TRANSNATIONAL

SERVICE LEARNING "THE"

IN CONTEXTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
TRANSNATIONAL SERVICE LEARNING IN CONTEXTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION (THE):

AN INCLUSION-ORIENTED COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITÄT HAMBURG (UHH) AND THE GERMAN JORDANIAN UNIVERSITY (GJU)
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Editor’s Note</th>
<th>04</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Culture of Remembrance** - Gordon Mitchell  
Shakir Al-Kaisi, Felix Hansen, Saba Saleem | 05  |
| **Before the law by Franz Kafka** - Felix Hansen | 10  |
| **Migration of Refugees: Integration and Inclusion** - Telse A. Iwers, Estefania Suarez Fuentes, Adam Douqa | 12  |
| **Schön, dass du da bist!”** - Mariam Abu Hussein, Mahasen Altal, Isabel Vonessen, Saskia Spath | 20  |
| **Challenges for inclusive transnational projects in higher education**  
Negin Shah Hosseini | 25  |
| **Enhancing Inclusivity and Support for Refugees and Migrants** - Jana Al-Nsour | 30  |
| **The importance of language awareness in the context of service learning** - Joachim Schroeder | 34  |
| **Opportunities of transnational service learning for the inclusion of deaf Muslim children and young people seeking asylum** - Anna-Lena Schnaudt | 38  |
| **Conclusion** - Saskia Spath, Telse Iwers | 44  |
| **Project participants** | 47  |
For the past five years, we, students and teachers at Universität Hamburg and students and teachers at the German Jordanian University, have been developing various forms of cooperation. Our aim is to get in touch with each other and find forms of communication that enable us to understand and learn from each other.

WE EXPERIMENTED WITH:

- Narrative-oriented methods such as storytelling
- Visual methods such as photo and film work
- Literary methods such as poems and stories
- Professionalization-oriented methods such as service learning.

In the various project phases, the focus is on respect and esteem, human dignity and human rights. In this booklet, we describe our experiences with different perspectives on this topic.

WE HAVE SET DIFFERENT FOCAL POINTS:

- Remembrance and the culture of remembrance
- Flight and migration
- Inclusion and accessibility
- German and Arabic language learning and teaching
- Language awareness
- Service learning in comparison.

Our presented reports are written in very different ways, just as we have deliberately chosen very different forms of work. This expresses our diversity just as much as it shows that a whole can emerge from the many.

Our thanks go to the DAAD, which has supported us in various rounds of the Ta’ziz Partnership funding line.
CULTURE OF REMEMBRANCE
A PERSPECTIVE

GORDON MITCHELL, SHAKIR AL-KAISI
FELIX HANSEN, SABA SALEEM

“Since the ways in which we access history change with each generation and the time gap from historical events, the practices of conveying history must also continuously modernize.”
(Welzer, 2010)

This project is about service learning in non-governmental organizations both in Germany and Jordan that is focused on our group work - dealing with the Culture of Remembrance (CoR) - to show diverse aspects of history, to learn from them, and to give a recommendation back to the NGO. In this group, we first met online on Zoom, since we are groups from Amman, Jordan, and Hamburg, Germany. We got to know each other online and we slowly developed ideas together on what we could focus our work on.
This article will be in chronological order of some of our thoughts. That’s why we start with our observations and ideas in Germany. We could have started with Jordan, but since the project group came together in Hamburg for the first time, we started with Germany.

Jordan is in touch with its ancient history in a different way than Germany is, but the culture of remembrance in both countries is mostly centered around the recent history of the countries, and in both cases going back to the early 20th century. The German CoR is summarized in the preamble of the German constitution, which became law in the year of 1949, four years after the unconditional surrender in World War II.

“The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is an independent sovereign Arab State. It is indivisible and inalienable and no part of it may be ceded. The people of Jordan form a part of the Arab Nation, and our system of government is a parliamentary system.

The 4th article of the Constitution of Jordan is a description of the flag of Jordan, made to resemble the flag of the Arab rebels during the Arab revolt against the Ottoman Empire. The flag used during the Arab revolt is still in use in Aqaba, it waves on the 7th tallest flagpole in the world.

We have found similarities between the situation in Germany and Jordan, mainly the fact that both countries have taken in a large number of refugees. Germany – a country surrounded by nine neighboring countries – has been dealing with migration throughout its history and has taken in a sizable number of refugees since the population exodus.
beginning in 2011 with the outbreak of the Syrian civil war. Jordan has been taking in refugees since the 1948 Arab-Israeli war and has had several waves of refugees with the most recent being the refugees escaping from the Syrian civil war. This has led both countries to attempt to find adequate accommodations for the refugee population living in their countries. This cooperation is another step taken by a group of people from both countries to collaborate on ways to make the efforts in that field more efficient.

Around 50% of the population of Jordan is of Palestinian origin, and part of the Jordanian CoR is the memory of these people who have been expelled due to war in their home country of Palestine in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, referred to in Arabic as the Nakba (النكبة) meaning catastrophe, and sought refuge in the neighboring country of Jordan. At the time, many Palestinians lived in refugee camps, which have over time become established communities and neighborhoods throughout Jordan. The citizens of the West Bank were given Jordanian citizenship during the Unification of the two banks of the Jordan River in 1950, however many of those citizens fled to Jordan again during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, in which Israel captured the West Bank. In 1988 Jordan gave up all claims to the West Bank, yet the Palestinians who had Jordanian citizenship who remained in Jordan still retained their citizenship and live in Jordan to this day.

By the end of August 2023, the Jordanian Group visited Hamburg. Together we visited the concentration camp memorial in Neuengamme. Neuengamme was the biggest Concentration Camp in Northern Germany and is a part of Hamburg, but no one is calling it "Concentration Camp Hamburg". The Nazis wanted to hide their involvement with the camp. Just like with Concentration Camp Sachsenhausen. Sachsenhausen is part of Berlin. An act of responsibility would be to show the full extent of their involvement. After we had been to Hamburg-Neuengamme we visited Hamburg-Alsterdorf. Alsterdorf was a facility for, at that time, so-called “mentally ill” people.

When we visited the Concentration Camp Memorial in Neuengamme, they told us that they do their work to show people, what has happened to prevent those things from happening again and to commemorate the victims of those crimes. In Alsterdorf they told us that the initial idea of taking care of people with disabilities was a good goal to strive for. There were children there, so the kind of work and the methods chosen were with good intentions. But during the Nazi Era things had changed. People with disabilities became a threat to the so-called “Völkskörper”, a made-up concept of genetic heritage. The way they deal with this period is by openly talking about it while not forgetting the crimes nor praising the perpetrators. An example of this is the rearrangement of one of the ornaments in the church on the compound. They took it out of the wall behind the altar, which was showing people with disabilities without halos being carried by people with no disabilities that have halos, turned it around, and lowered it into the ground.

Since parts of our groups already knew the history due to our culture of remembrance, it was not easy to come up with ideas on how to convey history. We understood and felt what had happened at these sites. We were emotionally touched by the tour guides.
You could feel that they are fully determined to make this world a better place. After the 7th of October, we had different kinds of questions, and some members of the project were confused.

In the preamble of the German constitution, it is written: “in the exercise of their constituent power”, who gave the German people this power? And why can’t other people get this power? Who is constituently empowering people? And what responsibilities come along with the empowerment others have given to them?

