Student Perspectives on Intercultural Classrooms in Higher Education in the Netherlands

A Research Paper presented by

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in partial fulfilment of the requirements for obtaining the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Major:

Human Rights, Gender and Conflict Studies:
Social Justice Perspectives (SJP)

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The Hague, The Netherlands

10 November 2020

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Acknowledgements

Abstract

This research paper aims to give an insight in how students perceive their intercultural study setting and their position in it. It strives to provide insight in the learning processes, both regarding the designed, planned curriculum and the coincidental, spontaneous moments of learning. Students who choose an international study experience almost all have an idealised image of becoming part of a global academic community, whether or not fuelled by the promotion of universities. By analysing learning experiences of students in intercultural learning environments in the Netherlands, this research demonstrates how the other students and the study environment play an essential role for most participants.

In addition to choosing a specific field of study, the intercultural study environment is important and "learning from and with each other" is perceived as a major added value. During their study period, almost all students experience obstacles related to being part of a diverse group in the academic environment or in their personal living environment. The difficulty of collaboration in group assignments rises in direct proportion to the group's diversity. Opinions differ about the way in which they learn from this and to what extent they are equipped (by the university) to apply these encounters as learning moments.

The two research environments, EUR/ISS and RUAS/IB, have similarities, but also differ greatly in their approach and considerations in the field of intercultural education. This research covers both approaches and explains the differences and possible reasons. At EUR/ISS many of the students indicate that they miss the explicit guided learning in the field of dealing with differences and (intercultural) conflicts. Contrasting this, at RUAS/IB a lot of attention is paid to this in the curriculum and by the staff, despite it often not being highly valued by the students surveyed. EUR/ISS students mainly learn to interact informally with students from all over the world, although the strongest relationships often remain those with fellow students from their own region / language area. Their acquaintance with the Netherlands and the Dutch remains limited. The opposite is true for the international students in the RUAS/IB program, they are a minority in the (English-speaking) student groups and are often used to impart more cultural awareness to mainly Dutch students.

In the context of increasing intercultural awareness, as also envisaged in the UN Sustainable Development Goals, it is worth seeking out ways of global learning that suit individual students with all their different perspectives. This paper hopes to contribute to that by providing potentially relevant insights.

Keywords

Relevance to Development Studies

On 1 September 2015, 193 Member States of the United Nations unanimously adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, Appendix 8) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With these Goals that universally apply to all, countries will "mobilize efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind" (UN 2020). Higher education institutions significantly contribute in achieving most of the Goals; at universities generations of young people work together at global issues and engage in tackling social, political, economic and environmental challenges. Goal 4, which commits to inclusive and quality education for all, places strong emphasis on learning to live together sustainably. Participating in an interconnected world and also appreciating and benefitting from cultural differences is a lifelong process that education can shape. This might yield a "defence against the rise of violence, racism, extremism, xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance" (Council of Europe, n.d.). This research presents how students in internationally oriented academic institutions in the Netherlands deal with their expectations on intercultural learning and the university environment and how they learn from intercultural encounters and experiences. It emphasizes how learning environments make a difference in the personal learning process of every student.

List of Abbreviations

BLM	Black Lives Matter
EUR	Erasmus University Rotterdam
HE	Higher Education
IaH	Internationalization at Home
IB	International Business (international program at RUAS)
ISS	International Institute of Social Studies
Nuffic	Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Cooperation; Now: Dutch organisation for internationalisation in education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
RBS	Rotterdam Business School (department of RUAS)
RUAS	Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UvA	University of Amsterdam
VSNU	Vereniging van Samenwerkende Nederlandse Universiteiten (Association of Cooperating Dutch Universities; now Association of Universities)

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1   Research motives and focus

Universities around the world have become increasingly international: bringing together staff and students from many distant places, all bringing different perspectives that would enrich science. At least, that is how they explain this as the most important reason. In line with government policy, universities in the Netherlands have firmly invested in the internationalization of education and research. The amount of international students has increased substantially in the last 10 years, compared to other rich countries, according to the yearly OECD report about the educational performance of the 36 participating countries (OECD 2020). Ideological, political and economic convictions have resulted in a wide variety of disciplines exploring international possibilities. In the Netherlands, scientific research has been largely internationally-oriented and more and more foreign students enrol at Dutch universities. In addition, it becomes increasingly common for Dutch researchers and students to visit a foreign university for conferences, exchanges and also for entire study programs (Nuffic 2018). Within Dutch universities, this has meant that more and more study programs are offered in English and the student population nowadays has a very diverse origin.

International study and exchange have a magical appeal to many people: becoming a 'global citizen' would be highly desirable, although the perception of this concept differs from person to person. It might be about knowing how to communicate with people from different parts of the world; to speak and write other languages than your mother tongue; to 'understand different cultures'; to be able to feel at home at a place far from home; to get exotic friends; to become an esteemed and attractive employee…

This research aims to show what happens after students have been attracted by the glossy marketing brochures universities spread over the world in order to welcome students from all over the globe. The paper shows what students experience when they are part of an intercultural group, and how they deal with the approaches of universities in the Netherlands.

Research Focus

The research literature about intercultural groups in educational contexts by i.a. Allport (1954), Pettigrew (1998, 2006), Jones (2010), Leask (2015) and Gregersen-Hermans (2016) shows how intercultural learning (often) works and which choices are being made by universities in order to promote intercultural learning. Comparing these works, one may conclude

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that just having an intercultural population of students does not automatically lead to better learning and understanding. These authors claim students should be facilitated with intercultural training; in both the business world as in education settings there are all kinds of courses on 'intercultural competences'. Scholars like Devoss (2002), Gorski (2009), Dervin (2016) and Beagan (2018) criticize the way in which many of this intercultural schooling is designed and performed and discuss the elusiveness of concepts such as culture, identity and intercultural competence. With this knowledge in mind I designed my field research, looking from the perspective of students themselves. I also included the concept of 'sense of belonging' in the university because the idea of being part of a learning community is often related to students' positive university experiences. Studies on the sense of belonging within educational institutions generally look at the extent to which students feel at home, experience that they connect with fellow students or feel that they fit in with the academic environment.

Research Questions with Sub-questions

The objective of this research paper is to analyse how students experience and learn in an intercultural university setting. It focuses on their perception against the background of two universities in the Netherlands. With this aim in mind, the following main research question has been developed:

Student perspectives on intercultural classrooms in higher education in the Netherlands: how do students in an intercultural setting learn from each other?

This question is approached with five sub-questions:

1. *What are the expectations of students regarding their peers?*

2. *When reflecting on their learning, which were the most powerful learning formats?*

3. *What are difficulties that students face in intercultural classroom settings?*

4. *How do students describe their 'sense of belonging' and how does this influence their learning?*

5. *What gives intercultural classroom participation added value for students?*

   I analyse how students experience cooperating with peers with another background (cultural, ethnical, religious, national, regional etc.) and how they experience educational approaches that aim to learn from diversity. It will be described what the students' expectations were before the academic year started, how much effort they put in collaboration and interaction with peer students, which class-room/learning situations they liked or disliked and how this experience changed their personality, or not. I will do research at the Institute of

Social Studies in The Hague (EUR/ISS) and Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences (RUAS/IB), interviewing both bachelor and master students.

Terminology

Whilst conducting my research, I came across many terms such as *international, multicultural, intercultural, diverse, multi-ethnical, trans-cultural, cross-cultural,* to describe heterogenous groups of people. None of those single words suffices to include everyone and many have a political connotation. I chose to use 'intercultural' in this paper because in my opinion this suits the differences my participants told me about best. This will be elaborated on in more detail in Chapter 2. In the field of 'intercultural education', currently the term 'global' as in 'global education' and 'global competences are often used, probably thanks to the emphasis on the UNESCO global sustainable development goals (SDG's).

1.2   Methodology

This research concerns the experience of intercultural students in Dutch higher education. It started with my own participant observations as a part-time student at ISS; my main research questions originate from my own encounters and experiences in class. But at this stage I was not consciously doing research; my findings were not written down or categorized nor did I note down quotes from my peer students or teachers. My observations helped me design this research but are not used as findings for my field research. This section discusses the justification of the methodological choices and their implications.

In-depth interviewing in one-on-one conversations and focus-groups was the most appropriate way to capture the student voices. I am convinced a topic like this should be regarded from many perspectives and I am lucky I have access to so many current and former students from EUR/ISS, and I could also get into contact with students from RUAS (see List of participants). Many of my contacts I gained by snowball sampling; during the conversation my participants advised me to talk to someone they knew. In order to receive more background information, later in the process I also interviewed teaching staff at both EUR/ISS and RUAS/IB, and I talked with counsellors and policy advisors at both institutes.

To test my ideas about my research topics and select my questions critically, I organized a brain storm session in early July with alumnae from EUR/ISS before my actual field research would start. In an in-person discussion with four participants we selected 5 sub topics for my interviews. These participants also helped me to formulate my key questions.

My field research was planned in the period July-September 2020; for RUAS students the Summer holidays, for EUR/ISS students from the 19-20 batch the time of their own field research. For the 18-19 batch it was about 6 months ago they left ISS, so they were able to look back on their time in the Netherlands that was still fresh in their minds. I tried to 'work on strategies for appreciating diversity and hearing the marginalized' (O'Leary 2017:126) by also explicitly asking modest, more unnoticed students. By doing this I tried to avoid the 'risk of gathering data and reaching conclusions that ignore those in society who often go unheard.' (ibid)

In-depth interviewing was the main method of data collection. Many EUR/ISS participants I knew personally as classmates, some of them were acquaintances of my peers. Some of them who graduated December 2019 returned to their country of origin, some were still in the Netherlands. Some RUAS/IB students reacted on an announcement in a Facebook group for international students at their university and others were linked to me by teaching staff from the international department. In a flyer I explained the purpose of my study (Appendix 1). I invited all participants individually for an online interview using Microsoft Teams. All interviews were conducted online and lasted about one hour. This was a feasible way of working during the Covid-19 pandemic: we did not have to meet in person, and I could easily interview people in countries around the world without traveling.

In total, I interviewed 15 students from a broad range of different nationalities at the EUR/ISS and 5 at RUAS/IB. Next to the individual interviews, I had two online focus group discussions, one with students from EUR/ISS and one with students from RUAS/IB (see List of participants). My participants differed in age between 20 and 51 years and were from different genders. For most of them, the study experience we talked about was their first outside of their country of origin.

The individual interviews were based on open-ended questions and a topic list, which is summarized in Appendix 3. After my introduction, I showed them promotional pictures used by their universities for the recruitment of new students (Appendix 2). I asked about their definition of concepts like 'diversity' and 'interculturality' and what these concepts meant to them in their student lives. The participants often shared their stories in a conversation-like manner, most interviews went fluently as students were very willing to talk about their experiences. After the introduction, my role often consisted of digging deeper or asking examples. Of course, my interpretations are subjective although I use reaffirmed quotes; I

have experienced student life at EUR/ISS myself and know RUAS from my perspective as a teacher. To explain my questions, I used examples from my own practice.

In order to gain more insights in long term educational considerations I also talked with the former Director of Educational Affairs, the dean of students/confidential counsellor and two lecturers from EUR/ISS, and a researcher/teacher, two teacher/staff trainers and the lector of internationalization from RUAS/IB. This gave me more background information on the pedagogical visions and the way things are organized at both universities.

After I wrote down my findings from the interviews, I organized two focus group discussions, one with participants from EUR/ISS and one with participants from RUAS/IB. As my participants were all experienced on the topic, each participant had a lot to contribute to the discussion; therefore, I chose for a smaller group of 4-5 participants, as advised by Hennink (2014:37). In the online setting this worked out fine, although it was sometimes difficult to have a lively conversation without interfering each other.

The theoretical framework I wrote after studying numerous articles on international class-rooms, intercultural communication, inclusive education and sense of belonging in university contexts. I read the theories of famous educational writers, which are often quoted, but also focused on modern international writers from different parts of the world. This literature helped me define and understand the broader picture of my research topic. I did literature research in the field of internationalization in higher education in the Netherlands by studying the reports (Nuffic, Ministry of Education, etc.) and reading the subsequent discussion in the Dutch media. In order to paint a good picture of the Dutch situation, I also studied issues in the field of migration and racism in the Netherlands, especially in the academic world. I have followed the recent discussions following the Black Lives Matter demonstrations and the reactions in the university community at RUAS and EUR/ISS closely.

Reliability and Validity

Of course, an interview is subjective, and the interpretation of the interviewer is also coloured. In order to be reliable as a researcher I tried to ask comparable questions to different interviewees and summarized the collected answers in order to check with the participant. The conclusions from my research are valid, but are only applicable in the specific research context. The conclusions might also be extended to other international university settings but the outcomes there might be different. Many of the findings from the field research connect to the theoretical works I read.

Coding and Analysing

In order to process my collected data into grounded theory I structured the transcripts by using codes. The interview transcriptions were coded, with a total of 18 codes derived from data (for example 'teaching style' 'friends', 'language'). The triangulation of the findings from the interviews, focus group discussions and literature was a continuous process of comparing and analysing. I compared the codes axially and made categories of umbrella codes. By re-categorizing and comparing I managed to find certain patterns that led me to formulate a number of conclusions.

1.3 Positionality and Ethics

Positionality

Within this research I position myself as an active participant, for my opinions, analysis and experiences influence the results of the research. This is related to my experience as a teacher for almost 20 years, and a student since 2018 at ISS. My standpoint is as an observant student, with a teaching background. I am doing this research as a student-researcher, but I cannot alter the fact that many of my own university experiences are in the role of teaching staff, working in the Dutch political and social location.

