



Agnieszka Postuła

Uniwersytet Warszawski
Wydział Zarządzania
apostula@wz.uw.edu.pl

Agnieszka Brzozowska

Uniwersytet Warszawski
Wydział Zarządzania
agnieszka.w.brzozowska@gmail.com

DOI: 10.17399/HW.2018.174213

Cultural Studies of Immigrants from the Far East. Challenges for Entrepreneurial Education

ABSTRACT

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE: The article seeks to put forward recommendations for entrepreneurial education in the area of cultural studies and is a theoretical exercise.

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND METHODS: Our argumentation relies on a literature review and our own experience as field researchers having conducted cultural studies for years.

THE PROCESS OF ARGUMENTATION: Cultural studies are now gaining in importance given the ever more frequent migrations of people and increasing effects of globalization processes. We note that there are a few publications on the relationship between students participation in research and entrepreneurial education. Therefore, we have decided to share our experience and analyses resulting from our studies.

RESEARCH RESULTS: Well-designed and conducted research largely translates to reliable and accurate results that can be used in entrepreneurial education.

CONCLUSIONS, INNOVATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS: Cross-cultural issues in research, especially at present, are ever more important and worth examining from the perspectives of both research and education – in particular in entrepreneurial education which increasingly involves international aspects and requires entrepreneurs and company workers to possess cross-cultural competences.

→ **KEYWORDS:** **CULTURAL STUDIES, ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION, RESEARCH PROCESS, THE ROLE OF RESEARCHER, METHODOLOGY**

STRESZCZENIE

Badania kultury imigrantów Dalekiego Wschodu. Wyzwania dla edukacji przedsiębiorczej

CEL NAUKOWY: Artykuł o charakterze teoretycznym ma na celu sformułowanie rekomendacji dla edukacji przedsiębiorczej w obszarze badań kulturowych.

PROBLEM I METODY BADAWCZE: W naszym dowodzeniu opieramy się na przeglądzie literatury oraz własnych doświadczeniach jako wieloletnich badaczek terenowych w obszarze badań kulturowych.

PROCES WYWODU: W dzisiejszych czasach badania kultury zyskują na znaczeniu dzięki coraz częstszym migracjom ludności i coraz bardziej odczuwalnym skutkom procesów globalizacji. W literaturze w niewystarczającym stopniu analizuje się te zjawiska. Biorąc udział w projekcie finansowanym przez Narodowe Centrum Nauki dotyczącym badań kulturowych w obszarze przedsiębiorczość imigrantów w Polsce, zauważamy, że liczba publikacji dotyczących samego przebiegu procesu badawczego jest jeszcze mniejsza. Dlatego też postanowiliśmy podzielić się naszymi doświadczeniami i analizami z przebiegu prowadzonych badań. W artykule poruszymy następujące wątki: wiedza o badanym terenie, rola badacza, wybór właściwej metodologii badawczej, a w szczególności: wybór metod, sposób przeprowadzenia badania oraz techniki służące analizie zebranego materiału.

WYNIKI ANALIZY NAUKOWEJ: Dobrze zaprojektowane i wykonane badanie w wysokim stopniu przekłada się na rzetelne i wiarygodne wyniki badań, które mogą być wykorzystywane w edukacji przedsiębiorczej.

WNIOSKI, INNOWACJE, REKOMENDACJE: Temat międzykulturowości w badaniach – szczególnie w obecnym czasie – jest coraz bardziej istotny i warty podjęcia analiz, zarówno z perspektywy badań, jak i edukacji, szczególnie edukacji przedsiębiorczości, która coraz częściej jest przedsiębiorczością międzynarodową i wymaga kompetencji międzykulturowych od przedsiębiorców i pracowników firm.

→ **SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:** **BADANIA KULTUROWE, EDUKACJA PRZEDSIĘBIORCZA, PROCES BADAWCZY, ROLA BADACZA, METODOLOGIA**

1. Introduction

The article seeks to examine the interaction between cultural studies and entrepreneurial education. We intend to look into the process of designing cultural studies in order to show key points for entrepreneurial education.

Thereby, we wish to contribute to filling this gap by sharing our experience and findings from studies conducted among immigrant entrepreneurs. During this studies we noticed that many conclusions and skills which are needed in cultural studies are also

useful in entrepreneurial process. This findings could brought new ideas for teaching entrepreneurship.

We wish to demonstrate which skills learned by researchers during cross-cultural studies we believe to be valuable in teaching entrepreneurship. We also point to the involvement of students in research projects that will offer them the opportunity to develop their cross-cultural competences which could be useful in entrepreneurial activities.