Culture of Remembrance "[...] provides a historical-moral education that aims to make National Socialism and the Holocaust historically comprehensible on the one hand, and to educate individuals who can resist mass or genocidal violence on the other. Stated educational goals include practicing democracy skills and developing civil courage.”

(Welzer, 2010)

The international community supports the right of people to have their own countries. with the goal behind that being safeguarding their rights. We know from history that taking people's citizenship away opens the door for mistreatment. This mistreatment is not unlawful because those who do not have citizenship have less rights, yet it is immoral. Some nations do not have the right to live in their homeland, and some do. Who is deciding who is allowed to have a country and who is not?

In the background, you see the Church St. Nicolaus in Alsterdorf. The sidewalk leads around the former altarpiece that once was the wall behind the Altar at the church. It was taken out of the wall, turned around with the backside facing the church. It was lowered into the ground.

On it, you see people with halos. One person is kneeling and has no halo. The person next to him is standing. This person has a halo and puts his hand on the head of the one kneeling. Another person to the right is standing and holding a baby. The baby has no halo. On the cross in the middle, Jesus Christ is shown.
This picture shows the silhouette of the eagle of the Nazi Party (National Socialist German Workers’ Party) on an air raid shelter made of bricks. The eagles’ claws are clinging on a circle. Inside that circle was a swastika that had been removed due to denazification after the unconditional surrender in WWII.

In the background are buildings and a flagpole with the flag of Israel. In the foreground is a building with people and a flagpole showing the flag of Jordan. Between the pieces of land is a river flowing – the River Jordan. The river is the border between Jordan and Israel to the North of the Dead Sea. To the south of the Dead Sea, on both sides, lies a desert border.

The treasury of Petra, in Maan governorate, Jordan. Built in the 1st century AD by Nabatean king Al-Harith IV. The Nabatean civilization was an Arab civilization that ruled most of Jordan and many surrounding areas from the 3rd century BC to the early 2nd century AD. The city of Petra was carved from stone to serve as the capital of the Nabatean Kingdom. It was voted into the 7 new wonders of the world. The city of Petra remains a sign of the connection the people of Jordan have with their ancient history.

Special thanks go to Hanno Billerbeck, Ina Rathje, Dr. Stephan Linck, and Thies Straehler-Pohl. Hanno Billerbeck and Ina Rathje gave us a tour through the Memorial Site in Hamburg-Neuengamme, while Dr. Stephan Linck directed our attention to the Evangelische Stiftung Alsterdorf (Alsterdorf Evangelical Foundation), where Thies Straehler-Pohl is working. They were happily welcoming us and eager to get to know our thoughts and ideas on how to convey the history of these sights to people. They showed us around and answered all our questions. Thank you for your time!

References:


Before the law sits a gatekeeper. To this gatekeeper comes a man from the country who asks to gain entry into the law. But the gatekeeper says that he cannot grant him entry at the moment. The man thinks about it and then asks if he will be allowed to come in later on. "It is possible," says the gatekeeper, "but not now." At the moment the gate to the law stands open, as always, and the gatekeeper walks to the side, so the man bends over in order to see through the gate into the inside. When the gatekeeper notices that, he laughs and says: "If it tempts you so much, try it in spite of my prohibition.

But take note: I am powerful. And I am only the most lowly gatekeeper. But from room to room stand gatekeepers, each more powerful than the other. I can't endure even one glimpse of the third." The man from the country has not expected such difficulties: the law should always be accessible for everyone, he thinks, but as he now looks more closely at the gatekeeper in his fur coat, at his large pointed nose and his long, thin, black Tartar's

Three entrances to the Criminal Justice Building in Hamburg. One wing of the three double doors is open. It is not recognizable what is inside. In the foreground, there is a traffic light displaying red. Below the sign "Strafjustizgebäude" (Criminal Justice Building) or above the three doors, faces can be seen looking towards the middle entrance, which door is open.
beard, he decides that it would be better to wait until he gets permission to go inside. The gatekeeper gives him a stool and allows him to sit down at the side in front of the gate. There he sits for days and years. He makes many attempts to be let in, and he wears the gatekeeper out with his requests. The gatekeeper often interrogates him briefly, questioning him about his homeland and many other things, but they are indifferent questions, the kind great men put, and at the end he always tells him once more that he cannot let him inside yet. The man, who has equipped himself with many things for his journey, spends everything, no matter how valuable, to win over the gatekeeper. The latter takes it all but, as he does so, says, "I am taking this only so that you do not think you have failed to do anything." During the many years the man observes the gatekeeper almost continuously. He forgets the other gatekeepers, and this one seems to him the only obstacle for entry into the law. He curses the unlucky circumstance, in the first years thoughtlessly and out loud, later, as he grows old, he still mumbles to himself. He becomes childish and, since in the long years studying the gatekeeper he has come to know the fleas in his fur collar, he even asks the fleas to help him persuade the gatekeeper. Finally his eyesight grows weak, and he does not know whether things are really darker around him or whether his eyes are merely deceiving him. But he recognizes now in the darkness an illumination which breaks inextinguishably out of the gateway to the law. Now he no longer has much time to live. Before his death he gathers in his head all his experiences of the entire time up into one question which he has not yet put to the gatekeeper. He waves to him, since he can no longer lift up his stiffening body. The gatekeeper has to bend way down to him, for the great difference has changed things to the disadvantage of the man. "What do you still want to know, then?" asks the gatekeeper. "You are insatiable." "Everyone strives after the law," says the man, "so how is that in these many years no one except me has requested entry?" The gatekeeper sees that the man is already dying and, in order to reach his diminishing sense of hearing, he shouts at him, "Here no one else can gain entry, since this entrance was assigned only to you. I'm going now to close it."

References:
Scenery of Hamburg
Southeast view from St. Nicholas’ Church bell tower

Felix Hansen
Our group embarked on a mission to delve into the complex world of refugee integration and inclusion, to explore the complexities from an educational perspective and based on the technique of service learning. We began our journey with a series of virtual meetings on Zoom, setting the stage for what lay ahead. These meetings were essential to defining the themes we aimed to investigate, laying the groundwork for our visits to Amman (Jordan) and Hamburg (Germany).
As we began this journey, our goals were not clearly defined, and we approached with an open mind, acknowledging that our path to a specific focus would unfold through ongoing discussions.

We recognized the multifaceted nature of the topic at hand, and we deliberately started with a broad, global focus to allow a flexible and responsive development. This approach ensured that our research would not be constrained by preconceived notions but would adapt and refine itself organically during the unfolding of discussions and experiences. During our meetings and interactions, we participated in meaningful dialogues that guided us in gradually clarifying our objectives, ultimately focusing on the specific areas we considered crucial to our mission. This journey of evolution of defining our focus reflects our commitment to thorough exploration, adaptability, and a keen awareness of the ever-evolving nature of the challenges faced by refugees seeking integration and inclusion.

Before coming together in person and gaining a practical understanding of our research endeavors, we collaboratively identified the following key areas of discussion:
RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Our primary mission was to understand and investigate the context and conditions of refugees’ integration and inclusion in the fields of teaching and social work and its differences between Jordan and Germany.

METHODOLOGY

Our approach involves conducting interviews in Germany and Jordan, along with engaging in open discussions with various NGOs in both countries. These interactions should enable us to capture the perspectives of NGOs on the crucial topic of integration and inclusion.