I am well aware of my own western perspective on education. My lens is Dutch, although I studied different educational approaches and went on international exchanges. I studied and now work in a European academic institution; I am familiar with the systems of grading, the ways faculty and staff communicate with students, the open-door policy. I am part of the colonial system and this encompasses blindness. My position gives me an advantage that I am often not aware of. When I interview my peers at EUR/ISS in for example a focus group, I am 'one of them', but I am the only 40+ person in the room. When I am initiating and explaining, my 'teacher-role' might appear, which might enlarge the distance between me and my participant(s). In my research at RUAS I made clear I am not interviewing in my role as a teacher; I have not interviewed students from my own classes, because of the power relation that exists when I would be the one who assesses them in future. I have always been clear about my role and intentions with this research, nevertheless I am a subjective interviewer, as O'Leary (2017: 124) states: "The question here is not whether researchers are subjective entities (everyone is), but whether we recognize ourselves as subjective, and whether we can manage our personal biases." I know I am biased in my understanding of my peer-students, having collaborated with them in courses or with their friends from the

same country. I always tried to be aware of my preoccupations. I have a specific cultural and socio-economical background, which will be similar to that of some of my participants and different to others. Harding's standpoint theory (1992: 445) argues "that we can achieve more objective understandings… by embracing our subjectivity consciously and actively reflecting on it within our socio-political environments" (Au 2012: 57 in Braun 2016). Of course, the findings from my research will not be neutral nor objective, as Dervin (2015: 8) writes: "…researchers and educators of IC *(intercultural communication, HK)* are not invisible omniscient characters merely observing others interacting with others or narrating about their encounters. Their own presence does have an impact on what is negotiated, constructed and performed which needs to be fully acknowledged and taken into account".

If I myself would have been one of the interviewees I would have criticized some of my experiences as a student at EUR/ISS and this fact may have influenced the way I asked some questions, although I tried to formulate and act neutrally. During my own 'learning in intercultural groups' I had both fantastic and disappointing practices and I linked these to the stories participants told me. When I heard participants talking critically about their teachers, I internally wanted to defend them because I know how the majority of teachers really tries to do the best they can to teach well and treat their students fairly.

Ethics

People participating in my research project have been assured of being able to speak freely and were well informed of the way I processed their quotes. I have considered the possible power relations and fear students might have had to speak openly and sometimes critically about their institution, but they did not seem to experience this: most participants agreed on recording their answers and wanted their first names to be included. In other cases, I used a nickname. I assured my participants they were being interviewed in a space where the only ones who heard them, are the ones they saw (in an online modus). Before I started the actual interviews, I explained the context of the research and asked them for consent. I told them they could refuse answering my questions as well. At the end I also asked them if they had any questions or missed issues they would have liked to talk about. In the focus group it was my responsibility to keep the information discussed confidential and I appointed this, but I cannot ensure that participants will not disclose the content of the discussion with others outside the group. All quotes I use in this paper have been approved via e-mail contact in the last month of writing.

1.4 Organization of the Paper

The structure of this research paper is as follows: in the first chapter the reason for conducting this research and the research problem were introduced, just as the methods used to design the study and collect and analyse the data. In chapter two, the most important concepts for this research are elaborated. A theoretical framework is developed which presents the concepts, and their underlying relations. Chapter three contains the context of this research. The two locations in which this study is conducted are outlined. Next, in chapter four is the findings section where the results coming from the analysis of the data are presented. Chapter five reports the discussion on the findings and implications and concludes with a number of recommendations.

Chapter 2
Intercultural Learning: Theories and Concepts

In this chapter, I will describe the theories that formed the backbone of this research. These concepts include interculturality, intercultural learning, intercultural students and classrooms and intercultural learning institutions. I will expand on theories like Allport's Contact Hypothesis and the concept of Sense of Belonging in a learning setting.

2.1 Interculturality

> "Culture' is generally recognised as complex to define. It can refer to the fine arts, including a variety of works of art, cultural goods and services. 'Culture' also has an anthropological meaning. It is the basis for a symbolic world of meanings, beliefs, values, traditions which are expressed in language, art, religion and myths. As such, it plays a fundamental role in human development and in the complex fabric of the identities and habits of individuals and communities." (European Commission 2007: 3)

> "Culture is not an immutable external force that determines the behavior of people, but a dynamic process that is being constantly redefined by interacting human beings." (Snel 2003: 236)

Interculturality is nothing new, for people have always interacted across national, regional, linguistic, religious, and social borders, states Pieterse (2004 in Dervin 2014: 2). According to the Council of Europe (n.d.) interculturality is "a value for citizens: Meeting and socialising with people from different cultures is […] always enriching as they bring new perspectives, concepts, visions, ideas...". But people also misunderstand each other in intercultural encounters, which is then often explained by the 'power' of culture. Dervin (2014: 11) argues: "The assumption is: People have different cultures, so when they meet they encounter problems". Although 'culture' is merely, as Spivak mentions (1992: 775) "a word like *value* in Marx, simple and contentless, immediately codable as ground of difference", she thinks the "existence of interculturality is dependent on the ascription of content to culture, since the notion always involves more than one singular culture". It involves "contemplating how otherness is defined and how engagement with otherness leaves intact or challenges the very differences that categorize the Other as other" (Aman 2015: 151). Razafimandimbimanana (2015: 121) states there are strategic values of using the word 'culture' for it is being used in "political, educational, and scientific discourses and appears there as a substitute for more commonly controversial forms of social categorisation concepts such as 'race' or 'religion'". While the

term 'interculturality' was originally coined to refer to relations between cultures, it is now used as "a more complex term that refers to the relations that exist within society between diverse majority and minority constellations that are defined in terms not only of culture but also of ethnicity, language, religious denomination, and/or nationality" (Dietz 2020: 1). Aman warns: "Contrary to its self-proclaimed goal of learning from the Other, interculturality may in fact contribute to the repression of the Other by silencing those who are already muted" (2014: Abstract). In Europe, and in the Netherlands, in studies and policies, the 'Other' means often a person perceived to be incongruous with the Eurocentric 'standard'. This 'Other' in intercultural communication is exoticized, essentialized, and marginalized (Yep 2014: 341). Interculturality "may run the danger of treating others as abstractions, or examples, rather than as fully human individuals, and of promoting the easy adoption of assumptions" (Stables 2005: 188). Like many other notions in education, interculturality tends to mean either too much or too little (Dervin 2014: 3).

2.2 Intercultural Learning

> *"Intercultural learning is discovering yourself (your life and your works) through others (through their lives and through their works) and discovering others (their lives and their works) through yourself (through your life and your works)." (Abram 2001: 23)*

The above mentioned more holistic-spiritual view of the concept of intercultural learning by Abram (2001: 23) exists adjacent to firmer, policy-oriented statements by institutions like UNESCO, Council of Europe and the European Union, e.g.: "Intercultural Education provides all learners with cultural knowledge, attitudes, and skills to contribute to respect, understanding and solidarity among individuals, ethnic, social, cultural and religious groups and nations" (UNESCO 2006: 32) and "Education and training systems have to lead people to accept that racism and intolerance have no place in our society; that discrimination is unacceptable" (Council of the European Union 2001 in Faas 2014: 306), followed by "As an instrument of learning democracy, intercultural education creates deliberately these situations of exchange, mutual influence and cultural cross-fertilisation. Its purpose is to enhance diversity and complexity through a constant cultural dynamism" (Council of Europe 2012: 24). In general, scholars on intercultural learning subjects highlight the promotion of equal opportunities, cultural diversity, mutual understanding, respect and tolerance among people (Ng 2012: 445, Faas et al. 2014: 315), or as Candau, (2013: 1 in Candau 2016) states:

"Intercultural Education is based on the statement of difference as richness". This is often based on the conviction that people have a universal cultural heritage and "share the bond of humanity and global citizenship" (Ng 2012: 445). Intercultural dialogue is seen as "a tool to achieve a balance between cultural diversity and social cohesion" (Faas et al. 2014: 312) and is concerned with people who are trying to "deal with all the material, intellectual, spiritual and emotional aspects of the different value systems, traditions and beliefs, and ways of life that are involved" (Council of Europe 2012: 21). The complexity of intercultural education is that it accommodates both universalism and cultural pluralism, for example in the need to "emphasize the universality of human rights, whilst maintaining cultural difference, which may challenge aspects of these rights" (UNESCO 2006: 11). Intercultural education is often criticized, for example by Gorski who states that "most intercultural education practice supports, rather than challenges, dominant hegemony, prevailing social hierarchies, and inequitable distributions of power and privilege" (2008: 515) and Mignolo (2009 in Dervin et al. 2015: 9) who states that in intercultural education settings, people are often objectified if they do not belong to the majority, who are "the norm who celebrates, tolerates and learns to understand the others". Conversely, UNESCO Intercultural Education Chair holder Jagdish Gundara highlights in an interview (Bash 2016: 3):

> "The point is that national state systems are largely governed by dominant cultures and dominant groups—and they tend to impose a uniformity based on majoritarianism. There may also be the presence of issues of xenophobia and racism based on exclusivist ideologies. The point of saying all this is that *if we do not have intercultural education what kind of education would you have to bring those groups together? (emphasis added)* If we do not have intercultural education we are likely to have intercultural conflicts. So the role of intercultural education is to bring about intercultural understandings, intercultural coherence and cohesion by bringing diverse groups together in societies. It is only by implementing intercultural education in a substantive way that we would be able to remove the barriers of xenophobia, racism and inequalities of various kinds and to ensure that we have peaceable and inclusive communities".

Intercultural education is controversial and vulnerable, because "the most destructive thing we can do is to disenfranchise people in the name of intercultural education" (Gorski 2008: 516). On the other hand, "helping students learn to engage constructively with those who are not like themselves […] is the single most pressing issue for educators in the 21st century…" (Coburn 2005: 2). There are many different ways in which intercultural learning can find place, and some have an adverse effect that might only manifest itself over the years. This obliges all those involved to be aware of their approach. Students enrolled in international programs often value meeting and talking with culturally different people, for this

"provides the opportunity to question, clarify, consider one's own cultural position and find common territory and understanding" (Jones 2010: xvi). Schools and universities are generally aware they provide intercultural learning, but the degree to which they consciously compose this differs greatly. Intercultural learning is often being taken for granted as "an automatic outcome and benefit of intercultural contact" (Leask 2008: 20, Eisenchlas and Trevaskes 2010: 3 in George 2014: 163). The 'real life' experience is the most involving form of learning, but intercultural learning is not automatically initiated by the personal experience of an intercultural encounter (Otten 2000: 15, Vandeberg et al. 2012: 3, Gregersen-Hermans 2017: 1).

2.3 Contact Hypothesis

One of the classical theories on intercultural learning is Allport's (1954) 'contact hypothesis', which assumes that contact with members of different cultural groups leads to a reduction in prejudices. The contact theory describes four optimal conditions under which the effect is greatest: equal status within the situation, common goals, cooperation between groups and supervision and support by authorities. Later studies have further analysed the theory and show that the effect of contact is actually stronger under these conditions (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006: 767, Paluck et al. 2019: 3). Scholars reviewing the contact hypothesis often express scepticism about the feasibility of orchestrating the kinds of high-quality contact that Allport (1954) had prescribed (Tredoux and Finchilescu 2007: 675, Paluck et al. 2019: 26). In addition to the four conditions added Pettigrew (1998: 76) a fifth condition that states that the "contact between people should be potential for friendship". Friendships between members of different groups appear to have a significant effect on the reduction of negative prejudices, and new insights in the other group also provide new insights in the own group. Both provide fewer negative attitudes towards other ethnic groups in general (Pettigrew 1998: 72, Laurence 2019: 1276). 'Institutional support' seems the most important condition for a positive effect (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006: 767). In practice, this can be achieved by thorough guidance and facilitation (Lub et al. 2011: 57). But not being prejudiced is not the same as being 'interculturally competent' argue Brinkmann and Van Weerdenburg (2014: 118) and Bennett (2010:10). It takes additional effort to turn a 'cross-cultural immersion experience' into an intercultural learning experience, this does not take place simply by mere exposure to other cultures. In cooperating in heterogeneous groups, there has to be a certain interdependency; when group members depend on each other to fulfil a task successfully,

the commitment to collaborate is larger and the learning experience more impactful (Brame and Biel, 2015: 3; Popov et al. 2012: 303).

2.4 Intercultural Competences

In the discussion about intercultural learning and teaching, *intercultural competences* are often referred to. Many scholars have tried to define this debatable concept and its variations over the past 30 years (Deardorff 2006: 242). In summarising some central themes across different cultures with regard to global competence, UNESCO (2013: 24) described the following key elements: "respect, listening, adaptation, relationship-building, seeing from multiple perspectives, self-awareness and cultural humility. Gregersen-Hermans (2017) broke down this overarching definition and claimed that intercultural competence entailed, among other things, recognising oneself as a cultural being. According to her, it requires motivation, attitude, the capacity to tolerate ambiguity in relationships with other people and a minimum level of linguistic competence (Gregersen-Hermans 2017: 7). Importantly, she highlights that intercultural competence is something that could be developed (Gregersen-Hermans 2017: 7).

Theories and models on intercultural communication and intercultural competences, are numerous (see Appendix 6 for examples and their characteristics). Bennett's (1986) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), Byram's (1997) Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) Deardorff's (2006) Model of Intercultural Competence are most recognized. These models are used in training on intercultural competence to indicate, score and keep up people's intercultural awareness and communication skills. In higher education institutions, demonstrating evidence of the outcomes of intercultural and international initiatives is common policy, resulting in a strong demand for measurement tools in order to test students' intercultural skills. Scoring people's intercultural competence is contentious, and criticized by a number of authors, who argue in these models, that mainly have been developed in Euro-American contexts, " 'Culture' is reduced to race and ethnicity, ignoring other identities and framing race and ethnicity as residing only in the 'Other,' leaving dominant cultures unproblematized" according to Beagan (2018: 123), and Dervin (2016: 104) writes: " it is not just 'culture' that guides interactions but the co-construction of various identities such as gender, age, profession, social class, etc. All these intersect in intercultural interaction and thus need to be taken into account".