2. Research method

The article is a theoretical review with critical. Our goal is to analyse the current discussions on cultural studies for entrepreneurship education and share our experience from the field. Our argumentation relies on a literature review and our own experience as field researchers having conducted cultural studies for years (Brzozowska, 2015; Brzozowska & Postuła, 2014) and teachers of entrepreneurship at the University. At present, we are participating in the project is about immigrant entrepreneurship.¹ Our research tasks included interviews with entrepreneurs from these countries. When carrying out our studies, we took notes concerning our reflections on the research process, and subsequently we held numerous discussions on the research methodology and developed skills during this process which could be useful in entrepreneurial teaching process.

3. Cultural studies and entrepreneurial education

The study of culture in the context of economic growth dates back to Weber (1930). Culture treated as a signpost that guides our actions, through which we see the reality (Magala, 2011), or the collective programming of community actions (Hofstede, 1994) has a huge impact on how entrepreneurs operate. Nonetheless, the analysis of this context is intricate due to its complexity, high dynamics and processual character (Glinka, 2015). Cultural factors affecting the entrepreneurial process encompass: historical factors, religion, cultural texts, educational system, authorities, internationalization and globalization processes (Glinka, 2008). A vital factor influencing the approach to entrepreneurship is its social legitimization (Baumol, 1990; Busenitz, Gomez, & Spencer, 2000) resulting from beliefs about entrepreneurs consolidated in the community through values, norms, common interpretations of reality (Fukuyama, 2001). In addition, entrepreneurial learning takes place, among others, through observation, and thus observation of everyday entrepreneurial culture (Bandura, 1997). When combining entrepreneurship with national culture, we can find many studies in the literature that regard the meaning of: power distance (Mitchell et al., 2000; Ardichvili & Gasparishvili, 2003; Zhao et al.,

¹ The paper was prepared as part of the project "Entrepreneurship of Immigrants from the Far East in Poland" financed by the National Science Centre UMO-2016/21/B/HS4/00767.

2012), avoidance of uncertainty (Busenitz & Lau, 1996; Mueller & Thomas, 2001), collectivism (Mitchell et al., 2000; Hayton et al., 2002; Zhao et al., 2012), and their role in the entrepreneurial activity of a nation.

3.2. The role of researcher

What is important in research planning is the attitude of researchers themselves, their awareness of the role that they have to play, and related tasks to be fulfilled cultural researchers (e.g. anthropologists) such as: Bronisław Malinowski (Young, 2008) or Clifford Geertz (1973), from whom anthropology of organizations draws, management specialists may discover the world of organizations in a similar fashion. Thus, a fresh look can be taken at organizations by adopting the approach that Barbara Czarniawska (1992) termed the anthropological attitude of researcher. The observer keeps distance to the studied object while remaining inside the group (insider research). The combination of distance and deep closeness to the world of organizations is crucial for ethnographic cognition through participant observation. In this case, research optimization is imperative, meaning that two types – an insider and outsider researcher – must be combined, and the researcher must simultaneously play the roles of an indigene (moving freely in the field), an ethnographer (aware of the methodology applied), a visitor (taking a fresh look at the group under study) and a friend (building positive relations with respondents) (Ybema & Kamsteeg, 2009). What is vital in research – regardless of the chosen methodology – is the openness of mind, a friendly attitude towards respondents, a fresh look at the new reality, and the childlike curiosity to discover new things.

3.3. Methodological preparation

Another meaningful stage in the research process preparation is the selection of methodology appropriate to the field. This essentially should begin with ontological and epistemological decisions in order to maintain the research logic; given the limited space, however, we do not wish to elaborate on these anyway crucial choices in this article. Instead, we will focus on methodology planning, namely the choice of appropriate research methods and techniques, result interpretation and subsequent transcription of interviews (Miles & Huberman, 2000).

The selection of methodology is closely related to the adopted research perspective described above. In studies treating culture as an internal (dependent) variable, we analyse organizational culture.

Currently, our particular interest focuses on the approach to culture as an external (independent) variable. We are studying the entrepreneurship of Asian immigrants in Poland. Researchers need specific contacts and specialist mediation in order to reach the group they wish to study. The language of the collected material is also a weighty

issue for all translations hamper its interpretation. This is particularly true of research following the lines of the third perspective – culture as a root metaphor. The language, symbols and all other manifestations of culture must be thoroughly analysed, and the researcher's knowledge in this area cannot be overestimated.