KEY THEMES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH NGOS

Our conversations with NGOs should encompass several key themes, including the preparation of professionals for working with refugees in Germany and Jordan and their experiences working in this field.

OPEN DISCUSSIONS WITH STUDENTS:

Additionally, we planned to engage students majoring in teaching and social work in open discussions in both countries to offer us a unique opportunity to examine university preparation in the areas of integration and inclusion, as well as to address teacher training and approaches to working with refugees in Germany and Jordan.

NEXT STEPS:

Following our initial discussions and research, we should seek NGOs willing to collaborate with us in both, Germany and Jordan, as we believed that meaningful change is possible through collective effort.

FROM VISION TO REALITY: OUR JOURNEY BEGINS IN HAMBURG

We explored several places, where we learned about German history. We also had a workshop with the organization 'Deaf Refugees' to understand their experiences.
During our visits and discussions with various organizations, we wanted to conduct interviews with different stakeholders of the NGOs. We encountered differing opinions of whom to interview, particularly regarding the ethics of conducting interviews with refugees. The question of whether it is politically correct to interview refugees, given the concern of potentially retraumatizing interviewees, arose.

**ETHICAL DILEMMAS: INTERVIEWING REFUGEES**

During our visits and discussions with various organizations, we wanted to conduct interviews with different stakeholders of the NGOs. We encountered differing opinions of whom to interview, particularly regarding the ethics of conducting interviews with refugees. The question of whether it is politically correct to interview refugees, given the concern of potentially retraumatizing interviewees, arose.

**A GLIMPSE INTO EXPERIENCE: MRS. TODOROVA**

In our quest to address this ethical dilemma, we had the opportunity to speak with Notably Mrs. Todorova. She is a refugee herself, lending a unique perspective to our discussions.

Mrs. Todorova shared detailed insights into the organization’s operations and the experiences of the women it serves. She presented her results on research about traumatization of Ukrainian refugees whom she interviewed during her research. We took this opportunity to discuss our concerns and seek her opinion on whether conducting interviews might be a form of retraumatization for refugees.

**CREATING SAFE SPACES**

In response, Todorova emphasized that, initially, it is challenging for individuals, particularly women, to open up about their lives. However, through activities such as crafting in a comfortable environment, they gradually become more willing to share their stories. In the context of interviews, she underlined the critical importance of creating a safe and supportive environment to ensure that interviews are conducted ethically and respectfully.
Our journey continued in Amman, Jordan, where we had the privilege of visiting key organizations and meeting with individuals deeply involved in refugee integration and inclusion.

As our journey of exploration continued, we transcended borders and touched down in the beautiful country of Jordan, where history and cultural diversity intertwine. In this corner of the world, our mission took on a more defined focus. Our journey led us to iconic locations, such as the Baptism Site "Bethany Beyond the Jordan" (Al-Maghtas) in the Jordan River, where we delved into history.

Additionally, we had a presentation and a question-and-answer session with the King Hussein Foundation, where we conversed with Mr. Nart Dohjoka. We explored the complexities of intercultural understanding during a discussion with guest speaker Renee Hattar from the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies. Our visit to the Collateral Repair Project highlighted the importance of solidarity.

Figure 5. Two encyclopedias titled "Jordan" and "Future" at the historical bookstore and cafe “Kawon” in Madaba. (Foto: Estefania Suarez Fuentes)

As our journey of exploration continued, we transcended borders and touched down in the beautiful country of Jordan, where history and cultural diversity intertwine. In this corner of the world, our mission took on a more defined focus. Our journey led us to iconic locations, such as the Baptism Site "Bethany Beyond the Jordan" (Al-Maghtas) in the Jordan River, where we delved into history.

Additionally, we had a presentation and a question-and-answer session with the King Hussein Foundation, where we conversed with Mr. Nart Dohjoka. We explored the complexities of intercultural understanding during a discussion with guest speaker Renee Hattar from the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies. Our visit to the Collateral Repair Project highlighted the importance of solidarity.

A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE

Todorova shared an invaluable perspective, pointing out that many individuals already integrated into the association’s community might be willing to share their experiences. She noted that this willingness reflects the genuine interest in understanding their perspectives.

EXPLORING THE HEART OF THE MATTER IN AMMAN, JORDAN

Our journey continued in Amman, Jordan, where we had the privilege of visiting key organizations and meeting with individuals deeply involved in refugee integration and inclusion.

STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

We then explored the Theodor Schneller School, an educational institution with a rich history of commitment. Finally, we concluded our journey with a visit to the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, where we learned about the barriers and challenges faced by individuals with disabilities.

Amman presented us with a unique opportunity to strengthen our international partnerships and gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and successes in the context of Jordan.
LEARNING FROM LOCAL EXPERTS

We engaged in conversations with local experts, academics, and practitioners in the field, allowing us to broaden our perspective on the critical issues surrounding refugee integration and inclusion.

CULTURAL IMMERSION

Our time in Jordan provided us with valuable cultural insights, reinforcing the importance of cultural sensitivity in our mission to facilitate integration and inclusion.

EXPLORING COLLATERAL REPAIR PROJECT IN JORDAN

During our visit to Jordan, we had the privilege of exploring the Collateral Repair Project (CRP). CRP’s Family Resource and Community Center, nestled in the neighborhood of Hashemi Shamali in East Amman, Jordan, stands as a symbol of hope and support for refugees. The center serves as a safe space for refugees to rebuild the social ties they lost after fleeing their home countries. For some, it’s the only opportunity for social interaction they have.

Figure 6. Photo Collage featuring participants of this program in Amman and Madaba.
Our visit to CRP led to enlightening discussions with the dedicated staff members. They graciously provided us with a tour of the facility and engaged in open conversations about their work. Notably, one staff member shared a story similar to that of Mrs. Todorova’s experience at the “Conflict-Sensitive Emotional Mentoring for Ukrainian Refugee Families with Children” organization. While we maintain her name in anonymity pending confirmation, her journey closely mirrors that of Mrs. Todorova. She, too, was a refugee from Iraq, arriving in Jordan without her spouse. Starting a life as a single mother in Jordan presented numerous challenges, including the need to earn respect and support her family independently.

Our conversation with this staff member shed light on the prevailing stereotypes and misconceptions that deter many refugees from seeking help. She pointed out that, especially among male refugees, there is a perception that associating with organizations is a sign of weakness and fragility. Overcoming these stereotypes is a substantial challenge in their work. She emphasized that it takes time for individuals to feel comfortable enough to seek assistance or share their difficulties openly. This, she believes, is linked to the environment in which people find themselves. When refugees engage in leisure activities such as sports, cooking classes, chess, or board games offered by the association, they become more open to seeking help and discussing their problems. This underscores the importance of providing a comfortable and inclusive environment for refugees.

Inspired by these two compelling perspectives, we are eager to conduct interviews with these two remarkable women, hailing from different continents but united by their shared experience as refugees. Their strength and resilience have led them to help other refugees navigate the challenging path of displacement.
A store in an area of Hamburg called „Grindel“.

Felix Hansen
As the group of Language Learning and Teaching, our main idea for this project was to actively work with people who were learning German as a foreign or a second language.

