also proposes to place *power distribution* at the centre of developing intercultural curricula (ibid.). In a complementary vein, Glynis Cousin (2011) questions the west/non-west dualism and its limiting effect on thinking about internationalization of higher education. The author (ibid.) discusses the conceptually interdependent notions of orientalism and occidentalism and points to the importance of an understanding of the west and of pedagogic cultures that admit a history of complexity and connectivity. Based on discussions of the internationalization of Japanese higher education, Whitsed and Volet (2010) contrast the literature on internationalisation in Japan with the Anglo-European discourses and highlight the limited attention given to intercultural dimensions in the Japanese context. Some empirical studies also examine traces of intercultural dialogue in internationalization policies of universities. For instance Woodin, Lundgren and Castro (2011) analyse policy documents of three higher education institutions in Spain, Sweden and the UK. The authors argue that while much of the motivation for internationalization is represented by a desire for raising European universities’ financial and/or academic position there is very little focus on e.g. the concept of ‘intercultural dialogue’. Daquila (2013) proposes a similar study by examining both government rationale and policies and the responses of a university in Singapore. Unlike the previous study, the author found that the university has responded well to the policies and promotes actively intercultural awareness as part of its internationalization strategies (ibid.). How the intercultural is defined and used differs in the aforementioned articles, oscillating between culturalist approaches to more constructivist and critical ones.

The next strand of publications that relates to interculturality, and which appears to have been intensively researched, is about language policies and uses in the international university. To start with, Josep M. Cots, Enric Llurda and Peter Garrett (2013) note that three types of studies have been published on multilingual issues: management and planning, practices, and beliefs. They also discuss the tensions and ambiguities in the design and implementation of language policies (ibid.). ‘Englishisation’, language hierarchies and the establishment of multilingual policies as responses to the globalisation of higher education have been studied extensively – English being the main academic lingua franca worldwide (Bulajeva & Hogan-Brun,
Many studies present case studies of multilingual policies and practices of universities (Cots, Lasagabaster & Garrett, 2012; Phan, 2013). In her 2012 article, Taina Saarinen asks if language is an issue in the internationalization of Finnish higher education. Analysing the internationalization strategies for Finnish higher education, The Finnish International Study Programme Database, and introductory texts from four universities’ and four polytechnics’ International BA and MA programs, the author shows how the use of English represents the globalization development in Finnish higher education.

Internationalization has also been examined alongside marketization and transnational market-driven knowledge economy. These aspects are central in discussions of the place of interculturality in this context. Abbas (2014) discusses brand management of Higher Education institutions by looking into how branding concepts (brand identity, personality, perception, etc.) are put into practice in Pakistan. Like most universities in the world, the scholar shows that branding is essential in this context in order to survive in a very competitive global environment. In a similar vein a special issue of the Journal of Marketing for Higher Education (2014) examines branding in higher education. In their contribution Khanna et al. (2014) identify and analyse 13 influencing touch-points for building a higher education brand during pre-admission stage, course stage and alumnus stage. Goi et al. (2014) have constructed a scale for measuring brand identity of Higher Education in Malaysia based on students’ perceptions. In Swayed by the logo and name: Does university branding work? Zaffwan Idris and Whitfield (2014) analyse the effectiveness of Corporate Visual Identity (CVI) of universities.

Many recent studies have concentrated on the case of Finland. In her 2012 article, Helena Kantanen has used strategic documents and focused interviews with university and stakeholder representatives in three Finnish cities to examine stakeholder dialogue in higher education institutions. The importance of the implication of multiple stakeholders in university branding is emphasised. Suomi et al. (2013) focus on the tension between a distinct brand identity and harmonization by exploring the construction of a brand identity in Finnish higher education. Haapakorpi and Saarinen (2014) problematize the relationship between Finnish higher education traditions and transnational market-driven knowledge economy policies. Finally, Aspara et al. (2014) conducted a study of a Finnish university that is rebranding itself in accordance with a new market-oriented, service-dominant logic. The researchers show the contradictions and adversarial interpretations among different stakeholders involved in the reshaping of brand identity and that it leads to struggles and dynamics of power and resistance, which can have a negative impact on the resulting brand.

