



Asia-Europe Meeting
ASEM Education and Research Hub
for Lifelong Learning

e-Newsletter No.9 • November 2009

The ASEM LLL Hub Secretariat, International Research Policy Office, Danish School of Education, Aarhus University • Tuborgvej 164, DK- 2400 Copenhagen NV, Denmark.
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Published in English and Chinese

ASEM LLL Hub Research Network 5 Workshop:

“Managing and Developing Core Competences in a Learning Society”, 29-30 October 2009, Seoul, Korea.

Sponsored by the Seoul National University, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other partner institutions.

The Network’s Coordinator: Professor Soonghee Han, Seoul National University, Korea.



ASEM LLL Hub Research Network 5 workshop: “Managing and Developing Core Competences in a Learning Society”, 29-30 October, Seoul, Korea.

The workshop entitled **“Managing and Developing Core Competences in a Learning Society”** took place on 29-30 October 2009 at Seoul National University, Seoul, Korea. This workshop was part of the 10th International Conference on Educational Research - ICER 2009 “Global and Comparative Perspectives in Academic Competence, Evaluation and Quality Assurance”.

The workshop was organised by the ASEM Research Network 5 on Core Competences as a result of the network’s meeting in March 09 in Copenhagen.

15 presentations were delivered by the researchers from Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, Korea, Thailand, UK and USA in three sessions of the workshop which stimulated the discussion on the **nature, operation and conceptualisation of human competences in a learning society**. Core competences required for individual learners were analysed in the context of Asian and European learning societies with diverse approaches and perspectives. Furthermore, having addressed emerging issues and challenges to competence development, the scholars proposed alternative ways in which school learning systems and adult education systems could be organized and restructured in the future learning society.

The three sessions covered three themes:

- Life, Learning and Competence in a Learning Society
- School Curriculum for Competence Development in a Learning Society
- Competence in Higher and Adult Education in a Learning Society

The first session “Life, Learning and Competence in a Learning Society” dealt with the meaning and significance of concepts of competence from different perspectives, viewing competence as

- demographic and situated properties of knowledge,
- set of learning abilities and experiences: self-development, socialisation and culturalisation
- latency and limits of performance,
- commodity for knowledge capitalism.

In this session, participants pointed to the missing parts in the dominant discourse on competence - the nature of competence, that is tacitly embedded and situated in individual-social transactions. Moreover, the concept of competence was proposed as ‘commodification of human ability’ that obtains a standardized and measurable monetary value in the labour market, and thereby becomes a crucial sub-system of knowledge capitalism.



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In the **second session** “School Curriculum for Competence Development in a Learning Society”, more specific arguments grounded in empirical studies were developed about core competences across different levels of educational systems, focusing on:

- adult learner multi-role identities
- social-cultural learning systems (communities of practices: e.g. higher education contexts, homeschoolers' borderless learning)
- transformation of learner's existential structure in time, space, relationship and activity
- student beliefs, positioning and reflections in practice
- effective development of core competences through school curriculum
- comparison of policies boosting competence development at the international level.

This session highlighted other challenges and issues:

- the negotiation of meaning of adult learners, core competence outcomes in relation to both their communities of practices and their multi-role identities
- the changing nature of competence and role of the education system in competence development proposed by cross-country comparison of analytical competence based on performance in mathematics, existential competence emerged from homeschoolers' borderless learning experiences.

The **third session** focused on “Core Competences in Higher and Adult Education” for the future of lifelong learning societies. Key issues were:

- the importance of and interaction between internal factors and external factors in triggering transformation towards a learning organization
- the significance of lived experiences from participating in practice and meanings constructed from the experiences
- different types of participation in classroom practice and different paths of competence development
- the developmental approach toward education research competence.



Professor Soonghee Han, Coordinator of the ASEM Research Network 5 on Core Competences.



Professor Lena Lindenskov (standing), Danish School of Education, Aarhus University.

See the workshop presentations at www.dpu.dk/ASEMRN5SeoulOct09



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ASEM LLL Hub Research Network 5: Action Plan and Future Directions, Seoul October 2009

An edited-book

The network decided to publish an edited book consisting of selected papers presented at the workshop. Peer-reviewing and editing processes were scheduled to be completed by summer 2010 in agreement with the authors and Springer publisher in order for the book to be ready for the ASEM LLL Hub Conference in Autumn 2010.

Comparative Research on Mathematic and Analytical Competence.

Building on the cross-country comparative study in analytical competence by using mathematic achievements, the network



The network meeting at Seoul National University, October 2009.

members agreed to also take cultural differences into consideration and design a new and common set of instruments to measure analytical competence and compare various aspects of analytical competence across a number of countries.

Read the project proposal [here](#)

Anthology of History of Competence Concepts

The network members agreed to collect data on history and social background in their own countries in which the concept of competence has distinctive meanings and roles in facing the challenges of the current and future societies. A comparative paper will be jointly developed by examining the emergence, usage and history of the concept of competence in different countries. The network members planned to complete the paper by July 2010.

Policy Recommendations

With collective efforts in materialising the above joint projects, the network members will keep making clear how their work can be interpreted into policy recommendations for ASEM countries.

Network Meeting in March 2010, Glasgow, UK

Next network meeting will be held in March 2010 at the University of Glasgow, UK. The agenda includes:

- collaborative research: review progress and agree concrete action plan
- book publication, articles in international journals to strengthen the network's role in the discourse of competence
- programme for academic and student exchanges among partner universities
- membership expansion to include more universities and researchers representing at least 12 universities from 10 ASEM countries.

See regular updates on the Research Network 5 and other events on www.dpu.dk/asem