UNESCO pursues the goals of the '2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' which aims to "provide individuals with key competencies to act as engaged and responsible

citizens, in a lifelong process based on experience and reflection, gathering cognitive, affective, and motivational elements". On behalf of UNESCO, Deardorff (2020) developed a method to pursue these goals in educational settings on a global scale in cooperation with educators from around the world. Derived from her 'Process Model of Intercultural Competence' (Figure 2.1), a manual for developing intercultural competencies was designed, based on so called 'Story Circles'. In this recent release, Deardorff describes intercultural competence as "the skills, attitudes, and behaviours needed to improve interactions across difference, whether within a society (differences due to age, gender, religion, socio-economic status, political affiliation, ethnicity, and so on) or across borders" (2020: 5). The method of Story Circles focuses on the process of achieving intercultural competencies by practicing "…deep listening, increasing one's own cultural self-awareness, awareness of others, connecting across difference in a respectful manner, developing empathy, and discovering similarities, especially with those who seem quite different" (Deardorff 2020: 6). In a more holistic way, Story Circles engages all three modes of learning: cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioural. In contrast to more traditional intercultural training methods, in this tool the emotional connections are key, and are not being assessed or graded.
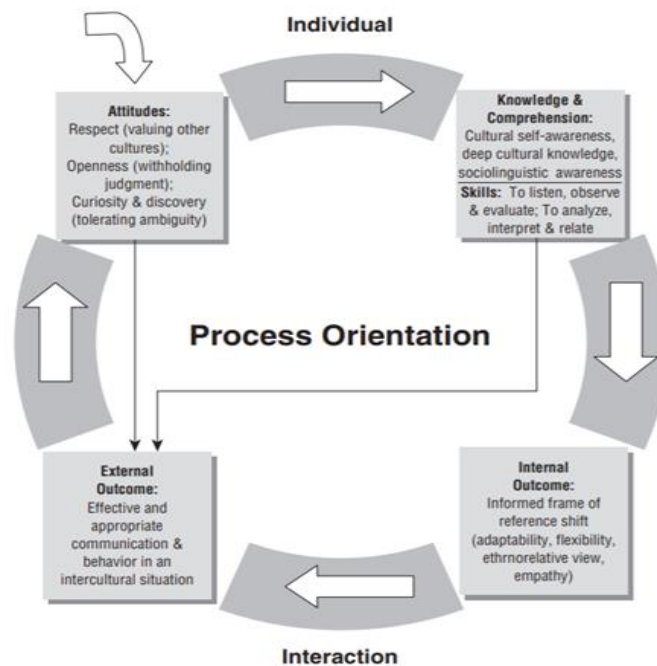

Figure 2.1
Process Model of Intercultural Competence (Deardorff 2006).

2.5 Intercultural Students and Intercultural Classrooms

"To bring a spirit of study to learning that takes place both in and beyond classroom settings, learning must be understood as an experience that enriches life in its entirety." (hooks 2002: 42)

In the context of this research, one speaks of *international* students in the first place: students who moved to the Netherlands in order to pursue a study program. Simultaneously, they are all *intercultural* students as well, but this latest term is also being used for students who have lived in the Netherlands for a long time, maybe for their whole life, and have a migrant background. When talking about intercultural classrooms and intercultural learning, students *without* a migrant background actually also fit the profile as they bring a whole lot of cultural diversity just like the others, in terms of ethnicity, religion, social economic background etc. In most intercultural university classrooms in English-taught programs there is a mix of international students and domestic students (mostly the majority) and the idea is they should all benefit from the international classroom, because an "international and intercultural experience is relevant to all higher education students" (Gregersen-Hermans 2016: 72). This is also referred to as: Internationalization at Home (IaH). Next to their study program, international students have, compared to 'domestic students', challenges which make them "suffer more psychological and social distress than domestic students" (Ward 2001: 25). Language issues, homesickness, culture shock, social isolation, immigration service issues or the lack of a social safety net often make these students' lives more difficult. For these reasons, universities employ special counsellors, organize international meetings and events and often provide a mentoring program. 'Classrooms' might be groups of 20 students, but most universities also teach groups up to 200 in massive lecture halls. It will come as no surprise that the participation in meaningful discussions decreases as the number of attendees increases (De Vita 2000: 174). What prevents most students from participating in class discussions, is the fear of not being understood and, in the extreme case, of becoming subject to ridicule. Especially for international students, smaller groups are considered less threatening and more inviting to participate (De Vita 2000: 175). According to Volet and Ang (2012: 34), students will spontaneously only form teams with peers from the same cultural background because this is less emotionally straining. Only if they are convinced of the benefits of a culturally mixed group, they will choose for that, as cooperating with peers from the same background makes communication easier, helps to develop and maintain a sense of identity (Tan 1997 in Volet and Ang 2012: 33) and provides psychological support. Teachers are not always aware of the life situations in their groups. The focus is generally on the

"needs, feelings and concerns of the dominant group, who are enabled to define the agenda" (Jones and Jenkins 2007: 142). Both students and teachers need effort to feel at ease in an intercultural class (Kim 2011: 292). Unknown pedagogical methods can marginalize students who are not familiar with this educational environment. Western education often concentrates on values like independent and critical thinking, problem-based learning, and developing and communicating knowledge whereas this might be totally different in their countries of origin (Safipur et al. 2017: 817). This means these classes need active, engaged staff and students wanting to move beyond their comfort zones, in a safe environment. Otherwise, students from different backgrounds will co-exist in one classroom, but there is no question of intercultural learning (Crose 2011: 394).

2.6 Sense of Belonging

Study outcomes are usually better when students feel at home at their university and with their peers and teachers. Especially for students coming from abroad, the atmosphere they experience in their host university is an important motivator. Various studies of feelings of belonging within education (e.g. Lugones 1987:12, Tinto 2017: 258, and Ahn and Davis 2020: 631) look at the extent to which students feel at home, experience that they connect with fellow students or feel that they fit in with the general atmosphere or environment. The primary need to belong is a dynamic and changing desire in which we continually review to what extent this need is provided (Gomes 2020: 13). College students' sense of belonging "includes students' perceptions of institutional support and relationships with others, all of which combine to elicit feelings of connectedness and affiliation with the campus community" (Yao 2015: 8). To Lugones (1987), being at ease in a 'world' also means shifting; being different people in different contexts; having different personalities or characters; or behaving, using language, or space in different ways (Anderson 2014: 640). Especially for international students, student support services and counsellors play an important role (Gomes 2020: 60) in the process of becoming part of the university community. They organize introduction activities, extra-curricular excursions, student events to stimulate students mutual contact, because good relations with peer-students are crucial for students' self-efficacy: their belief in their ability to succeed, how they perceive experiences and interactions and their capacity to have some locus of control (Tinto 2017: 256).

2.7   Intercultural Learning Institutions

In an intercultural university, *interculturality* should be embedded in the practices that inform all aspects of university life, not only in changes to certain subjects or programs, or visual changes to the physical environment. Leask (2015) distinguishes three levels: the formal, informal and hidden curriculum. The formal curriculum of most university programs represents the courses and activities that are formally assessed. Curricula in Western universities are traditionally Eurocentric, they predominantly contain normative Western knowledge (Heinemann and Do Mar Castro Varela (2017: 266) among others), which negatively influences success and wellbeing of non-Western students and staff. In an intercultural environment, curricula incorporate information about various (minority) groups, course materials question stereotyping, and literature and research developed outside of the Global North is equally referred to (Fitzsimons et al. 2017: 15).

The informal curriculum consists of all additional services and events that are usually not graded, but contribute to student learning and wellbeing. In an intercultural university social activities and student committees of all kinds should be actively supported. When social gatherings are organised, these institutions consult with a diverse range of students in order to accommodate difference and to ensure that events are sensitive to the timetabling of, for example, religious events. The university building provides quiet rooms that all students can access and there is a variety of culinary options in the cafeteria. Appropriate signage reflects language diversity and buildings are accessible (Fitzsimons et al. 2017: 17).

The hidden curriculum consists of the "unintended hidden messages to students" (Leask, 2015: 8). It informs students how people behave towards each other: who interacts with whom, when, how… In short, what are the dominant values and beliefs, the social structure and dominant culture of the university (Gregersen-Hermans 2017: 3). Needless to say, these elements are the least transparent; e.g. social rituals which govern where to sit in a classroom, how to enact the relationship with teaching staff etcetera, can only be observed and experienced at first hand, but are of great influence for students' sense of comfort.

Becoming an inclusive intercultural learning institution is an intensive process of many years, "while there are many very valuable initiatives, programmes and projects, the challenge for taking a qualitative step forward on the topic of equity, diversity and inclusion is to connect all the dots, creating linkages within an institution as well as between institutions and systems" (EUA 2019: 44). According to their self-evaluations, the universities where this

research finds place strive to become such intercultural inclusive institutions, and the steps they are taking are detectable but not yet conclusive.

Chapter 3
The Dutch Context

In this chapter, I first address why and when Dutch higher education institutions started to 'become international', how this evolved and what the side effects are. In the second section, I take a look at what kind of culture prevails within the Dutch universities and how do they position themselves in society.

3.1 Intercultural Learning in Higher Education Institutions

Since the second half of the last century, higher education has an important emancipatory role: academic training has long since been reserved for the upper class, but since the 50s a university training became more easily accessible. This has resulted in a more heterogeneous student population: more students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, more women and more students with a migrant background (De Jong 2014: 16). The average level of education of the Dutch population has increased considerably in recent decades (Maslowski 2018: 3). With the foundation of Nuffic (Dutch organisation for internationalisation in education) in the early 1950s, Dutch universities began to collaborate to make Dutch academic life globally visible. Initially, this was mainly done through programs that allowed talented foreign students to study in the Netherlands (Van den Eijden 2019). In the first decades this happened on a modest scale, but when in the 1980s the Erasmus program was launched, more and more students and staff travelled abroad for study opportunities and universities developed goals and strategies for internationalisation on a micro, meso and macro level (Appendix 5). Simultaneously the number of English-taught programs in the Netherlands grew significantly. In the academic year 2020-2021 the Dutch universities offered 368 Bachelor and 1190 Master programmes with English as language of instruction (Study in Holland 2020). The Dutch higher education system is principally government-funded and is sub-divided in two types: universities of applied sciences (36 in total) and research universities (14 in total). Research universities focus on theoretical aspects of the field of study and prepare students for research. Programs at these universities lead to a bachelor or a master degree and at these universities PhD tracks are a possibility. Universities of applied sciences are more practically oriented and prepare students for specific professions, e.g. engineering, teaching, nursing, constructing and designing. Internships are an essential part of these study programs, which lead to a bachelor degree in four years.

Not only specialist (research) masters, but also bachelor programs increasingly have English as the language of instruction (Leest and Wierda-Boer 2011: 1). In research universities, there is a long tradition of internationalization, due to the cross-border nature of science. At universities of applied science internationalization is often linked to the globalization of the labour market where graduates end up. Although internationalization in the 1990s was mainly related to student exchange and intercultural learning, nowadays attracting international diploma students for some programs has become increasingly important. This latest trend is inseparable from the increased use of English as the language of instruction in many study programs (Leest and Wierda-Boer 2011: 13, Messelink et al. 2018: 86). In 2014 the Association of Dutch Universities (VSNU) and the Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (Vereniging Hogescholen) agreed on a joint vision: "Internationalization is not a goal in itself, but contributes to the quality of education and research." It should be in line with the social function of universities, which primarily serve all groups in Dutch society, with their identity and cultures (VSNU 2018: 19). At first internationalization was seen as an added value for some students and staff members with specific interests but nowadays it is part of the general strategy and mission of most universities (Ng 2012: 440, Gregersen-Hermans 2016: 39). The main reason is that the Dutch position in the knowledge-based global economy would be consolidated: by uniting an international mix of researchers and students, the quality would supposedly increase (VSNU 2018: 6). Organizations like the association of Dutch universities (VSNU) believe that students' 'intercultural competences' (VSNU 2018: 11) (not further defined) improve, but this is difficult to measure (See Chapter 2 'Intercultural Learning'). Especially in English taught programs where there is no mix of Dutch and foreign students (e.g. in the Psychology program at Erasmus University in Rotterdam), Dutch students do not benefit from the international program. An interesting justification for internationalization of education is the economical aspect: universities receive more governmental funding when they have more registered students. On top of this, students from outside the European Union pay the institutional tuition fee (possibly rising to € 32,000). In the long run, the Dutch state gains millions of euros by recruiting international students, because many of them stay after their graduation and work in well paid jobs, and therefore become valuable taxpayers. The long-term total income from international students is therefore significantly larger than the spending on international students in the short term (CPB 2019).

Over the last decade Dutch universities not only saw significant growth in their student population, but also a growing heterogeneity in the background of the students. In the academic year 2009-2010, 636.406 students were registered, of which 23.8 % had a migrant

background. In academic year 2019-2020, 770.277 students in the Netherlands were enrolled and 31.8 % had a migration background (CBS 2020, figures in Appendix 4). This term 'migrant student' is used for students who lived already in the Netherlands but were born elsewhere as well as for students who came to this country for their study program or for an exchange year. Some of them stay in the Netherlands after finishing their study goals, others travel back to their home countries.

