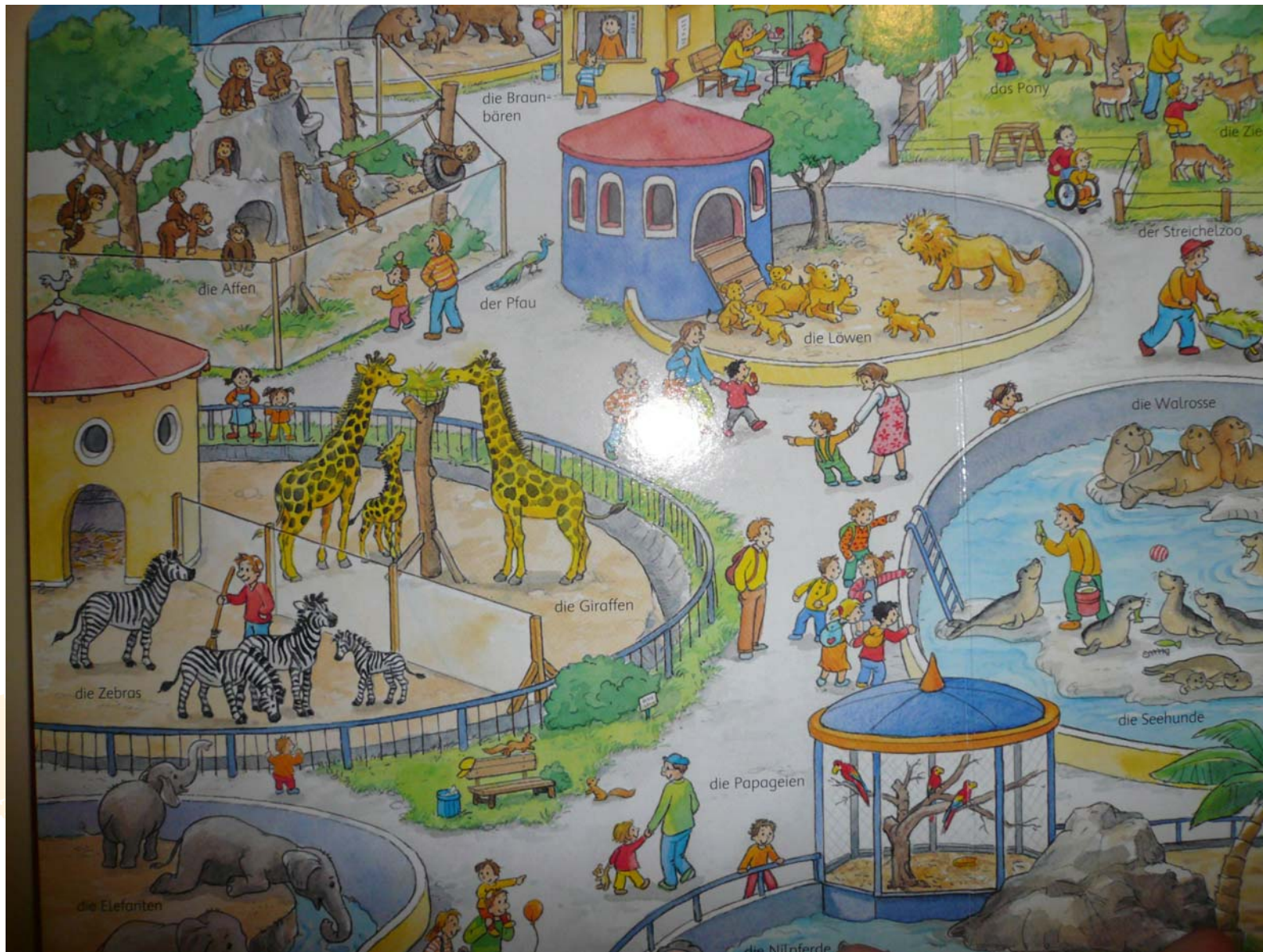


Intercultural Learning in Elementary Schooling

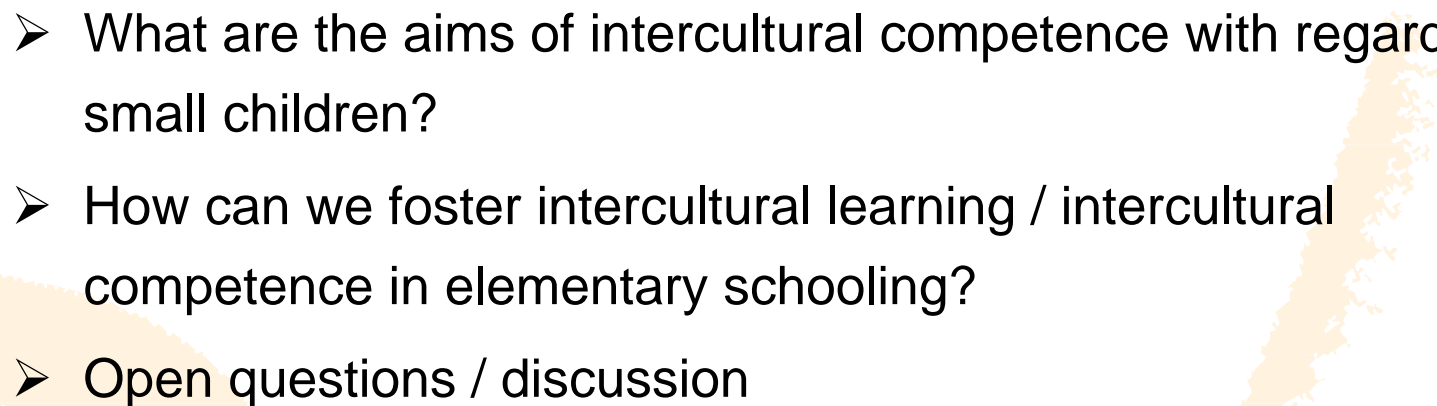
Early **L**anguage & **I**ntercultural **A**cquisition **S**tudies

Magdeburg, 24.1.2009

Prof. Dr. Ute Massler
PH Weingarten



Structure of presentation

- What is my understanding of culture and intercultural competence?
 - When and how do children develop awareness for diversity?
 - What are the aims of intercultural competence with regard to small children?
 - How can we foster intercultural learning / intercultural competence in elementary schooling?
 - Open questions / discussion
- 
- A decorative orange brushstroke graphic that starts from the bottom left, curves upwards and to the right, and then continues as a diagonal line towards the top right corner of the slide.

Culture / Intercultural learning

"... culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs".

UNESCO

(United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2002)

→ must be studied and taught (!)"indirectly" by looking at behaviour, customs, material culture (artefacts, tools, technology), language, etc.

Intercultural (communicative) competence / ICC

- **Intercultural competence (IC)** is the ability to interact effectively with people from cultures that we perceive as being different from our own
- IC focuses on establishing and maintaining relationships
- „**Intercultural Communicative Competence**“ (Byram, 1997) is the ability to interact in a foreign language with people from another country and culture
- **ICC = aim of intercultural learning**

