

Irena Zavrl  
Tonka Semmler-Matošić

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



**FH Burgenland**

UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

BRINGT BESONDERES ZUSAMMEN

**Amber Road Conference 2016**

**March 22nd, 2016**

Danube University Krems

**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**



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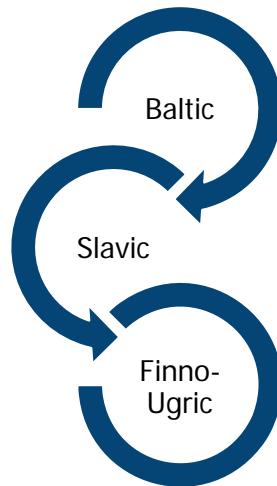
## Amber Road – ancient trade route



## 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



## 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?



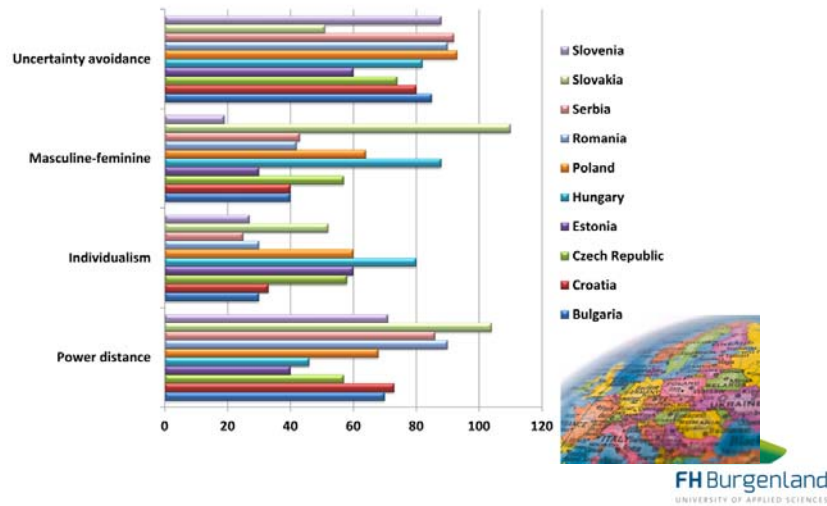
## Nexus between language and culture: dialectical relationship

→ 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)
- HOFSTEDE'S ORIGINAL FOUR CULTURAL DIMENSIONS
- HOFSTEDE'S LATEST CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

## PDI Amber Road



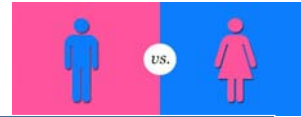
High		Low
<p>Unequal distributed power accepted and expected</p> <p>Decisions from above</p> <p>Supervision</p> <p>Large wage differences</p> <p>Privileges tolerated</p>	<p>Prefer equality and decentralization of power &amp; decision making</p>	<p>Hierarchy only for convenience</p> <p>Being independent with equal rights</p> <p>Power decentralized</p> <p>Control disliked</p> <p>Direct &amp; participative communication</p> <p>No privileges</p>
<p>Croatia (73)</p> <p>Czech Republic (57)</p> <p>Poland (68)</p> <p>Slovakia (100)</p> <p>Slovenia (71)</p>	<p>Latvia (44)</p> <p>Hungary (46)</p>	<p>Austria (11)</p> <p>Estonia (40)</p> <p>Finland (33)</p>

## Individualism vs. Collectivism Amber Road



Individualistic		Collectivistic
<p>People prefer to act as individuals</p> <p>Take personal responsibility</p> <p>Follow their own path</p> <p>Work task-oriented</p>		<p>Tight social framework</p> <p>Long-term commitment to a group</p> <p>Loyalty to a group</p> <p>Protection of the members of the group</p>
<p>Austria (55)</p> <p>Czech Republic (58)</p> <p>Estonia (60)</p> <p>Finland (63)</p> <p>Hungary (80)</p> <p>Latvia (70)</p> <p>Lithuania (60)</p>	<p>Polish → highly individual, but need hierarchy</p> <p>Slovakia (52)</p>	<p>Croatia (33)</p> <p>Slovenia (27)</p>


## Masculinity vs. Femininity Amber Road



Masculine		Feminine
Society driven by competition Work success- and profit-oriented Status symbols Work hard to achieve a high living standard Dedicated to work "live to work"		Gender roles overlap Relationships - dominant values Quality of life  "work to live"
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

Pragmatic		Normative
Prepare for the future Thrift and effort are largely encouraged Show ability easily to adapt tradition in changed conditions Believe that truth depends very much on situation, context and time Have a strong propensity to save or invest Perseverance in achieving results		Tradition and norms are important Have a strong concern with establishing the absolute truth Are normative in thinking View the societal change with suspicion Focus on achieving quick results instead of long-term benefit Fulfill social obligations
Austria (60) Croatia (58) Czech (70) Estonia (82) Hungary (58) Latvia (63) Slovakia (77)	Slovenia (49)	Finland (38) Poland (38)

and  
SCIENCES

## Indulgence vs. Restraint

Indulgent		Restrained
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		Tendency to cynism and pessimism Leisure time not important Have perception that their actions are restrained by social norms
Austria (63) Finland (57)	Slovenia (48)	Croatia (33) Czech (29) 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 Republik)**
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 bachelors 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?



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