The number of Dutch students going to study abroad has increased, but on balance there are many more students coming to the Netherlands than the other way around (Ministry of Finance 2019: 13). For Dutch universities, offering English-taught courses has positive effects, i.e. a good English language proficiency is useful for alumni to work in international organizations. English-taught courses also contribute to the scientific research climate, because they help institutions attract international (top) researchers. In all academic positions, there was an increase in the share of foreign personnel between 2003 and 2018 (Rathenau.nl 2020). The higher the position, the lower the share of foreign academic staff. The share of foreign academic staff is the largest among PhD students (Rathenau.nl 2020). In a study by the Dutch organization for internationalization in education Nuffic (Van Gaalen et al. 2014: 19) on institutional policy on internationalization, most universities argue their internationalization policy realizes their "desire to prepare graduates for participation in a globalized work force or to create global citizens able to interact with peoples from different cultures." This is in line with the Global Education Guidelines of the Council of Europe (2008: 10) which states it is crucial "to give learners the opportunity and competences to reflect and share their own point of view and role within a global, interconnected society, as well as to understand and discuss complex relationships of common social, ecological, political and economic issues, so as to derive new ways of thinking and acting".

Conversely, reduced attention for the Dutch language in higher education has risks, argue De Groot et al. (2019) in a letter published in the Volkskrant (Dutch daily newspaper), which was followed by a list of concerned professors, writers and other prominent figures from the social and cultural sector. Full English taught courses would be at odds with the quality and accessibility of education. Universities would lose touch with their students and the level of academic discussion would diminish. The emphasis on the English language might hinder the development of Dutch as a science language and research context, and Dutch students would develop their Dutch academic language skills to a limited extent (Ministry of Finance 2019: 7). Another effect of the (international) growth of the number of students is the pressure on the housing market. Dutch students complain that they cannot find

an affordable student housing in their university city. This holds true for international students as well, with a significant proportion of experiencing stress, insecurity and instability with regard to their living conditions (Fang and Van Liempt 2020:8).

In the past forty years there have been significant investments in cooperation in European higher education, but student mobility is not evenly distributed among Europe; countries like Germany and the Netherlands receive numerous students, while many Eastern European universities only see talented academics leave the country (De Wit et al. 2015:46). Until September 2019 there was no regulation concerning these unequal exchanges (Van der Wende, 2020: 5). Now populist parties criticize academic international ambitions as a part of their anti-globalisation and anti-elitist policies. Just like the student unions they are critical about English-taught study programs, therefore Van der Wende (2020: 11) warns: "Universities can then easily be caught up in the political polarization connected to the rise of nationalism and become targets of populists that happily critique their internationalization aims as part of their anti-globalization and anti-elite discourse". In 2019, Minister of Education Van Engelshoven decided to regulate the internationalization of universities by 'restoring the balance' in the so called 'Language and Accessibility Bill' (Government.nl 2019) which contains stricter rules on the language of instruction, higher fees for students from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) and possibilities to restrict the intake on courses taught in a language other than Dutch (Government.nl 2019).

In addition to their international offices that contribute to organizing and facilitating all internationalization academic activities, Dutch universities nowadays usually have a 'diversity office' and the topic 'inclusion' has been given a place in the policies of the academic institutions. Unfortunately, this does not mean that all students and employees feel that they are a natural part of the university community. The next paragraph will focus on the Dutch situation in terms of interculturality, diversity and migration.

3.2   Universities as Intercultural Communities

Like in many other countries, universities in the Netherlands claim to be international, liberal, multicultural centres of knowledge. Nevertheless, conventionally most universities have had little attention for diversity and inclusion. During the last decade, universities have increasingly been called on their one-sidedness and the way in which they offer unequal opportunities to students and staff which do not belong to the majority population. Some people argue that universities are white strongholds where reproduction of traditional colonial ideas and

perspectives take place (Ploner and Nada 2020: 374), although the cities where they are situated have become very diverse: 24,4 % of the Dutch population has a migration background (CBS 2020). As Wekker writes (2016: 2), this is a paradox which occurs in throughout Dutch society, which is built on power relations stemming from the colonial history, when the Netherlands gained wealth by enslaving people and making used of forced labour on plantations. The awareness of this history of slavery has been very limited among the Dutch majority; in schools, even in the former colonies like Surinam or the Antilles, children learned about the Dutch 'naval heroes' and the 'Golden Age' of prosperity – not about the shadow sides of this wealth. Since the 1950s the Netherlands has attracted immigrants from the former colonies, but also so-called 'guest workers' from Southern European countries like Italy and Greece. Institutions in the Netherlands stayed predominantly monocultural; only gradually migrants entered the public realm in for example politics and media. For decades, the Dutch have described their culture as open and tolerant towards outsiders and dissenters (Essed 2009: 137, Ghorashi 2015:185). This credo has been used in all kinds of situations, for example when protests increased against the traditional celebration of the Sinterklaas festival, when actors are made up as blackface to play Black Pete, Sinterklaas' helper. While people of colour increasingly expressed how hurtful this figure is to them, more conservative Dutch reported that they shouldn't be so sensitive and ruin an 'innocent children's party'.

Dutch people generally like to see their country as meritocratic, where people are being judged in the first place on their qualities and where you can get far, as long as you do your best. When numbers and facts of current situations of discrimination are being published, it is difficult to face this painful reality, as Essed already pointed out in 1984 (2018: 55). A short wave of attention went through the Netherlands at that time, but in the 1990s and the beginning of the 21th century the liberal thought was prominent: every citizen would have the chance to use their talents and become successful. Anti-racism advocates received little recognition in those days (Brown, 2012: 25). "Acknowledging that white people benefit from racial systems of oppression sits uneasily with central tenets of liberalism, including those of individual responsibility, meritocracy and universalism" (Çankaya and Mepschen 2019: 4). Wekker (2016: 18) argues, racism in the Dutch self-image is "by definition located in working-class circles, not among 'our kind of middle-class people'" Many of those 'middle class people' were extremely afraid to be called racist, or to be made aware of discriminatory behaviour. 'It was not meant that way' is a statement that is often heard when micro-aggressions or exclusion mechanisms are being appointed. This cuts off any conversation but does not seem like an argument, as Tavares (2004: 13) states:

"the stigma of racism has spread faster than the consciousness of racism. That stigma works as a deterrent to developing the sense of consciousness. Why? Because we live in a world of people, most of whom are well intentioned, whose fears of being labelled prejudiced are stronger than their fear of actually being prejudiced. Therefore, they contribute to prejudice. The stigma of prejudice often resonates deeper within non-oppressed peoples than the harm it causes the oppressed."

Since the Black Lives Matter demonstrations in many Dutch cities following the violent death of George Floyd in the United States in June 2020, the Netherlands seem to be entering a new phase: terms like 'institutional racism', 'cultural appropriation' and 'white privilege' suddenly appear in mainstream media. Young Dutch citizens, mostly from different ethnical backgrounds, embrace the Black Lives Matter movement which is already so much bigger in the United States. Prime minister Mark Rutte, who stated only 6 years ago Black Pete should not change, admitted that he changed his mind on this issue. Rutte called discrimination in the Netherlands a systemic problem. "Here too, people are judged on their origin." (NOS 3-6-2020). Later this summer, on 3 September, Rutte and minister of Social Affairs Koolmees had a meeting with representatives of Black Lives Matter (BLM) en Kick Out Zwarte Piet (KOZP) in the Catshuis in The Hague, where Rutte stated: "Racism and discrimination are still too widespread in this country, and that is unacceptable. That's not the Netherlands I want." Elvin Rigters, KOZP-leader, reacted: "There is progressive insight, which gives hope. It is very important that our political leaders take a stand on racism and do not pass the problem down to society" (Roetman 2020).

In 2015 students and employees of the University of Amsterdam (UvA) occupied the Maagdenhuis, the seat of the university board in the heart of the city. The occupiers blamed the lack of democracy and found the UvA too white, the curriculum too biased by 'Western traditions' and the culture not open to students and staff from non-western backgrounds. A diverse group of students started the 'University of Colour'. Their mission is: "We aim to decolonize the university. Our project includes creating a more balanced curriculum that includes non-Eurocentric perspectives and ideas" (Jouwe, 2015:7).

After this event UvA formed a diversity commission led by Wekker to conduct extensive research and give advice to the university. In 2016 the report 'Let's do diversity' was presented, which is used as a 'fundamental roadmap for the strategy, content and yearly outlook' of the Chief Diversity Office which advises the Executive Board.

Diversity in Dutch universities seems to increase (CBS 2020), however research shows that students from minority backgrounds are less often successful in their (study) career (Rezai et al. 2010: 65, Severiens and Wolff 2008: 253, Wolff 2013: 15). This is becoming

acknowledged now, and the last couple of years diversity and inclusion have become buzz words within universities – every Dutch university employs a 'diversity officer' in 2020. These staff members advocate a greater diversity of faculty and students, (religious) facilities especially for minorities, and an 'inclusive pedagogy'. Their role is 'to motivate and galvanize the institutional community toward shared diversity-centred goals and missions' (Parker 2020). Unfortunately, diversity officers often work in the margins of the academic institution and their influence is limited (Parker 2020). In order to achieve a real different epistemological mindset, it is imperative that change be carried much wider. "If higher education institutions are to become not only diverse but also truly inclusive, an intersectional approach to diversity is needed" (Deunk et al. 2020: 2). That means, in the words of hooks (1994: 44) that "other cultures (specifically, people who have different cultural backgrounds) are effectually speaking, having the lead and determine the values". In September 2020, nine parties launched a national action plan to promote diversity and inclusion in teaching and research in all Dutch universities and research institutions, including the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW), the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) and the Dutch Research Council (NWO). "This can be seen as a further step in the commitment to diversity and inclusion" (UvA Diversity Blog 2020).

3.3   Two HE Institutions in The Hague and Rotterdam: EUR/ISS and RUAS/IB

In this section I describe the backgrounds of the international study programs at Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences and Erasmus Institute of Social Studies and how they are organized. The field research in this paper takes place at a research university: Erasmus University Rotterdam, Institute of Social Studies (EUR/ISS), and a university of applied sciences: Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences, School for International Business (RUAS/IB). In both cases the participants of the study participated in an 'international program' with English as language of instruction.

Considerable differences between the two institutes are the fact that RUAS/IB has a vast majority of students with a Dutch nationality, whereas at EUR/ISS the student population is a mix of nationalities, predominantly from the so called 'Global South'. All EUR/ISS students are internationals, some nationalities appear more frequently, others only once. A remarkable point is that there are nearly no domestic students. EUR/ISS students have

considerable working experience and bring this insight to the classroom (George 2014: 233). The average age of EUR/ISS students is 29, whereas at RUAS/IB, students are around 20 years old and have, on balance, recently completed their secondary education. The RUAS/IB bachelor program takes 4 years while the EUR/ISS master program lasts for 15 months. Teaching staff members at both universities have very diverse international backgrounds. In this section I describe the origins of the international programs at both universities.

Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University

The Institute of Social Studies (ISS) is established in 1952 and focusses on the field of development studies and international cooperation. EUR/ISS is located in The Hague and was an independent educational institution until 2009 when it became part of Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). The institute is housed in the heart of The Hague and most students live in the student housing complex behind the building. The majority of the students (ca 150 participants each year), attend a master program in Development Studies (ISS 2020). EUR/ISS study programmes are all taught in English and concern development economics, sociology, politics, public policy and management, governance, gender, employment, population, social security, children and youth, and human rights (ISS 2020).

ISS students are young and mid-career professionals with an average age of 29 (ISS Self-assessment Report 2017: 29). They have a diverse background in working at NGOs, ministries, financial institutions, universities or in the private sector. Some are journalists or activists. EUR/ISS aims to create a "learning environment that deepens understanding, enhances critical skills, broadens horizons, sensitizes towards difference and enhances communication skills" (ISS Self-assessment report 2017 Annexes II: 99). EUR/ISS aspires to contribute to an interconnected world in which global social justice is the norm, characterized by the "full and unfettered development of individuals and communities" (Four-year plan 2018-2022: 5). EUR/ISS aims to "provide top-quality education in policy-oriented critical social science by bringing together students and teachers from the Global South and North in a European environment" (ISS Self-assessment report 2017: 11). EUR/ISS alumnae should become "more competent professionals and/or researchers, global citizens and change agents who are able to work effectively on issues relating to global development, equity and social justice" (ISS Self-assessment report 2017: 11). Box 1 shows the vision, mission and core values achieved at EUR/ISS:

Our vision

The EUR/ISS vision is of an interconnected world in which social justice is the norm, with full and unfettered development of individuals and communities.

Our mission

Our mission is to enhance social justice and create a more equitable world. We do this by conducting societally relevant development-oriented research and by educating the next generation of development leaders from around the world.

Our core values

Throughout our history, the core values of ISS have remained the same: social justice and equity.

ISS describes the educational vision as the 'expedition model' (ISS Self-assessment report 2017: 26), based on a strong selection at the gate (admission criteria are strict, in terms of academic background, knowledge of English, motivation and work experience). "In the expedition model committed students are expected to succeed" (Self-assessment report 2017: 26), which results in a high number (~90 %) of nominal graduated students (ISS Self-assessment report 2017: 49). ISS "creates a learning environment that deepens understanding, enhances critical skills, broadens horizons, sensitizes towards difference and enhances communication skills" (Self-assessment report 2017 Annexes II: 99). Development Studies at ISS is inspired by and aspires to Freire's view of education (1970) as "the practice of freedom - the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world" (ISS Self-assessment report 2017: 9). Four of the 13 exit qualifications of the MA Development Studies programme at EUR/ISS concern intercultural awareness and learning, as presented in Appendix 7, Box 2.

International Business, Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences

In 2019, 39.091 students were enrolled at one of the 125 programs of Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences (Hogeschool Rotterdam 2020). The study programs have a close connection to the region of Rotterdam and cooperate with local organizations and businesses.