How do children develop stereotypes or prejudices?

Children learn

- by observing differences and similarities among people and
- by absorbing the spoken and unspoken messages and judgements about those differences

(Wagner 2001: 2 ff)



When and how do children develop awareness for diversity?

6 months	infants notice skin colour differences (Katz, 1993)
2 years	children notice and ask questions about differences and similarities among people (Derman-Sparks, 1989)
2 ½ to 3 ½ years	children become aware and begin to absorb socially prevailing negative stereotypes, feelings and ideas about people (Derman-Sparks, 1989) children take over discriminating language expressions (nigger, gypsies,...)
7 years onward	children allocate discriminating language to groups of people or individuals as well as themselves (Oberhuemer, 1989)
9 years	seemingly racial attitudes tend to stay constant (Aboud, 1988)

Damage done to children's development caused by negative discrimination

Minority children are in danger of:

- Developing lower self-esteem
- Generally performing less well in society (education, career, ...)

Majority children are in danger of:

- Developing moral double standards
- Pretending to accept diversity, while feeling the opposite
- Constructing identity on a false sense of superiority
- Developing fears about people different from themselves
- Not developing skills for interacting with human diversity in society

(Dennis, 1981; Derman-Sparks, 1989; Miel, 1976; Wagner 2001)

How can we foster intercultural communicative competence in elementary school children?