The review presented in this section, which, again, is selective, shows that discussions of diversities and interculturality in relation to internationalization are more critical when it comes to language and marketing than the intercultural as such. The interrelationships between these three aspects do not seem to intersect much though. In the study that follows taking into account the BOTHOPY perspective and the counter-discourse of renewed interculturality detailed earlier I want to examine if and how interculturality is constructed and (mis-)used in a specific case study.

About the study

In this article I am using the University of Helsinki as a case study for examining the interconnections between the ‘intercultural’, internationalization and university branding. First this is how the university is described on its English website:
“The University of Helsinki is one of the best multidisciplinary research universities in the world. The high-quality research carried out by the university creates new knowledge for educating diverse specialists in various fields, and for utilisation in social decision-making and the business sector. The University of Helsinki is an international academic community of 40,000 students and staff members. It operates on four campuses in Helsinki and at 17 other locations. Founded in 1640, the University of Helsinki wants to strengthen its position among the world's leading multidisciplinary research universities and to actively promote the well-being of humanity and a fair society”.

I am examining three documents to situate the position of the intercultural in the university branding (English versions). I claim that these documents – which are also available in English – contribute to branding the University:

- Innovation in internationalization at the University of Helsinki (2013)¹
- Strategic Plan (2013-2016)²

The ‘intercultural’ is quasi-invisible in policy documents

Let me start with the most recent document entitled *Innovation in internationalization at the University of Helsinki* (2013). The 15-page document was produced for The European Association for International Education Award for Innovation in Internationalization. It presents the ECCE slogan: Embedding, Cooperation, Communication and Excellence (subtitled the “University of Helsinki approach”). The document answers different questions such as these:

“How many people do you have in your international office? We don’t have such office.

What is your international strategy like? We don’t have such strategy”.

Typical of marketing slogans, these ‘surprising’ facts (no strategy, no international office) seem to be equivalent to the oxymoron ‘we do internationalization without doing it’. We are also told that the University “has set up an external International Advisory Board consisting of 12 renowned university experts from around the globe” (p. 12). It is interesting to note that the board members are mostly from Western countries: Denmark, England (Oxford), Germany, Hong Kong, The Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, The USA. Apart from Hong Kong (a ‘cliché’ representative East or West?), no countries from Africa, Asia or South America are represented. So obviously the inclusion is not from “around the globe” but from specifically identified Western-centric places (Ballatore, 2014). The choice of including someone from Oxford is interesting as Helsinki often refers to the prestigious institution as an example to follow. The image of interculturality that emerges from this International Advisory Board is limited and geographically biased and reproduces a certain world order.

³ [http://www.ub.edu/slc/socio/Policy_Helsinki.pdf](http://www.ub.edu/slc/socio/Policy_Helsinki.pdf)
This document as such does not say anything about how issues of interculturality (from either past or renewed approaches) are dealt with. The only potential reference deals with the “culture of studying” at Helsinki in the following excerpt:

“In order to facilitate the early phase of the international students’ studies, special orientation programs are run at the start of both academic terms. These sessions, today known as the Welcome Fair, include information on various internal services (health care, computing, libraries, etc.) and lectures on the system and culture of studying at the University” (my emphasis).

There is no ‘interculturespeak’ either or reference to “Finnish culture” – as used to be the case in such documents (Dervin, 2008). References to languages are made, which go beyond English only policies:

“Language Support: The University of Helsinki offers extensive possibilities for its staff to upgrade their foreign language proficiency. The Language Centre caters for the needs of students, faculty and staff on campus by offering for-credit courses in 17 different languages, including Finnish and Swedish for international staff (Finnish for international students is organised by the Department of Finnish)”.