Background: Many children living in Germany who learn German as a second language are disadvantaged on their educational path in comparison to children whose first language is German (Gomolla & Fürstenau, 2009). Language deficits are reflected in subjects such as biology and mathematics and are not limited to the subject German. That’s why the city of Hamburg has enacted the Hamburg Language Support Program to promote language skills beginning from pre-school through the school career of a student (Hamburger Sprachförderkonzept, 2020).

Because children with refugee experience who live in public accommodation are particularly disadvantaged, we asked ourselves how children’s language skills can be developed outside of such school programs. In the spirit of service learning, we came up with the idea of students volunteering to provide services to activate children in talking German.
At the same time fewer and fewer children are reading books in Jordan and Germany. We are therefore interested in the question of how we can get children eager in books and thus improve their language skills in German as a second language or in German as a foreign language.

We wanted to create a workshop including various creative activities in which the participants have to use the German language to communicate. We chose to organize a workshop specifically for children with the main aim to encourage the children’s active participation, leading to their practical use of German. Our personal aim was also to expand our own experience working with children learning German as a second language.

**REFLECTION OF THE WORKSHOPS**

It proved a little more difficult than expected to motivate refugee children to attend our small workshop in a refugee camp in Hamburg, Germany. We had advertised the workshop in the camp a few days in advance and actively talked to families on the day. When the time came to begin the workshop, we patiently waited for the children to trickle in. About five minutes into the workshop a little boy, six years old, entered the room.

He was very shy and even though he engaged in polite conversation with us, we could tell he was not comfortable all by himself, so we asked him to get some friends to join the workshop. After a while, more and more children started to arrive and when we had a group of about ten excited children sitting in front of us, full of expectation, we decided to start.

While planning our first workshop in Germany, we concentrated on using interactive activities in German so that the children would use the language, expand their vocabulary and simply practise their German. We started the workshop with an introduction and immediately noticed that most of the children of primary school age could speak very well and the older children struggled a little more with their German. But the happy atmosphere in the group helped the older children to feel more comfortable, to join in and to laugh at the younger children’s jokes. Afterwards we sang a German welcome song with them and looking back we did not realise during the workshop that most of the children already knew the song and did not need as many repeats of the lyrics or melodies as we had asked them to do. Nevertheless, they were very happy to be singing and dancing.

Following this we read a short children’s book with them. It was about a little fish who stole a big fish’s hat while the big fish was sleeping. It had very little text and the pictures told the story more than the words. On each page, we asked the children to describe what was happening and to name objects in the pictures. There were a few children who got distracted by each other and caused unrest in the group during this activity, but when asked to engage, the children quickly turned their attention back to us.
The last two pictures of the story show the big fish going into the little fish’s hiding place and him sleeping with his hat back on his head. We asked the children to guess what they thought the big fish had done to get his hat back. Some guesses said that the big fish simply took the hat back or that it fell off, others said the fish fought and one even guessed the big fish ate the little fish.

After reading the story, we asked the children to paint the fishes in the story using finger paints. We let them draw on two big white posters. It was a bit chaotic and sometimes the children fought over paint or space on the paper. But with adult guidance they were always able to come to an agreement and create a joint painting. When we were almost out of time, we asked each child to describe what they painted and gave them a round of applause. We concluded the workshop by singing and dancing to the song again.

**SUMMARY**

The biggest organisational difference between our workshop in Jordan and the one in Germany was the amount of time we had. We had to leave out the painting part of the workshop and concentrate on the story and the song. In Amman, Jordan, we visited the Theodor Schneller School and were allowed to run our workshop during a German lesson. The children were in primary school, we had been told that they had a beginner level of German and their two teachers would translate and help us during the workshop.

When we entered the classroom, the children observed us very closely and were very curious to what we were saying to each other in German. They could not understand when we spoke in German, but one of our team or the teachers actively translated in Arabic. We asked the children to introduce themselves and our first assessment was that they were beginners but knew a few sentences.
When we started to teach them the song, the lyrics were very difficult for the children and in the little time we had, we could not teach them the words any better. However, we decided not to focus too much on the pronunciation of each word and to help them get to the point where they could sing the song. It was clear that most of the children found this quite difficult, but they imitated the words and so we managed to sing the song with them once or twice. Even though they found it very difficult and were very focused and unsure, we tried our best to make them understand that the song didn’t have to be perfect and so they had fun anyway.

When it came to reading the book with them, the children watched us very closely as if they could understand exactly what we were saying and reading, just like the German children. But when we finished speaking, they looked to their teachers for translation. We also asked them to describe what they had seen and then translated their Arabic answers into German and asked them to repeat the words. When it was time to guess the end of the story, some of their answers were that the little fish gave back the hat or that the big fish asked for the hat back. All in all, they had a great time making their guesses in German and Arabic. We ended the workshop by singing the song again and saying goodbye to the class.

In both Jordan and Germany, the children were able to practise their German in a lively environment at different language levels while having fun taking part in the received activities. The children in Jordan and Germany was that the activities were very varied and that they could have read more books.

In Jordan, they enjoyed all aspects equally and in Germany, they emphasized that they would like the music aspect to be developed further. One child in Germany asked if this workshop could be organized every week and we were sorry to have to tell him that it was a one-off. But his question made us wonder if there is a greater need for workshops like ours than there is at the moment. If more people need an environment where they can practice their second language outside of a classroom with various creative activities. If this was a recurring workshop we would introduce different activities and adapt them according to the children’s response. As a group were very happy with our decision to organise this workshop because of the children who were excited to participate. The lively environment of learning and creativity was more than what we expected. It was a gift for us to see the children happy and learning together.

Our special thanks go to Jenny Höhne, who made the workshop in the Eulenkrugstraße residential home possible, and to the principal of the Theodor Schneller School in Amman.
References:


Fürstenau, Sara (Hrsg.); Gomolla, Mechtild (Hrsg.) · Migration und schulischer Wandel. Unterricht. 1. Aufl. · Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften
The underrepresentation of students and scientists with disabilities in international projects despite explicit support being available from sponsors for their participation has been criticised. Experiences from other international projects have revealed, however, that this support is not implemented effectively. For scientists, gaining international experience in the academic world is crucial nowadays. This is also highly relevant for students across all disciplines. However, for individuals with disabilities, travel can be a challenging endeavour due to the barriers that exist. Does internationalization therefore set an exclusionary requirement?

1 For example, the DAAD supports the mobility of students or researchers with disabilities through various measures, such as financial support for special requirements (cf. Schroeder et al. 2023).
ACCOMMODATION

As a person without impairments, I did not consider the accessibility of the hotel when making the reservation and it was not accessible. It had several sets of stairs and uneven surfaces right at the entrance and throughout the premises, including in the rooms. Moreover, there was no lift in the hotel, making it entirely inaccessible for wheelchair users. There were no floor guidance systems or braille signage for people with visual impairments. Additionally, there was no assistance for individuals with hearing impairments, such as visual cues when entering rooms. Consequently, a stay in such a hotel would be unfeasible for a student or scientist with disabilities without external assistance. These considerations should be factored in when making a reservation.