Most RUAS students did their prior (high) school education in a Dutch school, but 6.6 % of the student population of the first year studied in another country before, that is why these students count as 'international students' (Hogeschool Rotterdam 2020). This group came

to Rotterdam to complete a bachelor degree, but there is also a group of students which only study for one or two semesters at RUAS. The vision of RUAS reads: "Every student deserves the best possible higher professional education. Education in which the student is seen and known, has equal opportunities and is challenged to get the best out of themselves. The teaching team makes the difference. Teachers, researchers and professionals from the professional field learn with and from each other to provide the student with current and challenging education" (Bormans et al. 2016: 4). RUAS' strategy is based on 3 goals: strengthening and further developing basic quality; shaping inclusive education and developing education rich-in-context. There is a main focus on study success, because still a lot of students drop out and do not graduate with a diploma (Bormans et al. 2017: 7). Students at RUAS are "very diverse in the aspects of prior education, learning styles, background, home situation, life experience and ambitions" (RUAS 2020).

To work with comparable participants at EUR/ISS and RUAS/IB this research was conducted at the International Business programme at the 'Rotterdam Business School' (RBS), the most diverse department of this university: its three bachelor and three master programmes attract students from the larger Rotterdam area and beyond, as well as from countries all over the world (Gerretsen and Van Os 2018: 11). RBS counts approximately 3700 students, and over 270 international employees (academic and administrative). The International Business (IB) program is an international business course with intensive contacts with international partner universities and the (international) professional field (Self-evaluation IB Rotterdam 2019: 11). In 2018 the total student body of RUAS/IB consisted of 28 % international students; RBS has set a target of 30% international versus 70% domestic students to form the international classroom (Self-evaluation IB Rotterdam 2019: 23). The IB program is currently housed in an office building rented by RUAS because of safety issues in the original university building. Most students live in the surroundings of Rotterdam, many stay living in the families where they grew up (bachelor students mostly start their university careers at the age of 17). For international students there is a small housing campus. 'Inclusive education' receives a lot of attention in the university's organization. Pedagogical projects and teaching experiments are being rolled out in order to provide equal chances for everybody and to make the university a place where all students and staff members feel at home. Chair of the university board Bormans writes: "In our education we acknowledge the presence of differences. Our pedagogical and didactic approach is based on inclusiveness. Diversity is a given and we try to apply it as a strength. Excluding and stereotyping are discouraged; all students feel at home and we have high expectations for everyone. We offer all students

equal opportunities and challenge them to perform at their highest level. We do so by tuning into their varying backgrounds, personal situations, ambitions, motives and talents" (Bormans et al. 2016: 4). RUAS' positioning abroad very much focuses on the city of Rotterdam. Studying International Business at RUAS means 'studying in a bustling international and multi-cultural city and port: the biggest industrial and logistics hub of Europe' (Self-evaluation IB Rotterdam 2019: 23). In the curriculum of the four-year International Business program at RUAS (IB), intercultural competences are as important as other courses for a qualification in the international labour market, as well as for personal development. Teaching staff at RBS is has a higher diversity than elsewhere in RUAS, especially if one looks at the nationalities (Gerretsen and Van Os 2018: 12). The IB program at RUAS has 24 program learning outcomes, seven of which concerning intercultural competences, as presented in Appendix 7, Box 3.

Chapter 4
Intercultural learning at two universities in the Netherlands

This chapter is subdivided according to the five research questions presented in Chapter 1. Each section presents the findings along categories which have been developed on the basis of the responses by 30 student participants. The analysis includes perspectives from both ISS and RUAS for every category, as well as findings of commonalities and differences. I describe student observations and experiences using their quotes. Students with * behind their names preferred to use a nickname or alternate nationality. These are personal answers to my main question: How have students in intercultural learning environments learned from each other? First, I will describe the outcomes of the interviews and discussions with students of the EUR/ISS program, followed by the RUAS/IB participants. Finally, I will explore the commonalities and differences between the two groups.

4.1 Expectations of students regarding their peers

My first sub-question in this research concerned the expectations of students regarding their peers, and how these expectations were met.

Diversity

The promotional pictures at the ISS website in order to recruit students are attractive to many students, although some say they know these are advertisements and situations where everybody is smiling in a happy mixed-colored group in the sun, are seldom seen in reality. But most say they were positively influenced by the promotional materials because it gave them the feeling of being welcome and not being alone. As Tayame, (EUR/ISS) said: *"Looking at this, I thought it's just very simple: you come to a community where you have different people and you are welcome in that community"*. Also Justine (EUR/ISS) stated that looking at the promotional pictures made her feel curious and wonder where the people who were shown came from, *"What languages do they speak? What kind of food do they eat?"*. It made her want to get a scholarship for ISS. Rhondeni (EUR/ISS) felt also motivated to apply at ISS as *"you feel the connection when you see this"*. For her, it was the great diversity with which ISS presented itself that fit with what she was looking for. Some students also mentioned insecurities that were triggered. Justine (EUR/ISS), for example, talked about her fear of not being interesting enough for fellow students: *"Will my experiences be interesting enough? Will I be able to share with them?"*.

At RUAS/IB expectations concerning diversity were not always met. Bianca (RUAS/IB), was disappointed about the diversity in her class: *"At my first day my class was put in a classroom and I was sitting on the first row. Everyone was behind me and the mentor-student asked: 'Who is international here?' I raised my hand and then she looked like… and I was looking behind me and no one else raised their hand. Later another guy appeared, he was from Venezuela and I thought: 'Thank God I'm not the only international in here.' I mean, that's not what I expected in an international program."*

Most interviewees chose for the content of the study program first, for the possibility of receiving a study grant and then for the presence of a variety of people and possibility to improve language skills. Like Aleksandra (RUAS/IB): *"I was really interested in Japan and business culture linking to Japan, that's why I came to RUAS. Diversity wasn't speaking to me at all, that wasn't the interesting part for me. But that was something I discovered here, which is actually amazing because it showed me totally different perspectives. It allows me to look differently at my own culture, my own country and people."*

Exposure to Students from all over the World

Many students had expected their contacts with students from other nationalities as more intense. Elle* (EUR/ISS) wondered: *"When ISS is multicultural, it should not just be concentrated to students from the Global South. There aren't a lot of students coming from the Global North. We are in a Dutch University, but there aren't a lot of Dutch students."* Tayame (EUR/ISS) made just a few friends from other countries whom *"I feel comfortable with or who also feel comfortable hanging out with me. Even though we wish to have more friends from different places. But somehow it's not working".*

At RUAS/IB it is sometimes difficult to connect with international peers, because there are only a few. Gil (RUAS/IB) anticipated before arrival the mix of Dutch and international students would be 50-50. *"I expected that everybody would mingle but then the Dutch just stayed with each other, that was different than I expected…"* Roan (RUAS/IB) explained he likes to connect with the international students, because *"they are in a new environment and for me everything is also new in some way".* Yuhui (RUAS/IB), a Chinese migrant student who lives in Rotterdam, pointed out *"most of the international students think of me as a completely international student. And when I speak Dutch they are surprised. I'm familiar with both my own culture and the culture here and if I'm talking to Chinese people, I act the Chinese way. And then if I talk to Dutch people I also adjust".*

4.2 Learning Formats

The second question concerned the ways in which students experienced different learning formats and how they students learned from each other. Students gave examples of different didactical approaches they liked and disliked.

Group Work

Many EUR/ISS students mention the Making of Development (MoD) course as a significant one in their learning process as a student. In this course at the start of the program groups are formed by the staff, mixing nationalities, genders and ages. In a group of 5 or 6 students, assignments are being completed and discussions take place, led by a senior student. For most students this is their first experience in cooperating globally and this confronts them with their assumptions; they describe it as challenging, especially because a graded group assignment is part of the course. Julia* (EUR/ISS): *"I think what was good in MoD (Making of Development introduction course, HK) for example, that they really cared that we were in mixed groups. That was enriching because when you looked at the setting of the group, most areas of the world were represented, so they didn't put only Latin Americans in a group, but always people from Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America were represented".*

Interviewees who say they would have liked more guidance in intercultural communication, give this as an example of group work that should be applied more often in the EUR/ISS program, but some prefer self-selected groups; they perceive it more as an individual student's own responsibility to open up to different other students, like NC (EUR/ISS) who said it was his task to make the best out of it: *"Maybe I made mistakes, maybe sometimes my working groups went better or worse. But I was not really expecting the institution to teach me this."*

Many students said working in small groups (2-4 p), formed by the teacher works best to talk about diversity and to share personal stories; in that way they felt less shy to talk in English, or to ask questions that might be considered offensive. Ewa (EUR/ISS): *"You need a teacher to direct and actively search for things that people share with each other. Just mixing students isn't enough. You have to have an activity that works. To get brotherhood. Doing something together to act like a team".* Julia* (EUR/ISS): *"In our MoD group we had people from Russia and from China. They were at some point concerned. They didn't want to have our video-assignment on YouTube because they felt: there is critical content in there and they didn't feel comfortable to have it online. If you are not in this group, you don't get this kind of aspects and you see how much it could possibly impact the life and you get a better understanding".*

At RUAS/IB, making your own groups is mostly not possible, told Romynique (RUAS/IB): *"We didn't really get to make a lot of the choices ourselves. We were just put in groups, and teachers would usually keep in mind that there was a fair distribution so it wouldn't be just a group of Dutch people and a group of internationals".* And Aleksandra (RUAS/IB) mentioned for her it was a positive fact that the university mixed classes every year: *"First I was against that because I like sticking in one place and sit with it until the end, but after a while I find it really funny and it's exciting: with whom am I going to be in the new class? It actually kind of forces you to meet new people and to go out from your comfort zone".* Experiences were not always positive. At RUAS/IB, Bianca explained why, in her eyes, it was difficult: *"I have very high expectations of my work and I want to do my best. I need to meet my own standards and I always want a better grade, more than 8 (on a 1-10 schale, HK). But my Dutch peers said: 'We only need 5.5 to pass, we're fine so…' I never understood that. We didn't fight but I was the one telling them 'We need to do this this, this, this' and I put a deadline and when it came they just wrote some sentences and said 'Sorry, I was busy.' I got very angry and I ended up writing everything for the whole team. I really was not sure if I even should put their names on my work, but we were a team and I took that risk so they all got across but three of them were free riders".*

Interculturality as Learning Issue

At ISS intercultural learning mostly occurs implicitly, argued many students who sometimes missed guidance, like Laura (EUR/ISS), who stated: *"I believe that you could make the environment more inclusive if you would provide more tools. On how to act and react on cultural conflicts, conflicts that might arise from the diverse backgrounds".* Natalia (EUR/ISS) agreed with her: *"I do think that the university takes for granted that we are an intercultural group. Besides mixing up the group, they don't do much to actually. They don't have an interchange dialogue that actually goes into your own backgrounds, so I think it's more instrumental in a way, but I don't see that they actually support us actively".*

At RUAS/IB students receive a ten weeks course on 'intercultural communication' in their first semester, and during the whole 4 years they are being monitored on their learning process concerning intercultural competences. In group sessions and individual conversations with their mentor, students are being prepared for an internship abroad and for the international business world. The teaching team puts a lot of effort in these sessions, explains Natalia (RUAS/IB) *"You have always to reflect on your intercultural competence; you write a personal development plan with questions like: what did you do to be aware of the cultural differences within your group? Were there any difficulties like that? And you have to reflect on that. Reflection is really important within the study".* Lea, (RUAS/IB) reflected year after year on her actions and how she developed intercultural competences: *"Am I really trying to avoid microaggressions? Am I being respectful*

towards other cultures? What do I do unconsciously and how can I avoid that in future?". She said, she did not really notice it at first, but in her 4th year she eventually valued this. Aleksandra (RUAS/IB), also as a fourth-year student, said in hindsight she often just wrote the essays to be graded, but learned from the individual conversations with mentors: *"Then you can really talk about yourself and see what you could really work on to be a more open-minded and interculturally competent person".*

4.3 Difficulties in Intercultural Classroom Settings

During the interviews, students mentioned many difficulties they faced in the intercultural classroom settings, something that cannot be ignored when answering the main question.

Emphasis on Nationalities

At EUR/ISS the introduction week is an important moment to connect with other students; in this week there are sessions about living in the Netherlands and communication with others. Students perceive this as very useful, but because they just arrived and are so full of many impressions, they only remember very few things afterwards. Some interviewees mention that during the introduction, the emphasis on 'who is from where' is most present. They would have liked to look for other, border-crossing similarities. Students say at EUR/ISS your origin and your group of peers from the same country or continent is often emphasized, by both staff and students. On the one side it feels secure and comfortable, especially at the start of the program, to find peers of your own background, but it is sometimes oppressive as well: students feel they are being reduced to their country of origin. Rachel (EUR/ISS), told me in an agitated tone of voice, she felt her nationality was more important than her personality: *"My name is not Nigeria, I'm just from there and there are a lot of people in Nigeria!"*. When asked, many EUR/ISS students describe the regional segregation as a serious problem and something that does not match the intentions of EUR/ISS; individually they feel powerless to change this and at the same time they also enjoy 'their group'. Javier (EUR/ISS) confirmed it was easier and more comfortable to hang out with peers from Latin America, but he also added: *"I never had the opportunity to know these class of people in Columbia. I belong to a part of the society where meeting upper classes is virtually impossible, and ISS opened for me the opportunity to know these people, to talk with them about our country. We had the feeling that we were equal, just there"*. In work groups for the courses, many students experienced what Tayame (EUR/ISS) described: *"Formation of groups on racial background is really very visible."* Laura (EUR/ISS) mentioned a staff member told her that *"every year there is an 'African group', there is a 'Latino group' that is friends*

with the Europeans or Westerners, and then there's the 'Asian group'. I was irritated by that sentence because I thought: If you know this, maybe that's a very clear sign that people need tools to connect more".