Of course the document contains a certain number of pictures and illustrations which could fill in the role of ‘interculturalising’ it. On p. 5, the usual pictorial representation of a circle of international friends who each represents a certain part of the world is included. A few “Finnish” images are also included: ice on a lake and students sledging down a snowy hill, wearing their very Finnish student outfits. Yet, in general, the document seems to avoid referring to the old and exhausted intercultural – or its acolytes like multicultural (Layne et al., 2015)

The next document is the Strategic plan for the University of Helsinki (2013-2016). If, as claimed by the embedded approach to internationalization in the previous document, signs of internationalization are everything, then it is important to examine this crucial document. The title of the Strategic plan is “The Best for The World”. At the beginning of the document, discourses about the university similar to those on the University website are printed: “The University of Helsinki is one of the leading research universities in the world, the oldest and most multidisciplinary university in Finland and a flagship for bilingual university education. It actively promotes the wellbeing of humanity and a just society”. In terms of international rankings Helsinki already ranks amongst the most prestigious universities in the world: 83 in the 2015 Times Higher Education World University Rankings and 73 in the 2014 Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities.

Interestingly for the focus of this article, the strategic plan contains an entire section entitled “The visible and audible presence of multiculturalism and multilingualism” (1.3). The plan lists the measures to be taken to ensure that this is happening, by whom and how. The first point suggests that “international staff and students take a more visible role in the academic community”. The problem about the use of the word ‘presence’ is that it gives a rather passive position to ‘multiculturalism’ (anthropomorphic term for ‘foreigners’) and ‘multilingualism (idem for ‘languages’). There is talk of improving practices “so as to support the integration of international staff and students”. Yet this is ‘promised’ without
problematizing e.g. the idea of integration, which is extremely political and polemic (Bhatia & Ram, 2009). The idea that “the needs of people speaking different languages will be taken into account by paying particular attention to multilingual communication” is also stated. Then the increase of international research and teaching staff as well as Swedish- (Finland’s second official language) and English-language education are mentioned. Finally, in relation to internationalization, the plan suggests the promotion of international exchange programmes. Again language is discussed in this regard and incoming exchange students are promised to be offered teaching in English for at least 20 credits per term.

The document concludes with three criteria that will be used to assess the success of the university in achieving its goals. The first criterion is related to ranking among the 50 leading universities in the world (e.g. position in internationally recognized rankings, peer-reviewed articles and monographs published internationally, the number of international degree students and staff). The second one relates to the position of the University as a responsible social force (e.g. the number of registered alumni and the outcome of fundraising campaigns). The final criterion relates to the University being an “inspiring and thriving community”. The criterion in the English version of the document contains a misprint; it reads as follows: “Feedback received on leadership, know-how, and the work community in a survey on the workplace atmosphereInternationally distinguished scholar (sic)”. It is noteworthy that the intercultural – and highly emphasized multilingual aspect in this document – are totally absent from the criteria for success. The quantitative criterion of “the number of international degree students and staff” does not say anything about interculturality – in terms of quality at least.

The final document analysed here is the University of Helsinki Language Policy from 2007. The document tells its readers first that

“The Language Policy is not an action programme, but a strategic document which aims to guide the preparation of action programmes for the various sectors of university activity. The spirit of the Language Policy can be crystallised in the following statement: the bi- and multilingualism of the University is a strength and resource for all members of the University community. We trust this Language Policy will help to reinforce and disseminate this spirit within the University” (my emphasis).

In other words, the language policy is just an extra document which has no official bearings on the university life. Interestingly – and rhetorically – the document opens with a quote from a researcher from a French university taken from a publication entitled “Bi- and multilingual universities: challenges and future prospects”:

“If we do not promote language diversity we run the risk of a langue unique which will lead to a discours unique which will lead to a pensée unique”.

The use of the French words is laudable as a sign of multilingualism – though I tested it on a few colleagues who did not understand the quote because of the French words.