3.4. Cross-cultural studies

The literature contains many texts describing how to interpret the results obtained from cross-cultural studies. Yet, little attention is paid to researchers' background and knowledge that they should accumulate before they commence studies. Particularly strong focus is on developing reliable tests that should be universal and supracultural, the goal thus being the minimization of cultural impact on the variable sought (Berry & Dasen, 1974; Vijver, 2001). In qualitative research, on the other hand, the issues raised include the role of translators and their impact on findings as well as related problems (Björk Brämberg & Dahlberg, 2013; Orlove, 2002; Stanner, 2011; Wong & Poon, 2010). Many researchers recommend that cultural studies rely on ethnography, systematic observation and in-depth interviews so as to understand the respondents' culture (Bhawuk & Triandis, 1996). Trust is greater if the researcher comes from the same community as the interviewees (Lê, 2008). Understanding the process of building relations will increase the odds of research project success.

3.5. Entrepreneurial education

Appropriate entrepreneurial education will allow entrepreneurship to develop, positively affecting socio-economic progress (Daszkiewicz, 2013; Gawel, 2011; Peterman & Kennedy, 2003; Rachwał, 2010; Sułkowski, 2016; Wach, 2007). Entrepreneurial education influences the very entrepreneurial intent and helps develop creative thinking (Žur, 2014). In Europe, however, education still tends to hamper rather than strengthen the entrepreneurial potential (Kirby, 2004). Students look for various educational offers that would support them in developing entrepreneurship and creative thinking (Popowska & Starnawska, 2011). And what entrepreneurial education should reinforce is new forms of thinking and the search of creative solutions (Heinonen & Poikkijoki, 2006), recognition of opportunities, self-assessment of knowledge and skills, pursuit of autonomy, willingness to take risks, and planning skills (Zbierowski, 2014).

3.6. Research for students education

Some research (Hunter et al., 2007; Lopatto, 2009) has indicated that benefits to students' participating in research include thinking and working like a researcher, becoming

a scientist, clarification, confirmation, and refinement of career/education paths, and enhanced career and graduate school preparation. Students argue that participation in research gives them the opportunity to gain knowledge from real-life, know-how and information from practice (Jenkins et al. 1998). Also the motivation for attending the lecture is increasing (Breen & Lindsay, 1999), facilitating learning (Brew, 1999).

4. Analysis results

As a summary of our reflections, we will present which skills researcher should have to participate in cultural studies. Among the fundamental issues, we have counted the ethical approach both in research and in student education, certain specific cultural competencies of the researcher, multidimensional relations, and the necessary knowledge of cultural studies.

What we consider crucial in cross-cultural studies is the ethics – researcher's approach that should rest upon a positive, open, equality-based attitude towards interlocutors, respecting their otherness (Laycock, 2011). It is also important to ensure safe interview conditions so that our interlocutors do not feel as if they were interrogated. Safety and care of interlocutors seem to be very significant factors. From the point of view of cultural studies, it is thus important to devote some classes to ethical issues and ways of building trust, which should translate not only into more efficient research but also into better international cooperation opportunities for students.

When conducting cross-cultural studies, it is worth setting up teams of researchers from different cultural backgrounds, where members can help one another interpret the interviews and explain ambiguous behaviours of interviewees. This may also assist in relation building because respondents can feel better understood in a situation when they talk to a person who belongs to the same culture. We think that researchers must be selected depending on the subject and the attitudes of respondents to their compatriots. Another solution might involve consultations with members of the studied culture who could comment on the research findings and possibly discuss the points that seem unclear to them.

As our experience shows, earlier establishment of relations with the research field is of great importance for the research success. They build a sense of security and trust. In many cultures, relations are crucial (most cultures in the world, however, are pro-partnership), hence without this awareness and the ability to navigate in particular communities, research is doomed to failure.

Generally, cultural studies have a humanistic dimension and provide humanistic values. Encouraging students to conduct cross-cultural studies can help them develop their openness to the world and get accustomed to other cultures. The presentation of study results by researchers and education about how to carry out cross-cultural studies will be equally important. Since knowledge develops as interpersonal relations are being formed (Yeager & Hurley-Dasgupta, 2013), research projects in this area will allow students to actively learn about cultures.

A strong emphasis should be placed on educating students and young researchers about applied methodologies. This allows for the research to be appropriately designed in line with good practice and well-chosen tools to be used consciously. Obviously, this enhances the reliability of research and results, while better equipping other researchers for the interpretation of exploration results. This is impossible without good knowledge of the tool.