GERMAN JORDANIAN UNIVERSITY (JABAL AMMAN CAMPUS)

The campus building is situated on Jabal-Mount- Amman. Without a car, accessing the building could be inconvenient due to the steep incline. Inside the building, there were numerous sets of stairs. Although there are lifts in the building, many seminar rooms were not accessible to persons with disabilities without external assistance due to the presence of obstacles like trip hazards and stairs. The entire campus lacked accessible sanitary facilities. Furthermore, there are no orientation systems for individuals with sensory impairments. Navigating the campus independently would be impossible for a student or scientist with disabilities.

TRANSPORT

We frequently travelled to locations by minibus. It was quite comfortable for us, as we didn’t have to rely on public transportation. However, the minibus had high steps, making it impossible for a wheelchair user to board without assistance.

---

2 This group comprised individuals from various status groups, including bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral students, research assistants and professors. Additionally, it included members of diverse genders and ‘countries of origin’ besides Jordan and Germany (Colombia, Egypt, Iran, Palestine, among others). None of us had visible physical or sensory impairments, which meant that there was no prior discussion regarding the accessibility of the planned program.

3 In another DAAD project, we already conducted a barrier analysis for the city of Hamburg and the Faculty of Education, which revealed that there is still much work to be done here as well (cf. Runge et al.).

4 The focus on these two disabilities stems from the ‘ease’ of identifying physical barriers during short visits, in contrast to psychological or cognitive disabilities that involve a broader range of aspects and may not immediately be apparent.
The accessibility of the buildings of the institutions and NGOs we visited varied. In all of them, the entrance and ground floor were accessible to wheelchair users. However, some lacked a lift. There was also a notable absence of floor guidance systems and other support for individuals with sensory impairments. Accessible sanitary facilities were not available everywhere. During visits, time frames are usually limited and information often delivered quickly. This was manageable for those of us without disabilities, as we received the information either directly in English or with translation from Arabic. However, for students or scientists with hearing impairments, this information would not be readily accessible. To ensure equal participation, the information would need to be "translated" by sign language interpreters. Moreover, areas that are only visually presented to persons with sight should be described thoroughly for individuals with blindness. This requires both sufficient time and financial resources (in case translators are used).

**GOOD EXAMPLE: VISIT TO THE HIGHER COUNCIL FOR THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

This visit was different, however. The building stands out as it is accessible for persons with physical and sensory impairments – from the entrance to the individual rooms we visited. The entrance door is automatic and a floor guidance system is available for the entire floor. Figure 1 below shows this system in a hallway within the premises. The floor guidance system is in yellow and has been placed on brown tiles featuring a white square pattern. It guides users to the next room.

![Figure 1: Floor guidance system in the building of the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Photo: Joachim Schroeder)](image)

---

5 For more information about the institutions and NGOs visited, refer to the article on page 30, and 38 of this booklet.
Furthermore, the room information is available in braille and Arabic. Figure 2 shows the label for a room. It is written in black in Arabic and braille on a beige background: خدمة الجمهور. Customer service.

The building has two lifts, ensuring that all floors are accessible without external assistance.

**EXCURSIONS**

Every transnational project includes visits to various landmarks and sites in the respective cities. These provide excellent opportunities to get to know the cities and allow the project group to engage informally beyond professional exchanges. The accessibility of the well-known sites I visited during my trip varied. For example, places like the citadel in Amman and the baptism site of Jesus in Balqa (Bethania) are partially accessible to wheelchair users. They can be reached by car up to the entrance and, in some areas, there are ramps that allow wheelchair users to access certain parts. Accessible sanitary facilities are not available, however. There is no orientation support for persons with sensory impairments either.

The situation is quite different at a place like the archaeological city of Petra, which is not readily accessible to people with disabilities. Therefore students or scientists with disabilities cannot easily participate in such excursions, which in turn means that they potentially miss out on opportunities for informal conversations with other project members – and these are also important in projects.

**GOOD EXAMPLE:** "ACCESSIBLE JORDAN" 7

Accessible Jordan is a guide for accessible places and tourist attractions in Jordan. They collaborate with businesses and organisations to enhance accessibility. Their goals include raising awareness about the challenges people with disabilities and other members of society (such as senior citizens or persons with infants in pushchairs) face due to limited accessibility. They aim to improve the accessibility of facilities and to create a comprehensive accessibility database for Jordan. By exploring websites like these beforehand, it becomes possible to ensure the participation of persons with physical and sensory disabilities in project activities – or to at least be made aware of the challenges and seek out possible solutions.

---

6. There is the option of booking a ‘special tour’ for individuals with disabilities. This tour is more expensive than the ‘standard price.’ However, it’s important to note that not all areas of Petra are accessible for individuals with physical and sensory impairments – even during this tour.

7. www.accessiblejordan.com
In sharing these examples, I seek to give an impression of the reasons why scientists and students with disabilities do not participate in transnational projects despite financial support being available. The observations presented highlight that structural barriers lead to their exclusion from transnational projects. It is therefore essential to carefully consider detailed aspects with the people with disabilities themselves before planning such projects to make their participation possible. Regarding service learning, it is essential to discuss this structural exclusion beforehand, with the aim of addressing and resolving issues. When collaborating with NGOs, it is important to ensure that societal diversity is also reflected in the work to incorporate a range of perspectives into such projects.

References:

Runge, P.; Schroeder, J.; Shah Hosseini, N. (eds.) (2023): From Challenges to Opportunities – Outcomes of the research project “Counselling in the Field of Disability”. Norderstedt: Books on Demand.
Jesus Christ
Baptism Site (Al-Maghtas)-
Jordan

Felix Hansen
ENHANCING INCLUSIVITY AND SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS:

COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES FROM GERMANY AND JORDAN

Jana Al-Nsour

INTRODUCTION

This academic article explores initiatives and institutions in Germany and Jordan aimed at supporting and integrating refugees and migrants, particularly those with disabilities, while fostering inclusivity and preserving cultural identities. Through an analysis of various organizations, including educational institutions, centers for disability support, and memorial sites, this article aims to highlight successful models and approaches while identifying areas for potential improvement and collaboration between the two countries.

The global influx of refugees and migrants has prompted nations to develop strategies and institutions to accommodate and integrate these populations. Germany and Jordan both stand out for their diverse initiatives and institutions designed to support refugees and migrants, especially those with disabilities. This article critically examines and compares several organizations in both countries, shedding light on their approaches and outcomes.
This small non-profit business (The Book-Case Program) is an excellent project that is highly inclusive for all migrants and refugee children residing in Germany. The organization has set up a group of people who distribute children’s books that are inclusive of around 15 languages in each story to make children of such languages feel seen and accepted and in touch with their culture and languages. In Germany, the initiative by a non-profit organization distributing children’s books in multiple languages aims to foster inclusivity among migrant and refugee children. The provision of stories in various languages helps these children maintain a connection with their cultures and languages, contributing to their sense of acceptance.

Similarly, the Schneller School in Jordan serves as a haven for Syrian children, enabling their education within the Jordanian Tawjihi system while accommodating their refugee status. (Der Hamburger Bücherkoffer Vielfältige Inhalte des Koffers, 2023)

The Deaf Refugee institution in Germany provides specialized support by teaching sign language to disabled refugees, enabling communication and integration. However, challenges remain in extending these services to a broader range of refugee nationalities. Conversely, the St. Nicholas Institution in Germany offers jobs for individuals with disabilities, yet limitations exist for refugees due to nationality-related criteria, posing barriers to employment opportunities (DeafRefugees, 2023).