The policy has a tremendously positive attitude towards language diversity and asserts that e.g. “The University’s bilingual and multilingual environment and internationalization are sources of enrichment for all and are a necessity for the international comparability of its research performance”. Unlike the previous documents this one contains (inter-)cultural speak as in “Language skills are a means
to understanding foreign cultures making the Finnish culture known to others. The university promotes the language proficiency of its students and staff as well as supports their knowledge of different cultures. Multilingual and multicultural communities promote creative thinking”. The repetition of the concept of culture hints at a typical culturalist, see potentially essentialist discourses (Holliday, 2010). Even more interesting is what is said about the mission of the University which includes “a special responsibility for preserving and supporting Finland’s national culture”. However, it is positive that the language policy is very much inclusive and makes reference to a long list of languages which “are required within academia and in Finnish society at large”: Chinese, French, German, Russian and Spanish (placed in the following order (of importance?) in the document: German, French, Spanish, Russian and Chinese). The policy also notes the importance of students, researchers and other staff with “immigrant backgrounds” as a resource “when developing the university”. In terms of the (r)evolution of interculturality, one could question the use of the word ‘immigrant’ as it tends to refer to different kinds of individuals and be, in a sense, highly political and hierarchical.

Just as a quick test let us see how one aspect of multilingualism work at the University. I take the example of the website of the Faculty of Arts. On the online pages dedicated to the international Master’s programmes taught at Helsinki, we are told that they are “taught entirely in English”. There is then a list of programmes within the faculty (European studies, Intercultural encounters, African studies, English, French, etc.). When one clicks on French philology for instance, a page half in English, half in Finnish appears. And when one clicks on admissions, the page is entirely in Finnish. I then visited the English pages of the department. A paragraph explains what French philology is and gives the contacts to the department. On the right side of the webpage, there is a section called News where all the information is in Finnish… There does seem to be multilingualism on the website but ‘disabling’ multilingualism if one does not speak Finnish – access to applying for the programmes is denied.

To sum up what we have seen about the official policy documents that we have examined: we did find very little BOTHOPY, maybe except in the Language Policy from 2007 – which will be reformulated in 2015-2016. The other documents made no reference whatsoever to the intercultural – maybe except through pictures of international people at the University and the use of the words integration and cultures of studying. On the other hand references to language diversity are many. Yet none of these (intercultural/multilingual) appear to be taken into account in the evaluation of the implementation of strategies. In sum some characteristics of the (r)evolution of interculturality are identifiable, which is an interesting and positive finding.

The paratexts of internationalization: BOTHOPY as a principle?

In what follows I am looking at the paratexts that surround the policy documents analysed above. I am using paratexts from the education export industry that is emerging the Nordic country. Of course other paratexts could have been used but this one is probably the least studied and known aspect of Finnish higher education. As such the country is experiencing an era of ‘hyper-branding’ where education, its gaming industry and design are at the centre (Schatz, 2015). As major actors in education export and in branding Finland abroad, Finnish institutions of Higher education have to take part (ex-/im-plicitly) in the common branding strategies that
have been defined by the last Governments. The concept of country branding has been problematized by e.g. Melissa Aronczyk (2013) and Simon Anholt (2009). Aronczyk defines country branding as:

“Using the tools, techniques and expertise of commercial branding is believed to help nations articulate a more coherent and cohesive identity, attract foreign capital, and maintain citizen loyalty. In short, the goal of nation branding is to make the nation matter in a world where borders and boundaries appear increasingly obsolete” (ibid.: 12).

Simon Anholt, who is an independent policy advisor for different governments around the world, instructed the Finnish Brand Committee in 2008. Country branding has also been called “ethno-preneurialism”, “Nationality Inc.” or “country-as-company”. For the anthropologists John L. and Jean Comaroff (2009: 59) “project(ing) the cultural subject onto the terrains of the market and the law, add(ing) the reduction of culture to (“naturally copyrighted”) intellectual property, mix(ing) it with the displacement of the politics of difference into the domain of jurisprudence (…)”.