Language Skills

Especially at the start of their study programs, students felt limited in their participation because of language issues. Laura (EUR/ISS) noticed: *"The same people were speaking over and over again. And these were people that were very confident in their language".* And Tsitsi (EUR/ISS) felt insecure: *"If someone comes from a country where they speak Spanish and then they have to interact with me, who speaks English […]. I don't want it to be a stressful time for them because they have to struggle to communicate with me".* Michael, (EUR/ISS), who studied in the Netherlands before, made an important decision: *"Then I did religious studies. It was a small group and there were only Dutch and Indonesian students. I only mingled and hung out with my Indonesian friends. My English did not improve. Now here in ISS I met a lot of people, I feel confident to talk in English and we talk English all the time".*

At RUAS, improving English language skills is often one reason for participating in the programme: Rominique (RUAS/IB) had to come up with 3 goals every year and a schedule to achieve that goals. *"My first one was on only speaking English with everybody!"* Mili (RUAS/IB) expected that everybody's English would be really good *"But that wasn't the case, so I got disappointed in that regard".*

Racism and Stereotypes [1]

Some black students experienced discrimination by teaching staff (lower grades) and by peers as well. Some white students mentioned that they are being held accountable for their privilege time and again, although some said their only privilege is their skin colour; their socioeconomic background for example is often challenging, they said. Tayame* (EUR/ISS) expected more guidance by staff: *"The fact that you have this diverse group of students in your class and you are teaching them doesn't mean that you are dealing with the issue, it goes beyond finding yourself in a system that preaches anti-racism among students and staff and going beyond that in doing it consciously: How do I use my capacity as an individual teacher to influence this."* And Rachel (EUR/ISS) wondered why *"I am not seeing any black professor yet."* She adds that if you are serious about your grades, *"you have to follow that (Western academic, HK) system because it's the system that gives you grades".*

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[1] In the interviews and focus group at RUAS/IB, my participants did not make any comments concerning racism or stereotyping, although my topic list was the same (and not focused on this issue). This does of course not mean those matters would not occur at RUAS/IB.

Some other students mentioned their doubts in sharing stories from their background, like Resty (EUR/ISS): *"All the cultures in class made things very interesting, but it was also very challenging. Coping with people that you barely know is a bit difficult. Sometimes when you said something in class, for a certain group it's not their expectation and it's boring; your country is not something they look up to learn from"* and Ewa (EUR/ISS): *"I had the feeling I was being attacked in my way of life, being European. Although it can't be that we're just evil and bad"*. Students also sometimes felt forced to collaborate with 'their own group' as a social obligation. Rachel (EUR/ISS) told about an experience at the multi-day study trip: *"When I saw the hotel room division I was shocked. Is it supposed to be normal that all African students are in one room? I can adapt anywhere, but I realized that somehow all Africans were in one room. All Latinos were in one, Indonesians one, Indians the same. I don't like that. We are in the same track, right? We are supposed to be able to mix together and you know these things, but I'm still pushed in my African group. No, that's not because I hate my African group, but I like also to step out there"*.

4.4 Influences on Intercultural Learning and 'Sense of Belonging'

The fourth question aimed to investigate students' 'sense of belonging' to the university and how this played a role in their intercultural learning process.

Building

Most ISS students I interviewed do think their study environment has added extra added value to their study time. They report that they have learned most intercultural competences by being with people in the same study environment, at the institute or the residences. Julia* (EUR/ISS) explained: *"I decided to apply for the ISS student house because I thought it's an easy way to connect to people and have a social network from the start and also to support and help each other with the assignments and with the journey you are in. That worked out really well"*. The majority of students from EUR/ISS say they feel very connected to the building. Ankita (EUR/ISS) said she learned plenty of things socializing in the Butterfly, the in-house café: *"I learned about Marxism at about 1:00 AM…"* She definitely felt a sense of belonging at ISS: *"I actually feel bad for the people who have to experience online learning and <u>not</u> be in the ISS building"*.

At RUAS/IB the housing situation does not make most students and staff feel at home; they are temporary housed in an office building in Rotterdam's office district. But not everybody complains: Romynique (RUAS/IB): *"[…] the 7th and the 9th floor were pretty much our floors. In the hallways we met our teachers and classmates and people from the other programs. So, you felt*

like you were in your own special place, this really helped with recognizing people and making you feel part of the group". Being student of a business program, it can even be an advantage*: "Our school looks like an office but now that I work in an office for my internship and I feel more familiar with the environment around me",* says Aleksandra (RUAS/IB). When asked if there they experience a sense of belonging, RUAS/IB students mention their relationships with peers first. The university was the place where they met, but is not binding them, which some regret. Roan (RUAS/IB) missed the sense of belonging: *"It would improve my learning because it gives more of a motivation to learn because you are more attached and you don't want to lose it or get kicked out".*

Friendships

An important reason for regional (as opposite to global) friendships is the food (this is often mentioned, as opposite to, for example, religion): students who live on campus like to share food, especially the food from their own culinary tradition. By sharing and cooking food, friendships are made. Kevin (EUR/ISS): *"My closest friends are from Thailand, Philippines, we can connect easier, as we have a similar taste in foods, so that means that we have a similar preference about restaurants. Then we can go together".* Xime (EUR/ISS): *"At the end of the Ramadan I was invited to the big dinner, and having the opportunity to share these things, felt like I was travelling without traveling. For me, food is so important, so I was trying to have dinner with many people just to get to know them".* Teachers and support staff recognize the importance of eating together: class presentations are often accompanied by a pot luck and the international day where everybody brings culinary specialities is a highlight of the academic year.

Community

At EUR/ISS there are often events or parties in which the majority of the students participate enthusiastically. For Justine (EUR/ISS) this was the first time she felt that she belonged to the university community. She played guitar for her own performance and that of the Nigerian and the Chinese group, and remembered: *"The idea of those people just wearing different costumes, different designs, different music. It was really overwhelming, but at the same time I felt: I belong because we all celebrate our differences".* Mauricio* (EUR/ISS) contemplated: *"One of the most interesting things of the University is that you can identify from the very beginning with a set of values, a set of principles that are part of the University, so you can find that there is some kind of philosophical approach to the disciplines of Social Sciences. And that's a special mark in everything that you do so you can identify with this set of values and that builds an identity inside the University".* And he continues in a dramatic tone of voice: *"When they closed my email account, I felt so empty: 'Oh my god, this is not possible' ".* Ankita (EUR/ISS) explains ISS gave students a platform, that is for her *"a symbol, it is obviously*

attracting a certain kind of people and putting them all together". To Justine (EUR/ISS), the sudden confrontation with the Covid 19 virus and being in lock down together made the connection increase: *"Maybe because of all of us going through this bad situation. It's really saddening, but it forced us to be more caring towards each other. To be more empathetic and to create a sense of solidarity even though it's from a distance in our online classes".*

4.5 Added Value of Intercultural Classroom Participation

Lastly, I will endeavour to answer the question what students ultimately see as the added value of their intercultural learning experiences.

Career Perspectives

Tayame (EUR/ISS) said her confidence grew being a student at EUR/ISS: *"I have been able to survive all of this, so I don't think I will find it difficult., living in a different country anymore, when I would get the opportunity to do my PhD somewhere else in Europe, wherever it is, I can survive it, because I've lived through this setbacks in this multicultural environment and all that has happened has moulded me and giving me confidence".* Michael (EUR/ISS) has made friends from different places and thinks that could help him in future: *"Maybe one day when someone becomes a leader and wants to hire someone from South- East Asia the thinks of me. I have a global network, when I go to Philippines, I have a place, when I go to Nigeria, I have a place. No need to pay a hotel! They become my tour guides!".*

Natalia (RUAS/IB) just finished her first year, but knew already the added value for her would be being *"part of the international community where I have access to a high range of cultures and have different perspectives, it brings me in contact with people from all of the world which means that this is not just a good source of getting good friends, but also good connections, which might be really valuable for my career".*

Discovery of Different Ways of Behaving (Reflection)

Elle* (EUR/ISS), told that where she comes from, she always has to think how it would be perceived before she says something: *"That's something that I learned here: to let go. The courses that I liked allowed me to talk. There are just instances when you feel like you were invited to really share your experience, and you have a topic and it really hits close to home. If you share it, it will just make the discussion more meaningful and rich. Even though you had this notion before that when you speak out, you'll be judged. I learned to speak up and share".* Ximena, (EUR/ISS) says: *"humility is one of the things that I'm taking with me. Just shut up and listen. That's so important".*

Mili (RUAS/IB) learned about migration whilst studying IB: *"There are a lot of Dutch people with migrant background, I did not understand before, because in Bulgaria we don't have that, or I was never exposed to them. Here are people from Turkey, Morocco, and other backgrounds. There was even a guy, he was a refugee in Bulgaria, he went to Netherlands with his family. He was supposed to be a Dutch student, although he had his international background. I got a bit lost: who's from where? But it's so worth it because now you can see the differences and you can appreciate them. I enjoy meeting things that I've never seen before, and that I don't understand, and sitting down and asking the dumbest questions so that I start from zero and I learn where people are coming from".* And Aleksandra, (RUAS/IB) reflected: *"Looking back, I think I would do it again because of the whole new perspective. I didn't come here for the intercultural experience. I receive it like an additional present and I'm really happy about that because now I'm coming back to Poland and I see things differently, that's really amazing".*

4.6 In Sum: Student Perspectives at EUR/ISS and RUAS

Commonalities

As discussed in Section 3.3, the academic circumstances at EUR/ISS and RUAS/IB are different from one another in terms of topic of study, student population, duration, etcetera. The accounts of students from both institutions presented in the previous sections, however, show that their perspectives on intercultural learning are often similar; students from both groups have an intention to be(come) interculturally minded persons, although they say they need and like to be nudged to get into contact with people who are very different in class situations. They admit that cooperating in more homogeneous groups is often easier. Connecting with Dutch students poses challenges in both programmes. At EUR/ISS there are a select few (this program is very costly and there are little scholarships for Dutch), and at RUAS/IB this is a majority group with a different lifestyle in which they are often difficult to approach for new contacts. Both student groups appreciate it if the diversity in the classroom is being used for learning issues, as long as it is in a positive, non-excluding and non-stereotyping way. Students claim that being part of an intercultural group has added value because of unexpected learnings from (conversations with) peers, often outside of the university classroom. Friendships and social life are important and the university community is a place where this often starts. In both groups, students are more positive about their intercultural learning process in hindsight; some distance is needed to reflect on it.

Differences

The largest differences, collected in discussions with students and staff, concern how intercultural learning is being addressed by the institution and appreciated by students. At RUAS/IB, intercultural learning is a scheduled part of the 4-year personal professional development trajectory. Guided by teaching staff in small mentor groups students are being monitored in their process of becoming interculturally aware and competent in intercultural communication. In year 1 and 2, this is mostly seen as an obligation to prepare them for the internship abroad but looking back after this experience in year 3, students value the general learnings they gained from these aspects of their program.

At EUR/ISS intercultural learning implicitly seems to be an evident part of the program. Next to the plenary introduction program there is little formal concern for intercultural learning and outcomes are not explicitly being assessed. Students write several essays for the different courses and the idea is that narrow-mindedness has implications for the argumentation and consequently the grade of an essay, which is not explicitly specified. The program starts with the overlapping course 'Making of Development' in mixed groups with a group assignment. This course is highly appreciated, not least because of the practical collaboration and shared responsibility for the final video assessment.

EUR/ISS students, especially alumnae, talk passionately about the diverse perspectives they learned and friendships they made, and the institute invests a lot in requirements to facilitate these intercultural encounters. The university building and student residences feel for them as the heart of the community and events and parties are popular. As a result, even very critical students say they experience a sense of belonging to EUR/ISS. In this respect the community building at RUAS/IB deserves more attention, according to participants of this research, for they say they perceive little sense of belonging: not much attachment to the building, only coincidental friendships, and events are only attended by a small specific group.

Chapter 5
Lessons from Intercultural Learning in Practice

This research paper gives an answer to the question what student perspectives are on intercultural classrooms in higher education in the Netherlands and how students in an intercultural setting learn from each other. Students from EUR/ISS and RUAS/IB were my key participants; their stories mattered most to get a sharp image. In order to understand more of the organizational and pedagogical backgrounds of the programs, I also talked with staff members at both institutions. I compared my findings with the literature on intercultural learning.

At both EUR/ISS and RUAS/IB study programs appoint in their intended learning outcomes intercultural competences and reflection (Appendix 7, boxes 2 and 3), but the approaches are very different. Chapter 4 showed the effects on students and this chapter discusses the possible reasons for the different approaches and consequences.

At EUR/ISS the intercultural learning outcomes are not explicitly assessed; ISS students are professional adults, this seems a reason why training on communication and collaboration is considered unnecessary. Another reason might be the fear of teaching Eurocentric intercultural competence training and thereby confirming the power imbalance which is criticized (among others by Gorski 2008, Aman 2014, Dervin 2016). Although there is a need (mentioned by many participants in this research) for learning skills to cooperate and work with each other in a satisfactory, but preferably optimal way, EUR/ISS seems reluctant and keeping on believing the 'melting pot' of cultures will do. George argues (2014: 142) mid-career students in 'European Schools of Development Studies' like EUR/ISS, should be approached as 'self-educators', she sees the role of faculty as *coaches* rather than *teachers* (2014: 39). This insinuates teaching would imply domination by staff, and coaching would not, which I think is too straight forward. I believe this coaching role of faculty perfectly suits the guidance of personal intercultural learning processes. It is unfortunate that the 'collateral learnings' in the courses are now not being pointed out, that students are not challenged to consciously appoint and analyse their personal intercultural learning steps; the things that they learned in that field stay unnamed and invisible. Reflection on personal awareness is not actively stimulated as an intended goal of the study period, although it is, as said before, stated in the official exam outcomes. It seems like EUR/ISS thrives on the informal, the goodwill and the intrinsic motivation of the students. The investments in facilitating quality

study environments (building, student housing) are sensible: research indicates that "activating and cooperative learning environments foster peer and faculty interaction, and in turn, that this interaction positively affects generic learning outcomes such as levels of engagement and the decision to continue studying" (Meeuwisse et al. 2010: 533). There is an introduction program, a counselling team, there are various committees and much is being achieved this way, but there are problematic occurrences at EUR/ISS which are not always noticed, e.g. cooperation problems and racist behaviour. To grow understanding and fight prejudices, some guidance and reflection on personal cultural awareness are often beneficial, argue Charles and Deardorff (2020). Immersion does have a positive influence, as the contact hypothesis states, in groups of people with equal status, a common goal, where there is cooperation and support (Allport 1954, Pettigrew& Tropp 2006, Lub et al. 2011) but making a 'cross-cultural immersion' to an intercultural learning experience requires more effort (Bennett 2010: 10).