The center was an excellent organization that helped migrants and refugees discretely recognize their rights without the interference of any governmental officials for those with no papers or permits to enter the country due to asylum reasons. This is an excellent approach and hopefully, it could be soon introduced in Jordan however, political reasons will have this program rendered. The report details the Arbeit und Leben Hamburg Welcome Center’s role in assisting newcomers in settling into Hamburg. The center offers job search support, comprehensive information on city living, tailored language courses, and networking events to facilitate integration into the local community (Faire Integration - Hamburg Welcome Portal, n.d.).
MEMORIAL SITES AND HISTORICAL REFLECTION

The Neuengamme memorial in Germany provides a poignant reminder of past atrocities, emphasizing the importance of learning from history to prevent the repetition of forced labor and enslavement experienced by migrants. This historical perspective can inform present-day policies in Jordan and Germany, emphasizing ethical consumerism and human rights in labor practices. The Neuengamme memorial was a good POV (point of view) of the past experiences regarding the slave labor of migrants since most of the detained migrants who slaved away at the Neuengamme camp were Russians, Slavs, and Eastern Europeans. This experience can be used for present modifications in terms of not repeating the history of forced/enslaved migrants in Jordan or Germany. This will help us to be more aware of the products we purchase, use, and exchange (Home, n.d.).

GOVERNMENTAL SUPPORT AND RIGHTS RECOGNITION (HCD AMMAN)

The Higher Council of Disabilities in Jordan is an excellent governmental organization that provides continuous support and development for people with disabilities in Jordan, such as accessibility in schools, roads, public transportation, and buildings. This approach can be studied and implemented by Germany as well to continuously provide improvements for people with disabilities to never feel burdened by the limitations of the environment around them (HCD, 2023).

CONCLUSION

While the Welcome Hamburg Center discreetly assists refugees in recognizing their rights without governmental interference in Germany, political constraints limit the implementation of similar programs in Jordan. However, the Higher Council of Disabilities in Jordan demonstrates governmental commitment to enhancing accessibility and support for disabled individuals, providing valuable lessons for Germany (Faire Integration - Hamburg Welcome Portal, n.d.).

The report concludes by underlining the significance of these initiatives in showcasing Hamburg’s commitment to remembrance, compassion, inclusivity, and community integration. It emphasizes the transformative impact of these initiatives in fostering empathy, empowerment, and a more inclusive society. These examples serve as models for other communities worldwide seeking to support marginalized groups and create welcoming environments.

Both Germany and Jordan exhibit commendable initiatives and institutions aimed at supporting refugees and migrants, particularly those with disabilities. However, challenges persist, such as limitations on refugee employment and political constraints on program implementation. Collaborative efforts between these nations could yield mutually beneficial strategies, facilitating enhanced inclusivity, support, and rights recognition for all refugees and migrants, regardless of nationality or ability. This comparative analysis underscores the significance of sharing best practices and fostering international cooperation to create more effective and inclusive support systems for refugees and migrants worldwide.
References:
DeafRefugees.
https://www.deafrefugees.de/en/

Der Hamburger Bücherkoffer - Vielfältige Inhalte des Koffers. (2023, June 6).
Coach@School. https://www.coachatschool.org/inhalt-buecherkoffer/

2023 Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
https://www.hcd.gov.jo/Default/En

https://welcome.hamburg.de/hwc/14889090/faire-integration/

St Nicholas Hospital | findingrecords.dhhs.vic.gov.au. (n.d.)
https://www.findingrecords.dhhs.vic.gov.au/collectionresultspage/St-Nicholas-Hospital


KZ Gedenkstätte Neuengamme: (n.d.).
https://www.kz-gedenkstaette-neuengamme.de/en/
THE IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE AWARENESS IN THE CONTEXT OF SERVICE LEARNING

JOACHIM SCHROEDER

Service learning is a socially relevant concept and therefore among others requires intensive language reflection, for example on the basic concepts of the approach. What exactly is meant by service? Supervise? Accompany? Support? Participate? Rescue? Help? Presumably all of these at the same time - or none of them? And what does learning through service mean? Learning by doing? But what exactly are we doing? What is the focus of the learning: social problems, disadvantages, needs or discrimination in the context of vulnerability?
A typical definition of service learning at universities is: linking academic learning and civic responsibility.¹ Our project differs from existing approaches in that the seminars bring together students, who are already working for NGOs or have established initial contacts for cooperation and bring these experiences with them to the seminars and reflect on them during an intercultural exchange. This means that no new cooperation structures are created that might dissolve again when the project ends. Instead, the project offers a methodically structured space for discourse in which students can reflect on and evaluate their social engagement. But does the creation of a reflective discourse space already constitute service learning?

Service learning requires communicative language sensitivity with regard to the designation of people in difficult life situations to which service learning often refers. In the "Deaf refugees" workshop, we were initially surprised that the NGO did not choose to use the German term "gehörlos" (literally, free of hearing), which is also often used in the academic field, but rather "taub" (deaf), a term that has long been used in social discourse as a derogatory description. The NGO rejects the term "gehörlos" because it conveys a deficit, a lack or a loss ("-los").

But also "[t]he term 'deaf' is still perceived by many hearing people as having negative connotations, as they associate it with commonly used pejoratives for non-hearing. The derogatory and discriminatory attitude towards deaf people or the marginalization of sign language is called audism. 'Audism' is based on a higher appreciation of hearing and speech and a devaluation of deaf people as 'defective'." (ibid.)

The use of the word "taub" is therefore "the reappropriation of a term that has long been used as a pejorative description (reclaiming)" (ibid.).²

²Springer, Dordrecht. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-8905-9_359
https://diversity-arts-culture.berlin/woerterbuch/taub
Service learning also requires an expanded concept of multilingualism. In the workshop with the "Bücherkoffer" (bookcase) project, we were delighted that primary school children are given the opportunity to "discover" multilingualism for themselves, for example through a variety of word comparisons, and to acquire their first metalinguistic skills without a school-like pedagogy. We were also fascinated by the consistent anti-discrimination approach chosen for the project. In addition, we have also been very impressed by the fact that the "Bücherkoffer" are designed to be inclusive: "The children learn that their language, their culture, their disability or their individual family constellation is normal." (ibid.) Nevertheless, it is difficult for children with visual impairments to use the materials offered, for example. And reading to children with sensory impairments (by parents, siblings or mentees in the context of service learning) must first be learnt thoroughly.

Semiotics has long criticized society's dominant understanding of texts as logographic texts based on phoneme-grapheme correspondences. It is pointed out that there are also other - equally valid - phonetic and written sign systems for text production, e.g. visual (sign language), tactile (lorm alphabet) or haptic (Braille) codes. In the history and universalization of modern schooling, however, a didactic approach has emerged that offers all subjects of importance, even in mathematics, as written language texts. All other forms of writing are at best used in the area of special needs educational support. Of course, there have (for a long time) been children's books that you can smell, feel or listen to and with which children can really experience that (their) 'disability is normal'. Hence the call for expansion of the concept of multilingualism in which the languages of migration are extended to include the languages of disability.

