



AALBORG UNIVERSITY
DENMARK

Aalborg Universitet

Talking Culture

Discursive Constructions of 'Culture' in a Corporate Context

Holmgreen, Lise-Lotte

Publication date:
2010

Document Version
Accepted author manuscript, peer reviewed version

[Link to publication from Aalborg University](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Holmgreen, L-L. (2010). *Talking Culture: Discursive Constructions of 'Culture' in a Corporate Context*. Abstract from Third International Conference on Multicultural Discourses, Hangzhou, China.

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal -

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us at vbn@aub.aau.dk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Talking Culture: Discursive Constructions of 'Culture' in a Corporate Context

When Danish businesses move production abroad, 'culture' is often seen as a huge challenge to the successful outcome of cross-border collaboration. Therefore, business leaders often seek information and guidelines of how to cope in the vast amount of literature on culture and intercultural communication. Much of this literature is based on functionalist approaches providing the dos and don'ts of intercultural encounters. This involves inter alia conceptualising 'culture' as a relatively fixed, homogeneous entity of values, attitudes and norms shared by members of a group, often leading readers to adopt dichotomised understandings and discourses about other cultures (see e.g. Hofstede 2001; Jandt 1998; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 1997). However, experience shows that the world in which intercultural encounters take place is not as simple and easy to categorise as these approaches may suggest, and therefore other approaches are needed to help actors manage and talk about the complexity and dynamism often experienced in intercultural encounters (Askehave & Norlyk 2006; Plum 2007; Zhu 2005). Taking the above as my starting point, I will present a case study of a Danish cross-border company and its employees' discourses on culture and intercultural collaboration, demonstrating that even within one, relatively small, group of people (the company), many different discourses and understandings of culture and intercultural collaboration may exist, making functionalist approaches seem little useful beyond the initial and preparatory stages of cross-border engagement and instead calling for other ways of dealing with diversity, and not difference, in day-to-day collaboration.

References

- Askehave, I. & Norlyk, B. 2006. *Meanings and Messages – Intercultural Business Communication*. Århus: Academica.
- Hofstede, G. 2001. *Culture's Consequences*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Jandt, F. E. 1998. *Intercultural Communication. An Introduction*. London: Sage.
- Plum, E. 2007. *Kulturel Intelligens*. Copenhagen: Børsens Forlag.
- Trompenaars, F. & Hampden-Turner, C. 1997. *Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Diversity in Global Business*. London: Nicolas Brealey.
- Zhu, Y. 2005. *Written Communication across Cultures*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.