Cross-cultural management and language acquisition to promote the connecting spirit of the Amber Road

Irena Zavrl

- Amber Road: an ancient trade route
- Amber Road: a modern (regional) educational route
- Languages of the Amber Road region
- Do languages shape the way we think?
- Nexus between language and culture: dialectical relationship
- Culture: How diverse is Amber Road?
- Conclusion
Amber Road – ancient trade route

Amber road: a modern educational route

- main idea of the project Amber Road, initiated by the University of West Hungary two years ago
- the incorporation of international networking alliances should become an essential mechanism for the internationalization of higher education institutions
- different languages meet different cultures.
Language groups of Amber Road

- Baltic
- Slavic
- Finno-Ugric

Languages of the Amber Road region

- **Croatian:** Jantarski put
- **Czech:** Jantarová stezka
- **Latvian:** Dzintara Ceļš
- **Lithuanian:** Gintaro kelias
- **Polish:** Jantarowy Szlak
- **Russian:** Янтарный путь
- **Slovak:** Jantárová cesta
- **Slovene:** Jantarjeva pot
- **German:** Bernsteinstraße
- **Estonian:** Merevaigutee
- **Italian:** Via dell'Ambra
Do languages shape the way we think?

Nexus between language and culture: dialectical relationship

- enough evidence on the dialectical relationship between language and culture: terms for describing relationships

- relatives are always vital elements in Croatian people’s life, precise terms for describing relationships: Croats distinguish relatives on mother’s side from those on father’s side. RELATIONSHIP

- the phrase ‘-in law’. LAW
How diverse is Amber Road?

Cultural dimensions

Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions

- PDI (Power Distance)
- IDV (Individualism vs. Collectivism)
- MAS (Masculinity vs. Femininity)
- UAI (Uncertainty Avoidance)
- PRA (Pragmatic versus Normative)
- IND (Indulgence versus Restraint)
**PDI Amber Road**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unequal distributed power accepted and expected</td>
<td>Hierarchy only for convenience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decisions from above Supervision</td>
<td>Being independent with equal rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large wage differences Privileges tolerated</td>
<td>Power decentralized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer equality and decentralization of power &amp; decision making</td>
<td>Control disliked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct &amp; participative communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No privileges</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Croatia (73)  Czech Republic (57)  Poland (68)  Slovakia (100)  Slovenia (71)

Latvia (44)  Hungary (46)  Austria (11)  Estonia (40)  Finland (33)

**Individualism vs. Collectivism**

**Amber Road**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individualistic</th>
<th>Collectivistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People prefer to act as individuals</td>
<td>Tight social framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take personal responsibility</td>
<td>Long-term commitment to a group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow their own path</td>
<td>Loyalty to a group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work task-oriented</td>
<td>Protection of the members of the group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Austria (55)  Czech Republic (58)  Estonia (60)  Finland (63)  Hungary (80)  Latvia (70)  Lithuania (60)

Polish → highly individual, but need hierarchy  
Slovakia (52)  Croatia (33)  Slovenia (27)
# Masculinity vs. Femininity

**Amber Road**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Society driven by competition</td>
<td>Gender roles overlap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work success- and profit-oriented</td>
<td>Relationships - dominant values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status symbols</td>
<td>Quality of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work hard to achieve a high living standard</td>
<td>“work to live”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated to work “live to work”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Austria (79)**  
- **Czech (57)**  
- **Hungary (88)**  
- **Poland (64)**  
- **Slovakia (100)**  

- **Croatia (40)**  
- **Estonia (30)**  
- **Finland (26)**  
- **Latvia (9)**  
- **Lithuania 19)**  
- **Slovenia (19)**  

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# Long-term orientation

**Amber Road**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pragmatic</th>
<th>Normative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prepare for the future</td>
<td>Tradition and norms are important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrift and effort are largely encouraged</td>
<td>Have a strong concern with establishing the absolute truth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show ability easily to adapt tradition in changed conditions</td>
<td>Are normative in thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe that truth depends very much on situation, context and time</td>
<td>View the societal change with suspicion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a strong propensity to save or invest</td>
<td>Focus on achieving quick results instead of long-term benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perseverance in achieving results</td>
<td>Fulfill social obligations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Austria (60)**  
- **Croatia (58)**  
- **Czech (70)**  
- **Estonia (62)**  
- **Hungary (58)**  
- **Latvia (63)**  
- **Slovakia (77)**  

- **Slovenia (49)**  
- **Finland (38)**  
- **Poland (38)**
Indulgence vs. Restraint

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indulgent</th>
<th>Restrained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People exhibit a willingness to realize their impulses/desires with regard to enjoying life and having fun. Have positive attitude. Have tendency towards optimism. Leisure time/money important.</td>
<td>Tendency to cynism and pessimism. Leisure time not important. Have perception that their actions are restrained by social norms.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Austria (63) | Croatia (33) |
| Finand (57) | Czech (29) |
| Slovenia (48) | Estonia (16) |
| | Hungary (31) |
| | Latvia (13) |
| | Lithuania (16) |
| | Poland (29) |
| | Slovakia (28) |

Amber Road countries...

- culturally and linguistically heterogenous
- notable differences between these countries
- negotiating styles vary (Poles, Austrians and Estonians are formal and written-detail oriented; Slovaks, Estonians and Czechs prefer a good presentation and a longer negotiation process)
- religions vary: Catholics (Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Lithuanians) or Lutherans (Estonians, Latvians)

→ Latvian and Croats are nations of singers.
Conclusion

Universities need
(1) to make sure that they are open and responsive to changes in the outside environment. In order for internationalization to be fully effective, the university (including all staff, students, curriculum, and activities) needs to be current with cultural and linguistic changes, and willing to adapt to these changes.
(2) And that is the fact we should bear in mind when thinking about our interdisciplinary orientation and a possible incorporation of our common programs into our university programs along the Amber Road.

THANK YOU...

Amber Road at the University of Applied Sciences Burgenland

Tonka Semmler-Matošić

1. Activities during our presidency in 2015
2. Project “Amber Road from a tourism point of view”
3. Opportunities for collaboration within the bachelors program International Business Relations
Activities during our Amber Road presidency 2015

- International excursion: A group of students and teachers from Hungary, Serbia and Russia visited us
- Culture, music and wine along the Amber Road at our Conference “Eisenstädter Europatage”
- New design for the Amber Road Newsletter

Project “Amber Road from a tourism point of view”

Students identified 10 highlights along the Amber Road

1. Amber discovery in Pavilosta (Latvia)
2. Museum in Kaliningrad (Russia)
3. Biggest Amber Museum of the world in Palanga (Lithuania)
4. Amber museum in Gdansk (Poland)
5. Amber Road bike path (Czech Republic)
6. Historical discovery and castle ruin Devin (Slovakia)
7. Archaeological park in Carnuntum (Austria)
8. Original part of the Amber Road in Szombathely (Hungary)
9. City museum in Ljubljana (Slovenia)
10. Forum of Aquileia (Italy)
Collaboration within the bachelor's program  
**International Business Relations at UAS Burgenland**

- Bachelor International Business Relations
  - Focus on CEE (languages: RU, PL, CZ, HU, CRO)
  - Specialized electives in 2nd year:
    1. Marketing, 2. Accounting, 3. Export/Logistics,
    4. Tourism, 5. Wine Management

- Opportunities to cooperate in elective tourism:
  1. joint lectures/excursions to special tourist attractions
  2. joint students project: „analysis and concepts in tourism for special guests (e.g. with handicaps)“
  3. Joint research projects?

Sources & Internet sources

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