---

3 www.coachatschool.org/inhalt-buecherkoffer

The term **language work** refers to "work on the language (such as the production of important manuals and textbooks, norming, language advice, standardization, etc.)." Nicola Heath points out in an article that the Aborigines in Australia and New Zealand do not have a word for disability in their languages. Therefore, 200 new words for mental health and disability were added to the Māori language in New Zealand in 2017. Care was taken to ensure that the new terms were not deficient, pejorative or labelling: "The new word for disability is *whaikaha*, which means 'to have strength, to have ability, otherly-abled, enabled'. The autism equivalent is *takiwatanga*, meaning 'his or her own time and space'. " In the experience of Keri Opal, who created the glossary, "people with autism tend to have their own timing, spacing, pacing and life-rhythm."

One would wish for such linguistic "new beginnings" for many discriminatory words in one's own language, but presumably the "historical ballast" of a language cannot simply be disposed of. There is little more left than to (repeatedly) restructure the use of words, terms and language through critical linguistic reflection. A search for "inclusive language" on the web leads to links to countless sets of rules for speaking respectfully about disability, which should be used in service learning in particular. For instance, the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Amman is currently preparing such a handout on inclusion-sensitive speaking and writing for Arabic.

---

5  https://de.wiktionary.org/wiki/Spracharbeit

schoolyard “Theodor Schneller School” - Jordan

Felix Hansen
Since 2011, refugees from Syria have increasingly sought asylum in Germany and Jordan. The war in West Asia and displacement in the Gaza Strip are forcing hundreds of thousands of people to flee. Against this background, I ask myself what living situation deaf children and young people fleeing Syria and Palestine can expect in Germany. Can our intercultural exchange contribute to inclusion by helping to resolve difficulties and eliminate disadvantages?

According to estimates, around 3,200 deaf Muslims live in Germany (cf. Karar 2008, 2). They form the largest group within the deaf, non-Christian minority. The number of deaf young Muslims is therefore significantly higher than among other non-Christian religions (cf. ibid.). According to studies, deaf young Muslims in Germany not only face greater difficulties and disadvantages compared to their German or Christian counterparts but are also left to fend for themselves more by their parents and teachers (cf. ibid., 1, 7 ff., 17). The German majority society
perceives them (and discriminates against them) on three different levels: as immigrants, as members of a different religion and as deaf people (cf. ibid., 3). In the case of children and young people seeking asylum, their uncertain status coupled with the attribution of illegality as a further differentiation further exacerbates the situation. The discrimination that deaf young Muslims in Germany experience on multiple levels jeopardises their health and development and the formation of a stable identity and positive self-image while also reducing their chances at school and in the labour market (cf. Karar 2008, 3, 80f.). It is not only the prejudice, lack of tolerance and anti-Muslim racism among German society that make their lives more difficult though (cf. ibid., 15). Due to their hearing impairment, they are also sometimes discriminated against and excluded by members of their own family and community (cf. ibid., 81). Just ten percent of all deaf children also have deaf parents (cf. Leven 1997, 19). Most deaf children and young people therefore grow up in a hearing family where an entirely different communication situation prevails. This often leads to communication problems, as they cannot learn their parents’ native language the natural way (cf. Karar 2008, 9). Those affected are usually helpless in the face of this often discriminating situation: they do not receive any professional support (cf. ibid., 1, 3, 81). Qualified educators who have authentic insights into their life situation or have themselves had similar experiences (e.g. deaf Muslim teachers with a migration background) are not something the German school culture has to offer (cf. Ibid., 18–20, 51-53). The consequences are tangible: On the one hand, deaf Muslim pupils exhibit more aggressive behaviour and less well-adapted conflict resolution strategies compared to their peers (cf. ibid., 1). On the other, resignation and acceptance of their fate are particularly common among them (cf. ibid.). Against this backdrop, taking a closer look at the discriminatory factors that deaf Muslim children face after fleeing and asking ourselves how we can counteract these seem to me to be of central importance.

A workshop with the NGO ‘Deaf Refugees’ provided insights into the life situation of deaf children and young people, who had fled Syria, after their arrival in Germany. While working with the Syrian refugees, the organisation discovered that parents were often unaware of their children’s deafness. Indeed, it frequently remained unknown until contact was made with the aid workers. Without ever having had access to specific support, sign language and, in some cases, not even to the general Syrian school system, these children suddenly had to find their way in German school life – deprived of any chance to communicate effectively with others and draw attention to discriminatory experiences. How might a child fare that is excluded from all communication structures or at least left to struggle alone with severe limitations due to communication barriers as they experience war, flight, a new situation in a foreign country and their first contact with a school system? In order to prevent deaf refugee children and young people from being pushed into such distressing situations, I believe we urgently need to ask ourselves how we can better help them to cope with the various situations in which they are overwhelmed, excluded and discriminated against that they are exposed to on a daily basis in all life contexts.

In 2015, ‘Deaf Refugees’ systematically searched Hamburg’s refugee camps and reception centres for deaf people in order to offer them a place to go. To prevent their isolation and exclusion, they offered the deaf
refugees, who were based at various different camps at the time, the opportunity to move into shared accommodation. This was chosen so that children and young people could attend the Elbschule, an educational centre for hearing and communication. The educational programme at the Elbschule is aimed at babies, toddlers, children and young people with a special focus on hearing and communication and enables each pupil to choose their primary language of communication for themselves: spoken language or sign language (see school profile). Mutual respect and recognition for both means of communication is a guiding principle (cf. ibid.). Beyond school attendance, the NGO also helped the deaf children and young people to learn German sign language. As sign language is the primary language for most deaf people, it is recognised as having an important function in building identity and self-image (cf. Karar 2008, 48). German sign language enables deaf people to converse casually and without restriction (cf. ibid., 48). Hence ‘Deaf Refugees’ is actively committed to promoting this and to facilitating access to the deaf and sign language communities (cf. German Engagement Award).

In my opinion, the experiences described can be used to good advantage to implement service learning in both countries. A transnational/transcultural exchange on the specific requirements of deaf children and young people in the Levant could help German institutions to better prepare for their arrival in the future and to organise more appropriate inclusion and education. For example, collaboration with the Jordanian Committee for the Development of Academic Sign Language could give German teachers and educators better insights into the diagnosis, support and educational status of pupils and their national sign language. Familiarity with the relevant signs of Levantine Arabic sign language could enable German educators and refugee aid organisations to use or offer different sign language modifications and variations, to understand mixed forms of the native sign language and German sign language and to adapt to the forms of communication of their deaf counterparts. Establishing transnational service learning could thus help to create an educational programme that addresses the specific difficulties that deaf refugees from the Levant face after fleeing and help to resolve these. By developing preventive measures that counteract the discriminatory conditions and processes currently in place, service learning could contribute to inclusion, also in anticipation of the current and future refugee needs in light of the wars in West Asia.