Several Nation Brands Indexes have been invented. Anholt is the father of the Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index™. The yearly Country Branding Index provided by futurebrand.com is based on quantitative research from “3.600 opinion-formers and frequent international business or leisure travelers from 18 countries around the world”. The Hierarchical Decision Model used determines how these people perceive a country’s brand. The following aspects are covered: awareness (do key audiences know that the country exists? How top-of-mind is it?), familiarity (how well do people know the country and its offerings?), associations (what qualities come to mind when people think of the country?), preference (how highly do audiences esteem the country? Does it resonate?), consideration (Is the country considered for a visit? What about for investment or to acquire or consume its products?), decision/visitation (To what extent do people follow through and visit the country or establish a commercial relationship?) and advocacy (do visitors recommend the country to family, friends and colleagues?). On top of these aspects, the model lists a number of future diverse, or core elements that impact a country brand’s strength in the future (e.g. value system, quality of life, good for business…). According to the 2012-2013 Top 25 Country Brands, Finland is situated at number 9 (behind Switzerland, Canada, Japan, Sweden, New Zealand, Australia, Germany and the United States). As examples, Finland ranks number 5 for value system (subcategories: environment friendly: 2; Stable legal environment: 2; and tolerance: 3); number 5 for quality of life (safety: 3); and number 4 for its education system, etc.

In this section I argue that nation (hyper-)branding and discussions around Finnish education export have an (in/direct) influence on the internationalization of Finnish Higher Education Institutions. I also argue that they represent (marketing) paratexts that have more to do with BOTHOPY than the official internationalization documents that I examined earlier.

My first interest is in the actors who contribute to Finnish country branding and who have discussed/promoted Finnish education beyond its borders. I have identified two categories: direct influencers and indirect ones.

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4 http://www.simonanholt.com/Research/research-introduction.aspx
Let me mention a few indirect influencers on Finnish country branding to start with:

* The first indirect influence on Finland’s country branding is the results that the country has received for the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), a triennial international survey which aims to evaluate education systems worldwide, organized by the OECD. The programme is mentioned every time Finnish education is in focus (see e.g. Sahlberg, 2015). Many international students confess having decided to study in Finland based on this factor. Here are randomly chosen examples of students’ discourses on Finnish education and PISA which are typical: “One of the reasons I turned to Finland as a possible place to live and study was its constant presence in the media as a shining example of education services and social policy”; “The Finnish educational system is held up as the system to emulate”. Thanks to PISA most departments of teacher education in Finnish universities have welcomed hundreds of guest from abroad who have been interested in getting to know about Finnish teacher education while Finnish scholars and decision-makers invited abroad to tell about the ‘miracle’.

* Another influencer is Finnish national media in English and international media, especially when reporting about the ‘wonders’ of Finnish education. E.g. on 31.10.2014 Yahoo published an item of news entitled “Finnish educational company opens online training center in Vietnam” explaining that the country was exporting its excellent system of education to the ‘developing world’; on 19.11.2014 The Arab Times Kuwait English Daily published a piece called “May Finland be our education model”. There are hundreds of such articles in the international press. Many Finnish scholars have spoken to journalists around the world and explained what they see as the miracle of Finnish education.

* Cultural institutions around the world have also contributed to creating a positive image of Finland. For example the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York proposed to its visitors to eat ‘Finnish school lunch’ in October 2012. The MoMA website says “This special lunch program gives guests an opportunity to savor Finnish school lunch favourites such as salmon soup and macaroni casserole (…)”. The text continues: “Finland is consistently recognized for excelling in all aspects of public education. A factor, which may be often unrecognized, is the importance of nutritious school lunches. Finland was the first country in the world to serve free, regulated school meals to children on a large scale, beginning in 1948”. This aspect of Finnish education has been advertised for on e.g. the Faculty of Behavioural Sciences of the University of Helsinki English website in relation to a visit of Chinese journalists having lunch during their visit to the Viikki Teacher Training School, which is attached to the university5.

Although the policy documents say nothing about this strong marketable aspect it is easy to imagine that with so much hype around the Finnish ‘case’, interests in Finnish Higher Education Institutions are high from abroad.