At RUAS, the intercultural competence training is simply a part of the curriculum, students are being trained in intercultural communication for study and business and they are being monitored and assessed. Especially in their first years, students are critical about these trainings on personal skills and write the essays 'only for the grades'. The reflection exercises are not popular, maybe because many students "tend to be more interested in learning about the Other than in engaging in a journey of self-exploration and awareness" (Yep 2014: 343), but RUAS adheres to Dewey's (1910) vision "We do not learn from experience, we learn from reflection on experience". The fact that RUAS so consciously chooses to monitor students in their intercultural awareness has problematic sides (like the possible use of biased assessment instruments), but it does give direction to the personal learning and reflection process of students. In fact, this way is consistent with the other content of the business program.

In my conversations with students from both institutions the assignments in sub groups were always mentioned as a source of intercultural learning, although they were not always joyful. As described by Pedersen (1991: 21) peer students from the same background provide emotional support, help develop and maintain a sense of identity and connecting is therefore easier (Ward and Kennedy 1993: 243); that is why most students choose for this comfortable option in case the group-making is not managed. This matches with a study by Volet and Ang (2012: 34), which states: "Unless the benefits of cultural mix are perceived as outweighing any potential drawbacks, students will spontaneously choose the less emotionally straining option of forming teams with peers from the same cultural background". But research

by Naber and Knippels (2013: 79) concluded that many students prefer to be nudged to get outside their usual group of friends. When teachers determine the division of working groups they break through group formation along the lines of language, nationality or ethnicity and although group work in diverse groups is often frustrating, students value this. Meanwhile, teachers often mention they do not feel like forcing students because of safety and inclusion considerations (Albeda et al. 2020: 33-34). When students are being asked on intercultural learning outcomes *in* courses, these group assignments are always mentioned as enriching experiences, especially when the discussion goes beyond the stereotypical ideas of nations and students are being given room to share personal stories.

Concluding, I can say that students of intercultural classes both at EUR/ISS and RUAS/IB do experience added value of a learning environment where they have the opportunity to meet and cooperate with students from very different backgrounds. Even though the two academic environments are different, at both places they learn consciously and unconsciously to deal with different expectations, conflicts and ways of cooperation and they experience things that would not have been there in a homogeneous group. Especially after they have finished the program, they emphasize this value. Although the university environment and the (organization and content of the) classes are of great importance, participants emphasize the time they spent with peers, but outside classes (in the breaks, after classes, in the campus buildings) was crucial for their intercultural learning. Sometimes making friends turned out to take more effort than they anticipated but, in many cases, it improved the sense of belonging students felt with the university community.

Cooperating in intercultural groups in assignments is oftentimes perceived as difficult. Some students mention they would have liked more initiative by teachers to forming genuine intercultural groups; without guidance they choose to cooperate in homogenous groups in order to reduce the risk of strained teamwork and disappointing results.

At RUAS/IB, a lot of attention is paid to the student's explicit intercultural learning process, whereas this is more an implicit learning outcome at EUR/ISS. Nevertheless, alumnae of EUR/ISS praise the intercultural encounters they had and the many learnings they took from that. For both institutions there are pursuable opportunities in order to improve students' intercultural experiences. RUAS/IB should give more attention to their ideal of a university environment which is more contributing to students' sense of belonging, and EUR/ISS can make an improvement in coaching students in their process of intercultural learning, cooperating and reflecting.

Epilogue

"If people 'of different cultures' are to meet, it must be as people, as persons, for it is only thus we can meet. And then the stage is set for something that can foster mutual respect and understanding – or struggle."
(Wikan 2002: 158)

Becoming an EUR/ISS student after 20 years of teaching was a very good decision which I would recommend every colleague. Practicing new unfamiliar behaviour, making mistakes, experiencing discomfort, and sharing and discussing these experiences with diverse peers is for me the ideal way of lifelong learning. My own 30 month MA study amongst international peers was inspirational and only served to further stimulate me into researching this topic. The different perspectives provided by my participants and other contributors to the research project, have enriched my own view on intercultural learning. Moreover they reinforced my commitment to contributing to inclusive learning environments as a teacher.

Appendices

STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON INTERCULTURAL CLASSROOMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE NETHERLANDS

RESEARCH PAPER BY HARRIET KOS - 495601

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Master of Arts in Development Studies
Major: Social Justice Perspectives

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RESEARCH QUESTION

Students' perspectives on intercultural classrooms in higher education in the Netherlands: how do students in an intercultural setting learn from each other?

What are the expectations of students regarding their peers?
How does the study environment stimulate students in sharing stories?
Which preferences do students have when cooperating in groups?
When reflecting on their learning, which were the most powerful learning formats?

Keywords: diverse global classroom dynamics, being included, sense of belonging

OBJECTIVES AND DEFINITIONS: LEARNING AND INTERACTING IN INTERCULTURAL STUDENT GROUPS

International study and exchange has magical appeal to many people: becoming a 'global citizen' would be highly desirable, although the conception of this concept differs from person to person. This research aims to show what comes after the attraction of the brilliant marketing brochures universities spread over the world in order to welcome students from far away. The research shows what students experience when they are part of an intercultural group, and how they deal with and reflect on the approaches universities take in order to optimize the learning process.

RESEARCH METHODS

Next to my theoretical research I will use data collected by ISS and RUAS in their self-assessment for the purpose of the accreditations. My field research will consist of interviews and focus group discussions with ISS students and students from Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences. I would like to interview a wide range of students, individually and/or in (online) focus groups. I would like to evaluate their experiences, struggles and marvels while being part of an intercultural academic group, and compare them with my own observations.

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

I am looking for (ex-) students who are/were taking part in an international study program at Erasmus' Institute of Social Studies (ISS) or Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences (RUAS). In July - September 2020 I will conduct online interviews of max. 1 hour. I make no demands with regard to successful or unsuccessful study results, on the contrary: the vision of every student is a valuable contribution to my research.

Would you like to be interviewed, or be part of a focus group discussion?
I will make sure your participation will be applied anonymously, if you like. You will be interviewed in a (online) space where you can be sure the only ones who hear you, are the ones you see. Participants will be assured of being able to speak freely and I will inform you about the way I process your quotes.
It would be great if you would be willing to join! I am sure your input will be of great value. In case you have any queries or doubts about any of the above, please let me know!

Please contact me: Harriet Kos +31 6 412 403 41   h.kos@hr.nl

Appendix 2

Conversation starter: PR materials by EUR/ISS and RUAS

Appendix 3

Topics and questions

Students perspectives on intercultural classes in HE.

Topic list composed in a brainstorm session with EUR/ISS alumnae in June 2020.

Start: CONSENT; Recording

1. Background of Student

   Name, nationality, how long in NL, which program and institute, living in student community? Have you been studying in another country or in an international program before? Have you been exposed to many people from other countries before?

2. Background education

   What is the student population at your institute like? How many Dutch/international students? Everything taught in English? Why did you decide to study in NL?

   Expectations

3. I will show you some pictures that are used for marketing purposes for international programs at your institution; did you come across this kind of promotion before you applied? What did you think about this? What do these pictures tell future students, in your opinion? Were you attracted by this kind of images when you were looking for a study program and why?

4. What were your expectations in terms of intercultural learning before you came to EUR/ISS or RUAS/IB? (Later: And after?)

   Definition

5. How do you understand the word 'diversity' when we talk about your student population? (nationality, race, religion, gender…)

6. How do you understand the word 'multicultural', or would you prefer 'intercultural'?

   In class

7. Do you think your curriculum and the study activities are especially designed for a diverse student population? How do you notice this?

8. Is there a difference in the style of teaching compared to education in your own country?

9. Does language play an important role in interaction between students?
10. Can you give me an example of something you learned that you think you wouldn't have if the class was not diverse?
11. How do students learn together in the classes you had? Mixed project groups? Forced combinations of people? What happens and how is this cooperation?
12. What are the challenges to study in different cultural settings?
13. Group dynamics: was group think an occasional occurrence and were the groups more diverse or polarized?
14. Was there enough 'diverse' participation by your peers? As expected?

Teaching

15. Did teachers encourage everybody's participation?
16. Were peers from diverse backgrounds (in your experience) motivated to tell stories, personal and otherwise?
17. How did teachers use that diversity? Or take advantage of it?
18. What settings encouraged you to talk about your experiences? Anything you liked or disliked?
19. Did you have other spaces to share and learn from others?

Emotions

20. How did you mostly feel during the program? (welcome or alone or discriminated within the diversity of the group or…)
21. Have your feelings changed throughout the year/duration of the program? What was the difference between your feelings in the beginning and the end?
22. Do/did you feel a 'sense of belonging' to your school/peers/university building/staff? Please describe this. How important was this for you? (Current students: did this change after the classes became online, and how?)

Reflection

23. Would you have an advice to yourself, to EUR/ISS, RUAS/IB, to the teaching staff when you could go back in time to the start of your study period here, in terms of learning etc.?
24. What could be improved in the system of your institute?
25. How has studying *in an intercultural setting* benefitted you?

END: anonym or name using? Possibility to withdraw and announce consent e-mail.

Appendix 4

CBS Statline figures: numbers of students

In the academic year 2019-2020, 463 382 students in the Netherlands were registered in universities of applied sciences, 306 895 students in research universities. 245 262 of these students had a migration background. The term 'migrant student' is used for both students who lived already in the Netherlands but were born elsewhere and students who came to this country for their study program or for an exchange year (CBS Statline 2020).
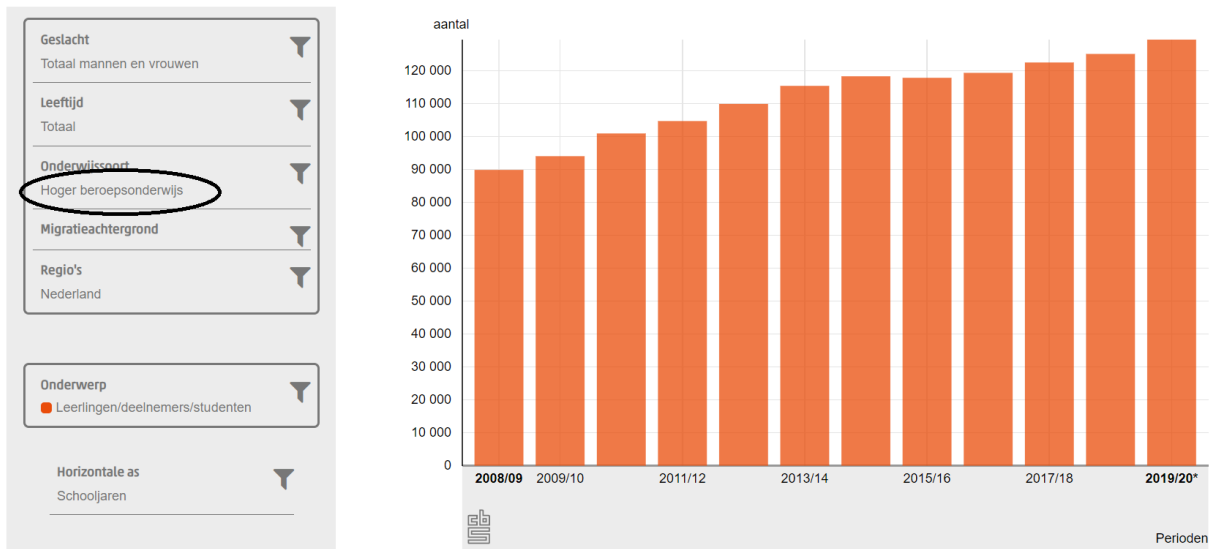
Figure. 1

Total amount of male and female students with migration backgrounds enrolled in Universities of Applied Sciences (Hoger beroepsonderwijs) 2008-2019.
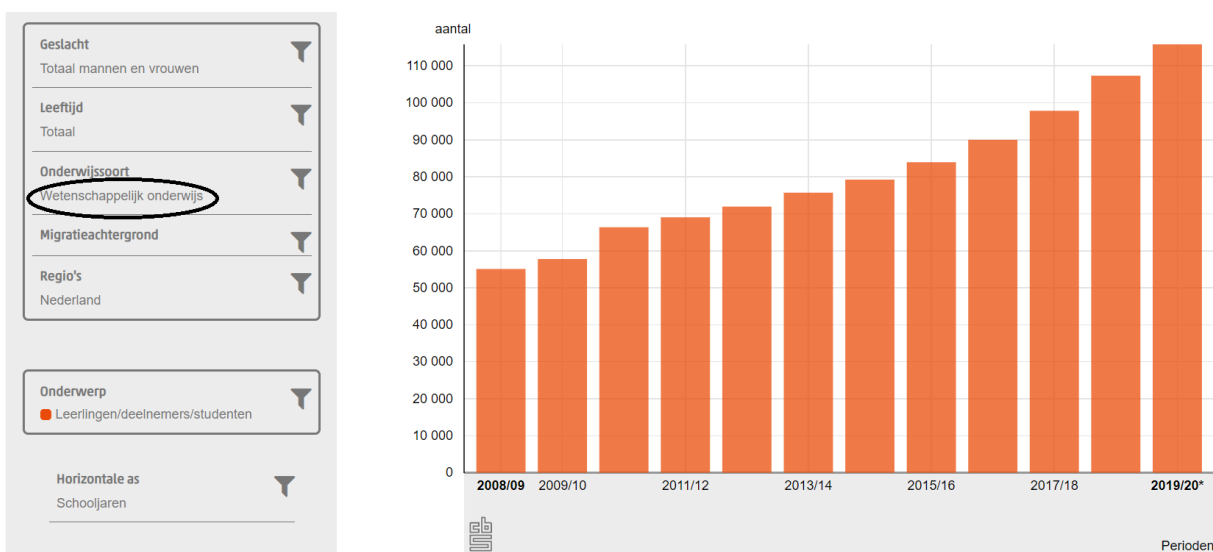
Figure 2

Total amount of male and female students with migration backgrounds enrolled in Research Universities (Wetenschappelijk onderwijs) 2008-2019.