Against this backdrop, I was pleased to learn during our visit to the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Amman that promoting Jordanian sign language is also very important there. The Jordanian Committee for the Development of Academic Sign Language was founded in July 2023 for this purpose. A team comprising ten deaf people and three interpreters is working to develop 1,600 signs for the K-12 curriculum of the Ministry of Education for the subjects of mathematics, natural science, IT, Arabic and English. The new signs will then be published on a central website and teachers familiarised with these during training.
ASYLUM SEEKERS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS

The arrival in Germany is particularly difficult for deaf refugees, as they are distributed according to a quota system known as the “Königssteiner Schlüssel” that calculates the admission quotas and allocates asylum seekers to the federal states in accordance with Section 45 of the German Asylum Act without considering their individual requirements and needs (cf. Deaf Refugees). This means that they often do not have access to “barrier-free” advice and services in their language, i.e. the sign language they use. The bureaucratic distribution of deaf refugees also deprives them of access to the deaf community and leads to exclusion and isolation (cf. ibid.). The NGO ‘Deaf Refugees’ has set itself the goal of addressing just this problem and opening up accessible services tailored to the needs of deaf refugees. The national network of deaf associations and organisations on the federal, state and local levels not only offers a hotline, but also acts as a central point of contact for communication, information and support for deaf refugees (cf. Deaf Refugees). Among others, ‘Deaf Refugees’ provides services to facilitate access, such as the translation of frequently asked questions (FAQ) and a database of interpreters (cf. ibid.). These resources are designed to help refugees find their way in their new environment and to help them clarify their questions and concerns. As one of the biggest challenges for deaf refugees is that they have little or no access to sign language, ‘Deaf Refugees’ is actively committed to facilitating this access and thus to connecting with the deaf and sign language communities (cf. German Engagement Award).

TRANSNATIONAL MIGRATION OF SIGNS

Comparing the signs of the national sign languages might be an exciting project in the context of transnational service Learning. The comparison to the sign for ‘INCLUSION’ sheds light on the transnational migration of words and signs: The LIU-sign for ‘INCLUSION’ (B1) is very similar to the DGS-sign for ‘INTEGRATION’ and the ASL-sign for ‘MAINSTREAMING’. The DGS-sign for ‘INCLUSION’ (B2) reflects the ongoing debate on inclusive language in Germany - a topic that is just starting to be discussed in Jordan right now.
References:


Online sources:

Deaf Refugees, last accessed on 15.11.23 at www.deafrefugees.de
German Engagement Award, last accessed on 15.11.23 at www.deutscher-engagementpreis.de/publikumspreis/nominierte/foerderverein-der-gehoerlosen/hoerbehinderten-ev-brd
Profile of the Elbschule, an educational centre for hearing and communication. Last accessed on 15.11.23 at https://elbschule.hamburg.de/?page_id=42

Image Sources:


Building on the two previous project runs in 2020 and 2021, the THE- project was used this year to deepen transcultural cooperation between the faculties of the two universities and to initiate cooperation with NGOs working in the field of inclusion with a focus on disability and/or migration and flight, language and the culture of remembrance in Hamburg and Amman, and to create an expansion of knowledge and perspectives through exchange.

The cooperation with the NGOs has shown that different aspects of inclusion cannot be considered independently of each other, but are closely linked. Although individual research aspects were discussed and highlighted in the individual groups, all project members thus generally took part in the lectures, workshops and discussions with the NGOs.

During the reciprocal visits in Amman and Hamburg transcultural reflections were made possible, which generated and expanded in-depth context-based knowledge and insights into various NGO programs and target groups as well as their framework conditions and impacts on socialization, communication, interaction and pedagogical self-concepts. With a view to the context-based knowledge imparted about the work of NGOs and their different backgrounds, the following questions, among others, could be answered:

- How does the accommodation and labor market integration of refugees in Hamburg take place? What role does the Hamburg Welcome Center play in this?
- What projects promote multilingualism and improve the German language skills of migrated children?
- What significance does the topic of remembrance culture have in Germany?
- Are support services available for refugees with disabilities or limitations in Hamburg?
- Why is the involvement of NGOs on refugee migration so important in Jordan?
- Are support services available for refugees in Jordan, especially for women?
- What aspects does the Ministry of Disabilities in Amman take into account developing a strategy for the inclusion of people with disabilities?
In addition to focusing these questions, the cooperation was used to develop joint ideas on how universities, i.e. students and employees, as well as NGOs can benefit from each other and how students in particular can get involved in the sense of service learning.

This development of ideas and as well as theoretical reflections were result-oriented and goal-oriented, but various difficulties arose during the practical implementation. One example is the exchange with the Bücherkoffer program, which has developed multilingual and transcultural books with various authors in order to make them available for elementary and primary schools. As these books do not consider the aspect of inclusion with a focus on disability, the idea was developed to write a book taking this aspect into account with the help of the special education department at the University of Hamburg. However, this was rejected due to a lack of financial and human resources.

Nevertheless, long-term cooperation between NGOs and universities has developed. For example, Tarek Jabi, head of the IQ Fair Integration project of Arbeit und Leben Hamburg presented the German social system to GJU students as part of a digital meeting following the project.

A major challenge, especially with regard to the topic of the culture of remembrance, which was addressed in Germany in particular and framed with a visit to the Neuengamme concentration camp, presented us with unexpected challenges after returning from Jordan and with the start of the Hamas attack on Israel and Israel's attacks on the Gaza Strip (October 2023). The GJU participants in particular subsequently felt that the Palestinian perspective should have been considered more deeply in the project. We responded by openly discussing our points of view in a virtual meeting and ensuring that the different perspectives were heard. This meeting was an important conclusion to maintain mutual understanding and to further strengthen transcultural communication.

We are currently discussing whether the content of this digital meeting and specifically the topic of memory could form the basis of a subsequent project to further strengthen and build collaboration between a university from the East and a university from the West.
CONCLUSION
SASKIA SPATH, TELSE IWERS

OUR THANKS GO TO THE NGOS THAT GAVE US EXCITING INSIGHTS:

Arbeit und Leben Hamburg e.V.- Faire Integration und Vielfalt in der Arbeitswelt
https://hamburg.arbeitundleben.de/

Collateral Repair Project https://www.collateralrepairproject.org/


Evangelische Stiftung Alsterdorf https://www.alsterdorf.de/start.html


Hamburger Bücherkofferprogramm e.V. https://www.coachatschool.org/inhalt-buecherkoffer/


King Hussein Foundation https://www.kinghusseinfoundation.org/en/Home

Royal institute for Inter-faith Studies https://riifs.org/en/


Wohnunterkunft Eulenkrugstraße, Fördern und Wohnen AöR. King Hussein Foundation
https://www.kinghusseinfoundation.org/en/Home
PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

- Prof. Dr. Telse Iwers - Head of Project - UHH
- Prof. Dr. Joachim Schroeder - Member of Project - UHH
- Prof. Dr. Gordon Mitchell - Principal Inspector - GJU
- Saskia Spath - Administrative Coordinator - UHH
- Dr. Bader Seetan Mujham Al-Madi - Project Coordinator - GJU
- Saba Saleem Suleiman Alajarmeh - Administrative Coordinator - GJU
- Mariam Ghazi Mahmoud Abu-Hussein - Project Coordinator - GJU
- Mahasen Issam Salim AlTal - Academic Coordinator - GJU
- Shakir Nabih Shaker Al-Kaisi - Student - GJU
- Jana Fedaa Hani Al-Nsour - Student - GJU
- Adam Taimour Farouq Douqa - Student - GJU
- Mina Hatem Abedalqader Ghanem - Student - GJU
- Deema Saleh Hussien Al Hamdan - Student - GJU
- Isabel Vonessen - Student - UHH
- Annalena Schnaudt - Student - UHH
- Abir Hussein - Student - UHH
- Negin Shah Hosseini - scientific assistant and phd student - UHH
- Felix Hansen - Student Assistant - UHH
- Estefania Suarez Fuentes - Student Assistant - UHH

Thank you