In terms of direct influencers, e.g. many individuals who are active in English on social media do contribute to ‘advertise’ for Finnish education and are somewhat interrelated by the multimodality of these media. Let me mention a few (selected)

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5 https://university.helsinki.fi/sv/node/2199
examples. Pasi Sahlberg⁶, who was visiting professor at Harvard University at the
time of writing (and who is an adjunct professor at the University of Helsinki), is very
active on Twitter and on his blog and he often ‘advertises’ for Finnish education. He
is the author of the best seller Finnish Lessons, What Can the World Learn from
Educational Change in Finland? (2011) and Finnish Lessons 2.0 (2015). He has
tavelled the world and given hundreds of talks on Finnish education. Many
pedagogical tourists who visit Finland mention his book as the “bible” about Finnish
education. Another influencer is of course the ‘father’ of the official Finnish country
branding, who was Prime Minister at the time of writing, Alexander Stubb. He has
been extensively involved in advertising for Finnish education around the world. In
2015 an American teacher who worked in Finland also contributed actively to
advertise for Finland through his online writings. The teacher, called Tim Walker⁷,
is a Grade 5 classroom teacher at a Helsinki public school. He often is referred to on e.g.
Sahlberg’s Twitter. One very important voices for Finland’s country branding is the
company behind the mobile game Angry Birds, Rovio. The company Chief Marketing
Director, Peter Vesterbacka, is probably one of the best promoters of Finnish
education, especially since his company has decided to join forces with e.g. the
University of Helsinki to develop gaming and learning spaces. According to the
company, Rovio aims at combining two top brands, Finnish Learning and Angry
Birds. The Department of Teacher Education and Rovio have set up together an
“inspiring physical environment combined with the creative educational program
make learning a fun experience”⁸. Angry Birds Playground has been sold to e.g.
China. A VP and Head Teacher of a Chinese kindergarten explains that “We can
together introduce the world-class Finnish education to children in China with Angry
Birds Playground and the Learn through playing concept – this will evolutionalize the
way Chinese parents and children view early-years education”⁹. Rovio’s marketing
prospectuses include pictures of many of the influencers mentioned earlier at events
such as signing agreements with important foreign partners.

Another direct influencer, whose clear role is to advertise for Finland, is called
Team Finland¹⁰ – an organization which is attached directly to the Prime Minister’s
Office. Team Finland is described as follows:

“The Team Finland network promotes Finland and its interests abroad:
Finland’s external economic relations, the internationalization of Finnish
terprises, investments in Finland and the country brand. The Team Finland
operating model brings together key actors in these fields both at home and
abroad. The actors are guided by shared goals annually approved by the
Government. The aim of cooperation is to create a clear, flexible and
customer-oriented operating model where projects falling under the scope of
Team Finland activities are carried out in cooperation between state and
private actors.”¹¹

The University of Helsinki, like most institutions of Higher Education in Finland,
works closely with Team Finland. This is where we get to see BOTHOPY appear, in

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⁶ https://twitter.com/pasi_sahlberg
⁷ http://www.taughtbyfinland.com
⁸ http://www.funlearning.com/angry-birds-playground/tools/
⁹ Ibid.
contradiction with the policy documents above. According to a document published by Team Finland key actors in Finland’s national branding should share similar messages about Finland and Finns. In their Strategy Update 2015 Team Finland explains that the aim of country image communications is: “to ensure that a consistent country image is built and relayed through all channels; to keep the shared message clear; to offer support and tools to produce new communications materials supporting the country image”. They thus propose to promote Finland and Finns as follows:

- “We are solution-focused, straightforward – and cool: Messages about Finland and Finns
- We export our creativity and expertise to the world: Culture and education are our soft power.” (ibid.)

It is easy to see the presence of BOTHOPY in these arguments, with bovarysm as a strong aspect.

Team Finland has an extensive network of local teams around the world. Embassies and cultural centers are such partners and most continents are covered. Documentation has been produced for these partners as well as for other key actors to help them spread the message about Finland. Four key areas have been highlighted as selling points: 1. Clean, 2. Education, 3. Design and 4. Competence. On top of these Finland has been packaged as “the most functional country in the world” (“we educate problem solvers”) and a long list of competences shared by Finns has been decided upon: natural competence, authenticity, problem-solving ability, quality and top products, reliability, language skills, etc. Let us see how much of BOTHOPY these elements contain in the Finland country image communications workbook (n.d.):

“No use of images, video or graphics with text only.