5. Conclusions and future recommendations

On the basis of our experience, we believe that universities still put insufficient emphasis on education about international cooperation and the establishment of cross-cultural teams that would help comprehend how different cultures function. It will be especially crucial for students who are thinking about leading international business. Also this would contribute to better preparation of students for participation in cross-cultural projects at universities and in international corporations. Furthermore, developing students' awareness of the challenges in cross-cultural studies will undoubtedly equip them for cooperation in an international environment and help them understand how to work there in order to build efficient relationships. In our view, it is important that ethics classes are included in student education so that students can develop the attitude of openness, tolerance and equality with other communities. This may make it easier for them to understand members of other cultures in the future, and simultaneously enhance their creativity. After all, tolerance is a factor recognized by Florida (2010) as a 3T creativity indicator that raises the standard of living of society. The Creative Economy Composite Index described by Bobirc and Draghici (2011) includes an openness component defined as the share of immigrants in the society for which the index is calculated. Contact with other cultures and learning about them will also allow students to find out about the diversity of approaches to entrepreneurship and applied solutions.

We also wished to emphasize the importance of cross-cultural studies in the context of university courses (Cushner, 2007). Based on their research experience, academic teachers can share their knowledge with students during the courses that they run. And as shown by research, knowledge and teaching competences also affect entrepreneurial education (Brzozowska, Glinka & Postuła, 2014).

In conclusion, it seems to us that cross-cultural issues in research, especially at present, are ever more important and worth examining from the perspectives of both research and education – in particular in entrepreneurial education which increasingly involves international aspects and requires entrepreneurs and company workers to possess cross-cultural competences.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy. The exercise of control*. New York: W.H. Freeman & Company.
- Baumol, W.J. (1990). Entrepreneurship: productive, unproductive, and destructive. *Journal of Political Economy*, 98(5), 893-921.
- Bhawuk, D. & Triandis, H. (1996). The role of culture theory in the study of culture and intercultural training. In: D.Landis & R.W. Brislin (eds.), *Handbook of intercultural training*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 17-34.
- Berry, J.W. & Dasen, P.R. (1974). Introduction: history and method in the cross-cultural study of cognition. In: J.W. Berry & P.R. Dasen (eds.), *Culture and Cognition*. London: Methuen, 1-20.
- Björk Brämberg, E. & Dahlberg, K. (2013). Interpreters in cross-cultural interviews: A three-way coconstruction of data. *Qualitative Health Research*, 23, 241-247.
- Bobirca, A. & Draghici, A. (2011). Creativity and Economic Development. *World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology*, 59, 887-892.
- Breen, R. & Lindsay, R. (1999). Academic Research and Student Motivation. *Studies in Higher Education*, Vol. 24, No.1, 75-93.
- Brew, A. (1999). Research and Teaching: Changing Relationships in a Changing Context. *Studies in Higher Education*, Vol. 24, No. 3, 291-301.
- Busenitz L.W., Gomez, C., & Spencer, J.W. (2000). Country institutional profiles: unlocking entrepreneurial phenomena. *Academy of Management Journal*, 43(5), 994-1003.
- Brzozowska, A., Glinka, B., & Postuła, A., (2014). Role of University of Creating Entrepreneurial Attitudes. *Horyzonty Wychowania*, 13(26), 91-104.
- Brzozowska, A. & Postuła, A. (2014). The cultural determinants of entrepreneurship. An example of the Vietnamese immigrants running their own business in Poland. *Problemy Zarządzania*, Vol. 12, No. 4(49), 2, 117-138.
- Brzozowska, A. (2015). *Przedsiębiorczość imigrantów wietnamskich w Polsce*. Doktorat obroniony na Wydziale Zarządzania UW, nieopublikowany.
- Busenitz L.W., Gomez, C., & Spencer, J.W. (2000). Country institutional profiles: unlocking entrepreneurial phenomena. *Academy of Management Journal*, 43(5), 994-1003.
- Cushner, K. (2007). The role of experience in the making of internationally-minded teachers. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 34(1), 27-40.
- Czarniawska-Joerges, B. (1992). *Exploring Complex Organizations. A Cultural Perspective*. London: Sage.
- Daszkiewicz, N. (2013). Education as a Stimulating Factor for Entrepreneurship Development. *Horyzonty Wychowania*, 13(26), 165-177.
- Florida, R. (2010). *Narodziny klasy kreatywnej*. Warszawa: Narodowe Centrum Kultury.
- Fukuyama, F. (2001). Culture and Economic Development: Cultural Concerns. *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Amsterdam: Elsevier, 3130-3134.
- Gaweł, A. (2011). Kształcenie uniwersyteckie jako czynnik wpływający na przedsiębiorczość. *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Poznaniu*, 215, 71-87.
- Glinka, B. (2008). *Kulturowe uwarunkowania przedsiębiorczości w Polsce*. Warszawa: Polskie Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne.
- Heinonen, J. & Poikkijoki, S. (2006). An Entrepreneurial-directed Approach to Entrepreneurship Education: Mission Impossible? *Journal of Management Development*, Vol. 25, No. 1, 80-94.
- Hunter, A.B., Laursen, S.L., & Seymour, E. (2007). Becoming a scientist: The role of undergraduate research in student' cognitive, personal, and professional development. *Science Education*, 91(1), 36-74.
- Jensen, J. (1988). Research and Teaching in the Universities of Denmark: Does such an interplay really exist? *Higher Education*, Vol. 17, 17-26.

