Intercultural Educational Practices: Opening Paths for Dialogue

Abstract
The present article offers an overview of the concept of ‘othering’ from the field of intercultural and postcolonial theories, and discusses empirical processes of ‘othering’ through a small ‘experiment’ with Master students in journalism, media and communication from Bangladesh and Nepal at Dhaka University in November 2010. The issue of concern is how socio-cultural diversity and societal integration exist in a relationship of greater or lesser tension, depending on the degree of reflexivity and flexibility of collective identities. The article is based upon a small qualitative research study that explored the awareness of group identity in intercultural communication. The article reveals how students responded to and made sense of constructed ‘imagined communities’ in the broader context of intercultural communication.

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Intercultural dialogue has emerged in the first decade of the 21st Century as a major means for managing diversity and strengthening democracy. The European Ministers of Education met in 2003 to witness and sign a declaration on intercultural education in the new European context. In the declaration the Ministers of Education reasserted the symbolic value of democracy as the underlying reference value for all states and, noting the diversity of European societies in terms of ethnicity, culture, languages, religions and education systems and the social conflicts and disagreements that result fr