“Fluency
Finns have a direct, no-nonsense attitude. Finns do not dwell on things but solve them. In Finland, systems – education, social support, political, transport, infrastructure, etc. – work. Problems are anticipated and solved when they are encountered. The authorities can be trusted. Simple solutions are found to complex problems.

Sincerity and authenticity
Finnishness is specificity, particularity, creativity and positive difference. Finns are partly children of nature and partly engineers. Finland is a humane country of smart international people”.

Again these idealized, essentialistic, ethnocentric and somewhat patronizing discourses on Finns and Finland contain a lot of aspects of BOTHOPY.

Team Finland also suggests to its partners and key actors to represent Finland and Finns in certain ways: “the image of Finland highlights active people solving problems, there is something going on inside their brains all the time, the image of Finland is vibrant and full of rhythm” (see note 11). Examples of pictures are also

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12 http://vnk.fi/documents/10616/1098657/J0714_Team+Finland+Strategy+2015.pdf/b53769c0-01a4-4f51-a0c7-13b3f9a1d360
included: a young man jumping on his bike, a young person moving through a library, a young lady writing in a notebook, etc. Out of curiosity I checked the images included on the website of the University of Helsinki\(^\text{14}\) and found striking similarities: there is a picture of a woman measuring a man’s eyesight with a machine; a beautiful lady thinking surrounded by words: society, interest groups; vision to the top and out to the society, objectives, feedback; an Asian lady smiling and looking at a mug that says Think in three languages (Finnish, Swedish and English) and finally someone who looks like a professor standing in front of a blackboard full of mathematical formulas with a piece of chalk in his hand, smiling happily. The three criteria set up by Team Finland seemed to be met: active people solving problems, there is something going on inside their brains, the image is vibrant and full of life.

Team Finland also has a certain number of ready-made presentations about Finland available on its website. These can be used free of charge and include: Finland – keeping the world on the move; Finnish game industry; Finland in brief, but also Education in Finland. Team Finland explains that the presentations “can be tailored for your own needs and made suitable for your own target group. The key message of all presentations is the same: there is demand for Finnish competence and problem-solving capability abroad.” (see note 9) All the presentations are available only in English. One of the presentations claims that: “Finns are among the happiest people in the world”; "Finland is a world pioneer of gender equity. The first women to receive full voting powers in the world, i.e. to elect and be elected, were Finnish. As early as 1906, Finnish women occupied seats in the national parliament. In recent years, women have held, on two occasions, the positions of President and Prime Minister at the same time” and “At the heart of Finnish ingenuity is that things should work. Form and function must find each other in a seamless process towards a novel yet simple display of inventive genius”. Interestingly the point about gender equality fails to mention that women have not been equal to men in Finnish politics. The example of a female president and prime minister is given but Team Finland forgets to explain that the Finnish president is more of a symbol than a real powerful figure – the Prime Minister is – and that the female prime minister in question rapidly left office because she made a mistake – which is never the case for male prime ministers in the country. Also, in order to illustrate Finnish ingenuity, a reference to the Rovio game is made: “The Angry Birds highly original game has taken over the world with its basically simple puzzle logic and mechanics that have easily second nature for its tens of millions of regular players” (see note 9).

Finally, the argument of the Finnish sisu is made. It is defined as follows by Team Finland in the presentation notes:

“"It is hard to propose a single definition or translation of this term since it has, even for Finns, a wide range of meanings depending on the context and the person. Sisu can best be described as a strong blend of courage and persistence; a sense of determination that is indifferent to the costs or consequences; a source of mental and spiritual strength that sometimes falls on the side of obstinacy; it is perseverance in action and a stoic and cool display of raw willpower”.