- Laycock, A. (2011). *Researching Indigenous health: A practical guide for researchers*. Carlton South, Vic: Lowitja Institute.
- Lê, Q. (2008). Intercultural issues in conducting health care qualitative research. *Quality Research Journal*, Vol. 8, 104-112).
- Lopatto, D. (2009). *Science in solution: The impact of undergraduate research on student learning*. Tucson, AZ: The Research Corporation.
- Magala, S.J. (2011). *Kompetencje międzykulturowe*. Warszawa: Oficyna Wolters Kluwer business.
- Miles, M.B. & Huberman, A.M. (2000). *Analiza danych jakościowych*. Białystok: Trans Humana.
- Orlove, B. (2002). *Lines in the water: Nature and culture at Lake Titicaca*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Rachwał, T. (2010). Entrepreneurship Education as a Growth Stimulus for Family Firms (chapter 9). In: A. Surdej, K. Wach (eds), *Exploring the Dynamics of Entrepreneurship*. Toruń: Marszałek Publishing House, 139-156.
- Popowska, M. & Starnawska, M. (2011). Formy edukacji wspierające przedsiębiorczość w Pomorskiem. *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego. Ekonomiczne Problemy Usług*, 63, 182-188.
- Stanner, W.E.H. (2011). *The dreaming and other essays*. Melbourne: Black.
- Sułkowski, Ł. (2016). *Kultura akademicka – koniec utopii?* Łódź: Wydawnictwo Społecznej Akademii Nauk w Łodzi.
- Vijver, F.V. (2001). The evolution of cross-cultural research methods. In: D. Matsumoto (ed.), *The handbook of culture and psychology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 77-97.
- Wach, K. (2007). Kształtowanie postaw przedsiębiorczych w programach nauczania: Stan obecny i proponowane kierunki zmian. W: P. Wachowiak, M. Dąbrowski, & B. Majewski (eds.), *Kształtowanie postaw przedsiębiorczych a edukacja ekonomiczna*. Warszawa: Fundacja Promocji i Akredytacji Kierunków Ekonomicznych, 120-127.
- Weber, M. (1930). *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Wong, J.P.-H. & Poon, M.K.-L. (2010). Bringing translation out of the shadows: Translation as an issue of methodological significance in cross-cultural qualitative research. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing: Official Journal of the Transcultural Nursing Society/Transcultural Nursing Society*, 21, 151-158.
- Ybema, S. & Kamsteeg, F. (2009). *Making the familiar strange: A case for disengaged organizational Ethnography*. In: S. Ybema, D. Yanow, H. Wels, & Kamsteeg F. (eds.), *Organizational Ethnography. Studying the Complexities of Everyday Life*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Yeager, C. Hurley-Dasgupta, B. (2013). CMOOCS and Global Learning: An Authentic Alternative. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 17(2).
- Young, M.W. (2008). *Bronisław Malinowski Odyseja antropologa 1884-1920*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Książkowe „Twój Styl”.
- Zbierowski, P. (2014). Determinanty intencji przedsiębiorczej studentów – wyniki badań. *Horyzonty Wychowania*, 13(28), 51-63.
- Zhao, X., Li, H., & Rauch, A. (2012). Cross-Country Differences in Entrepreneurial Activity: The Role of Cultural Practice and National Wealth. *Frontiers of Business Research in China*, 6(4), 447-474.
- Żur, A. (2014). Exploring the Role of Inspiration in Entrepreneurship Education. *Horyzonty Wychowania*, 13(26), 179-194.

Copyright and License



This article is published under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution – NoDerivs (CC BY- ND 4.0) License <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/4.0/>