49

Figures on numbers of international students by ICEF Monitor (2019), based on numbers by Nuffic (2019), which only counts students that came to the Netherlands for the purpose of study (not all students with a migrant background).
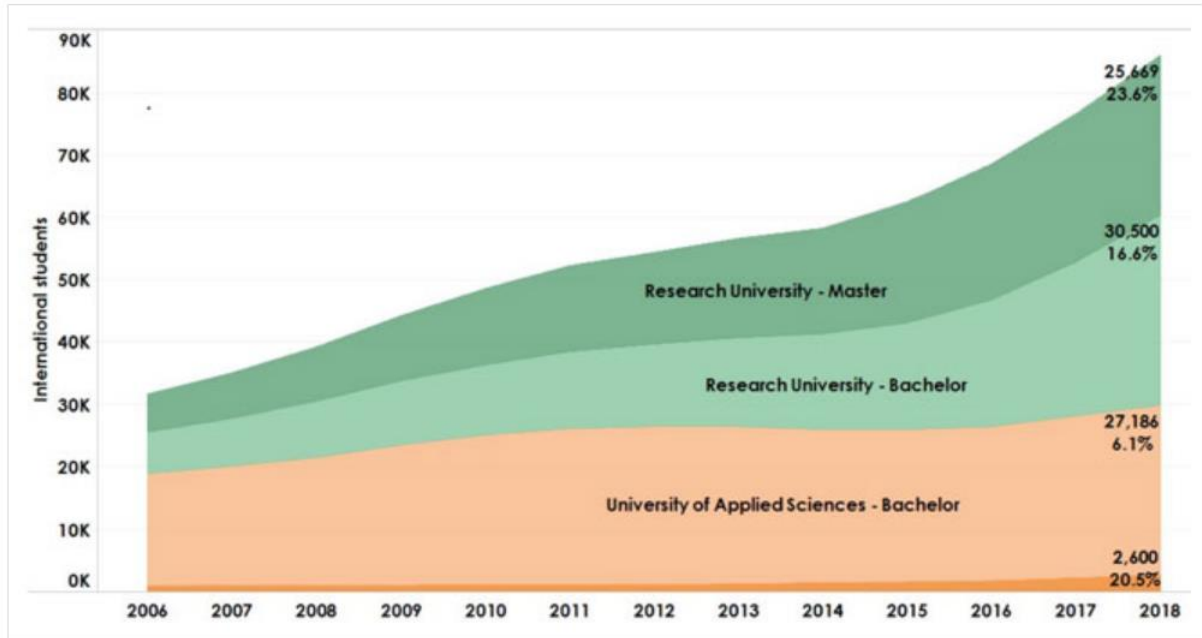
Figure 3

Total number of foreign degree-seeking students in the Netherlands, 2006–2018, by institution type and level of study. (Nuffic 2019).
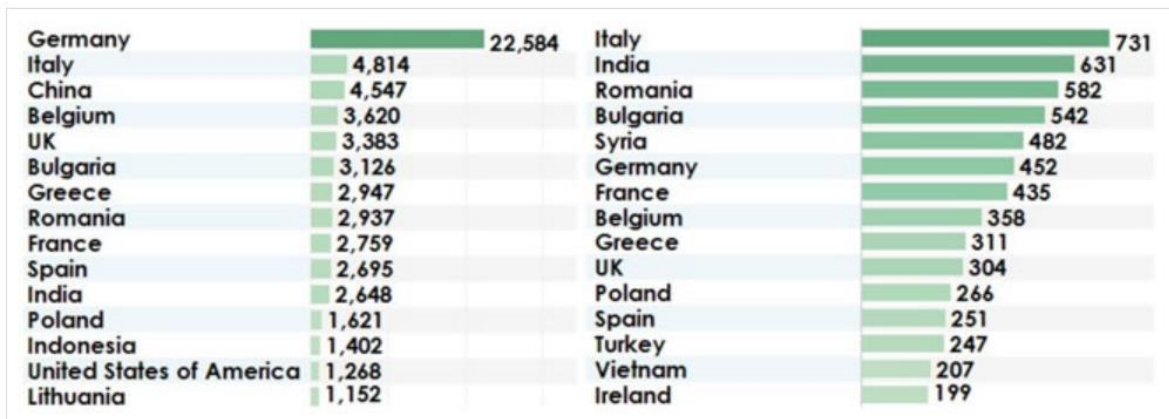
Figure 4.

Leading countries of origin for foreign enrolment in the Netherlands, 2018-19 (left); leading growth markets, in terms of additional student numbers compared to 2017-18 (right). (Nuffic 2019).

Appendix 5

Motives and strategies for the internationalization of higher education.

|	Objectives of internationalisation	Instruments and strategies	Outcome/effects
Macro			
International	World peace	Scholarships	Social integration
	Economic growth	Harmonising educational systems and their quality assurance	Competitive higher education system on world market
National	High quality workforce	International recruitment	Educating/attracting skilled workers
Meso			
Institutional	Attracting more and higher quality students and staff	Agreements with international partners	Reputation building
Micro			
Programme	Increasing the quality of education	Internationalisation at home	Student and industry satisfaction > increase in reputation and in student applications
Students	Having an interesting learning experience	Study abroad, international internships, *etc*	Personal enrichment and better job opportunities

(Van Gaalen 2010: 11)

Appendix 6

Models of Intercultural Competence development: focus, strengths and weaknesses (based on Spitzberg& Changnon 2009 in Gregersen-Hermans 2017)

Types	Focus	Strengths	Weaknesses	Examples
Compositional models *Which are the elements that constitute ICC?*	Components of intercultural competence in the knowledge, attitudes and skills domains.	Provide the basic content for any theory of intercultural competence.	Do not specify the relationships between the components; Lack criteria for competence and progression.	The Facework based model for Intercultural Competence, Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998. The Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence, Deardorff, 2006. The Global Competencies Model, Hunter, 2006.
Co-orientational models *What happens in the intercultural encounter and how is success defined?*	Outcomes of interactional processes in terms of effectiveness, appropriateness and satisfaction; Criteria for intercultural competence in terms of increasing correspondence of meaning between culturally different actors.	Attention for the need for clarity in an intercultural interaction and a minimum level of common reference; Include linguistic components.	Limited attention for management of ambiguity and dealing with uncertainty as key elements of intercultural competence.	Intercultural Interlocutor Competence, Fantini, 1995; Intercultural Communicative Competence Model, Byram, 1997; Cohesion-based model for Intercultural Competence, Rathje, 2007.
Developmental models *How does ICC develop and what are the levels of ICC?*	Development and deepening of intercultural relationships over time to allow for co-orientation and intentional and reflective learning.	Systematically identify stages or levels of intercultural competence; Allow for rubrics and criteria of intercultural competence.	Lack components that facilitate the development of intercultural competence.	Intercultural Maturity Model, King & Baxter Magolda, 2005; The Developmental Model for Intercultural Sensitivity, Bennett, 1993; revised by Hammer, 2009; The U-Curve Model of Intercultural Adjustment, Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963.
Adaptational models *Which cognitive, attitudinal and behavioural changes take shape to successfully engage in an intercultural encounter?*	Adaptation as a process and criterion for intercultural competence.	Adaptability as foundational for intercultural competence development.	Adaptability as a criterion has not been defined or validated	Intercultural Communicative Competence Model, Kim, 2009; The Intercultural Communicative Accommodation Model, Gallois, Franklyn-Stokes, Giles, & Coupland, 1988 The Attitude Acculturation Model Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki
Causal process models *Which factors lead to or influence the development of ICC?*	Specify the relationships between the various components or variables in the development of intercultural competence.	Allow for the development of specific hypotheses for intercultural competence development.	Some of the models include too many feedback loops and two way causal paths that limited rigorous testing	Model of Intercultural Communication Competence, Arasaratnam, The Anxiety/Uncertainty Management Model of Intercultural Competence, Hammer, Wiseman, Rasmussen, & Bruschke, The Process Model of Intercultural Competence, Deardorff, 2006.

Appendix 7

Exit Qualifications at EUR/ISS and RUAS/IB

Box 2
Four of the 13 exit qualifications of MA Development Studies at EUR/ISS.

"Students who successfully complete the ISS MA in Development Studies programme will independently be able to: (…)

j. work collaboratively within a multidisciplinary and multicultural context and communicate ideas, recommended solutions or interventions and strategies effectively, whether orally or in writing, to academics, practitioners and stakeholders both individually and within groups;

k. identify their own bias and opinion, and reflect on the strengths and limitations of their perspective;

l. appreciate the value of varied and opposing perspectives and the importance of context including the advantages and privileges and disadvantages and limitations associated with social, economic and national contexts;

m. continue and steer their further study and learning process in a way that is largely self-directed."

(ISS Self-assessment report 2017:13)

Box 3

The IB program at RUAS has 24 program learning outcomes, of which these are the ones concerning intercultural competences.

WW6   Collaborate effectively with different kinds of stakeholders, in different cultural, organisational and political landscapes to contribute to achieving agreed goals.

LW8   Express reflections on personal development with the aim of personal growth.

LW9   Respond appropriately to an unfamiliar, or unexpectedly changing, business environment.

LW11   Mitigate the pitfalls of cultural differences in business and social contexts

LW12   Display willingness to work with people from other cultures and to work in countries with different cultural backgrounds.

LW13   Use appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication in an intercultural setting.

LW14   Assess the effect of cultural differences upon organisational behaviour and strategic choices.

(Self-evaluation IB Rotterdam 2019: 9)

Appendix 8

Sustainable Development Goals (UNESCO 2020)

List of participants in interviews and focus groups

Preparation brainstorm group

1. Debbie	Kenia	EUR/ISS 18	13-7-2020
2. Ghivo	Indonesia	EUR/ISS 18	13-7-2020
3. Maria Inés	Colombia	EUR/ISS 18	13-7-2020
4. Michelle	Germany	EUR/ISS 18	13-7-2020

Interviews

1. Bianca	Romania	RUAS/IB	15-7-2020
2. Elle*	Philippines	EUR/ISS 19	19-8-2020
3. Ewa	Poland	EUR/ISS 19	20-8-2020
4. Gil	Luxembourg	RUAS/IB	15-7-2020
5. James	South Sudan	EUR/ISS 18	17-8-2020
6. Jana	Colombia	EUR/ISS 18	26-7-2020
7. Julia*	Denmark*	EUR/ISS 18	26-8-2020
8. Justine	Philippines	EUR/ISS 19	22-7-2020
9. Kevin*	Indonesia	EUR/ISS 18	26-7-2020
10. Mauricio*	Venezuela*	EUR/ISS 18	20-7-2020
11. Michael	Indonesia	EUR/ISS 19	14-8-2020
12. Mili	Bulgaria	RUAS/IB/IB	23-7-2020
13. Natalia	Netherlands	RUAS/IB	4-9-2020
14. Rachel	Nigeria	EUR/ISS 19	27-7-2020
15. Resty	Uganda	EUR/ISS 18	24-7-2020
16. Romynique	Netherlands	RUAS/IB	2-9-2020
17. Rhondeni	India	EUR/ISS 18	21-7-2020
18. Tayame*	Ghana	EUR/ISS 19	17-8-2020
19. Tsitsi*	Zambia	EUR/ISS 19	18-8-2020
20. Ximena	Ecuador	EUR/ISS 19	24-7-2020

*nick name, alternative nationality

EUR/ISS Focus group

21. Ankita	India	EUR/ISS 18	9-9-2020
22. Eirin	Norway	EUR/ISS 18	9-9-2020
23. Laura*	Germany	EUR/ISS 18	9-9-2020
24. Javier	Colombia	EUR/ISS 18	9-9-2020
25. Natalia	Colombia	EUR/ISS 18	9-9-2020
26. NC*	Chile	EUR/ISS 18	9-9-2020

*nick name, alternative nationality

RUAS/IB Focus group

27. Aleksandra	Poland	RUAS/IB	14-9-2020
28. Lea	Germany	RUAS/IB	14-9-2020
29. Roan	Netherlands	RUAS/IB	14-9-2020
30. Yihui	China	RUAS/IB	14-9-2020

EUR/ISS staff

Martin Blok	Netherlands	Dean of Students	26-8-2020
Kristen Cheney	USA	Associate Professor and counsellor	20-8-2020
Freek Schiphorst	Netherlands	Deputy Rector for Educational Affairs (2013-2020)	18-8-2020
Naomi van Stapele	Netherlands	Assistant Professor	18-9-2020

RUAS/IB staff

Suzanne Fagel	Netherlands	Research Lecturer Inter-national Business for Asia	11-9-2020
Leo Klienbannink	Netherlands	Lector Internationalization of Higher Education	8-9-2020
Jessica Shinnick	USA	Internationalization Advisor	15-9-2020
Cheryl Gerretsen	Netherlands	Leading lecturer, researcher and coordinator	29-10-2020

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