The notion was invented a few decades ago during the Winter War in the 1940s as a way of motivating the troops through an imagined characteristic (Taramaa, 2007). It

\(^{14}\) http://www.helsinki.fi/university/
very much resembles the globally omnipresent slogan of *Keep calm and carry on* that was made up more or less at the same time in England to motivate the soldiers. Again BOTHOPY is very much in use here and creates an implicit ethnocentric hierarchy between ‘us’ and ‘them’.

Team Finland has also created a specific organization for China called *Pure Finland* (纯净芬兰)\(^{15}\) in order to raise Finland’s profile in China. On its website the project says: “Pure Finland will prove that Finland is one of the most innovative countries in the world and that its innovations can greatly contribute to the development in China and around the globe” (note 13). The project has many business partners such as national carrier Finnair, Nokia and Kone. Interestingly the University of Helsinki is one of the Gold Partners of the project and is advertised for on the Pure Finland website. In November 2014 Pure Finland (and thus Team Finland) mediated an event between the University of Helsinki and Peking University called Science in Dialogue. The event poster shows two women wearing stereotypical headsets representing both Finland and China. Different specialists from both universities were invited to share ideas and represents of Rovio Learning were also present (Peter Vesterbacka tweeted about the event). One session was offered on Master’s Programmes at Helsinki:

“Come and discover the comprehensive selection of multidisciplinary two-year International Master’s Programmes at the University of Helsinki, meet students and staff, and learn how to apply. Admission Services, University of Helsinki.”

Thus the event served as advertising for the University too.

In this section I have examined the direct and indirect individuals and institutions/organisations that have an impact on how the University is constructed and constructs itself in relation to internationalization. The presence of BOTHOPY is much more visible through these different stakeholders and seem to contradict in the sense its near invisibility in policy documents. In accordance with Aspara et al. (2014) who conducted a study of a Finnish university that is rebranding itself, there are contradictions and adversarial interpretations among different stakeholders involved in the (re)shaping of an international brand identity. As many of these stakeholders allow universities to attract funding, how much do they have to say in how they are (made to be) represented internationally?

**Conclusion**

“A scholar who cherishes the love of comfort is not fit to be deemed a scholar”  
(Confucius, *The Analects*, ch. 14)

This article aimed to examine the potential position of the (r)evolution of interculturality in logics, discourses, and practices of internationalization of higher education, taking a Finnish university as a case study. The results show that there is little BOTHOPY (a limited, uncritical and problematic understanding of interculturality) in policy documents and that the emphasis seems to be mostly on

\(^{15}\) http://purefinland.cn
language diversity, with Swedish, Finnish and English as the main targets. Very few discourses of essentialism or ethnocentrism were identified in these documents.

What soon appeared to be problematic was the reliance on policies only to get an idea of the way the intercultural is used to ‘sell’ and ‘brand’ an international image. We also looked into a few practices. But these are far from enough. As such a university is not an isolated element as it depends and must rely on partnerships with different other actors, be they local or international (Aspara et al., 2014). In the current climate of education export and national hyper-branding (Haapakorpi & Saarinen, 2014; Schatz, 2015) that Finland is experiencing it is important to decentre our analysis of internationalization from the university and to look elsewhere for such influences. The ‘hyper-branding’, which is often on the verge of neo-nationalism and ethnocentrism, offered by direct and indirect influencers that are enmeshed in the internationalization of higher education in Finland one way or another, relies heavily on a form of ‘solid’ interculturality that illustrates typical BOTHOPY. Of course these are marketing discourses and actions and thus they must depend on selling cultural and national differences to create a specific identity in the ‘jungle’ of globalized competition. This identity can rely on references to national, regional, city specificities to make a difference.

It is interesting to see that, even if the university under review seems to have made an effort (consciously or not) to move away from such problematic discourses in its policy documents, it might eventually fall back into it if it has to play the game of nation branding as put forward by important institutions such as Team Finland. To my knowledge colleagues who have participated in selling Finnish education abroad have used e.g. some of the problematic presentations proposed by Team Finland. The example of the Finnish context, torn apart between new visions of internationalization beyond the usual imaginaries of self and other and neo-nationalism/cultural exceptionnalism, illustrates well the contradictions faced by the neo-liberal and global university of today.

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