1. Approach focussing on differences between cultures and the problems of minority children
2. “Tourist” approach



Tourist Approach

→ Activities about "other" cultures often exhibit the following problems:

- * **Disconnection**
- * **Patronization**
- * **Trivialization**
- * **Misrepresentation**

(Derman-Sparks, 1989)

Liebe Eltern

Ein großer immerwährender Wunsch der Kinder im letzten Jahr war, dass ihre Eltern im Kindergarten für alle Kinder kochen. Aus dieser Idee heraus möchten wir ein **Kochprojekt mit Eltern und ihren Kindern für Kinder** starten. Das heißt Mama oder Papa kocht mit Kind und 1-3 Freunden für die Kindergartengruppe an von uns vorgeschlagenen Terminen ein Gericht aus der Heimat.

Wir stellen uns vor, dass kleine typisch heimische Gerichte (z.B. afrikanische, arabische, ungarische, italienische, russische etc) angeboten werden.

Die Zutaten werden entweder über einen kleinen Beitrag in Form von Geld oder über Lebensmittelspenden durch alle Eltern gesponsert.

Die Eltern die sich in die aushängende Liste eintragen sprechen in der Gruppe ab, was sie kochen werden und wie sie die Kosten für das Gericht decken lassen möchten. Wir Erzieher teilen Ihnen dieses mit und sammeln die Spenden ein.

Zur Erinnerung noch mal die Kochtage, jeweils von ca 10:00-12:30 (je nach Aufwendigkeit):

Löwenzahngruppe	Pusteblumengruppe
05.02.09	29.01.09
12.03.09	12.02.09
26.03.09	26.02.09



Anti-Bias approach

Prerequisites

- accept multilingualism and multiculturalism as a form of living
- see culture-related conflicts as developmental chances
- nurture each child's construction of a confident self-concept and group identity (bicultural if appropriate) (Wagner 2001)

Teaching aims (Anti-Bias approach) => developing

- curiosity and openness towards foreign languages and foreign cultures
- language and culture-related self-awareness and flexibility competence with regard to foreignness (*Fremdheitskompetenz*)
- sensitivity for and capacity to act against negative discrimination
- focussing on similarities between different cultures but not denying differences nor problems of minority children

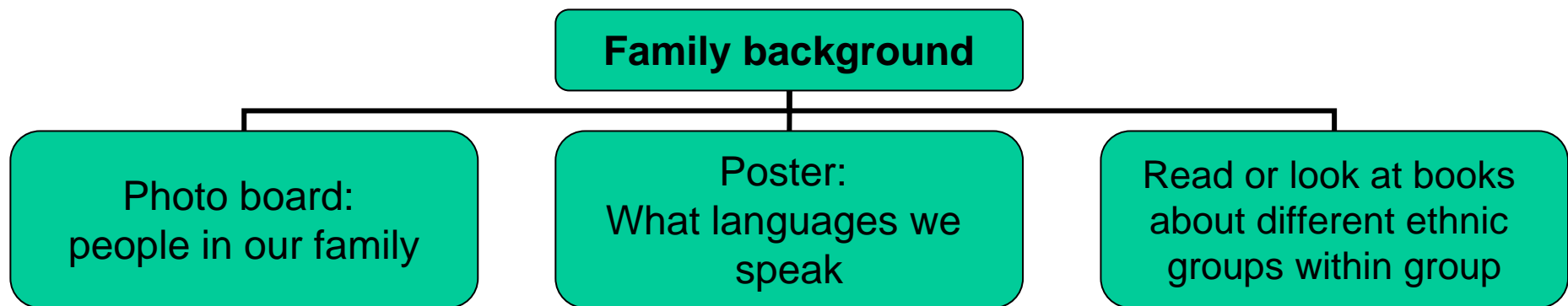
(adapted from Derman-Sparks 1999; Ulich 1994, 1998; Ulich/Oberhuemer, 2003)

Basic principles / avoiding tourist approach

- Linking cultural activities to concrete children and their families
- Differentiating between cultural practices of an ethnic group and how a specific family lives
- Connecting cultural activities with children's daily life
- Starting out by discussing cultural diversity within elementary school group



Principles and examples for activities in Anti-Bias programmes



Principles and examples for activities in Anti-Bias programmes

Cooking

- Cook what some but also what all families cook
- Don't use stereotypes (Leonie/Mohamed's family cooks .., NOT: German/Turkish people cook ...)
- Refer regularly to cultural diversity of the food we eat every day
- Don't force children to eat, show them how to renounce politely without offending anyone

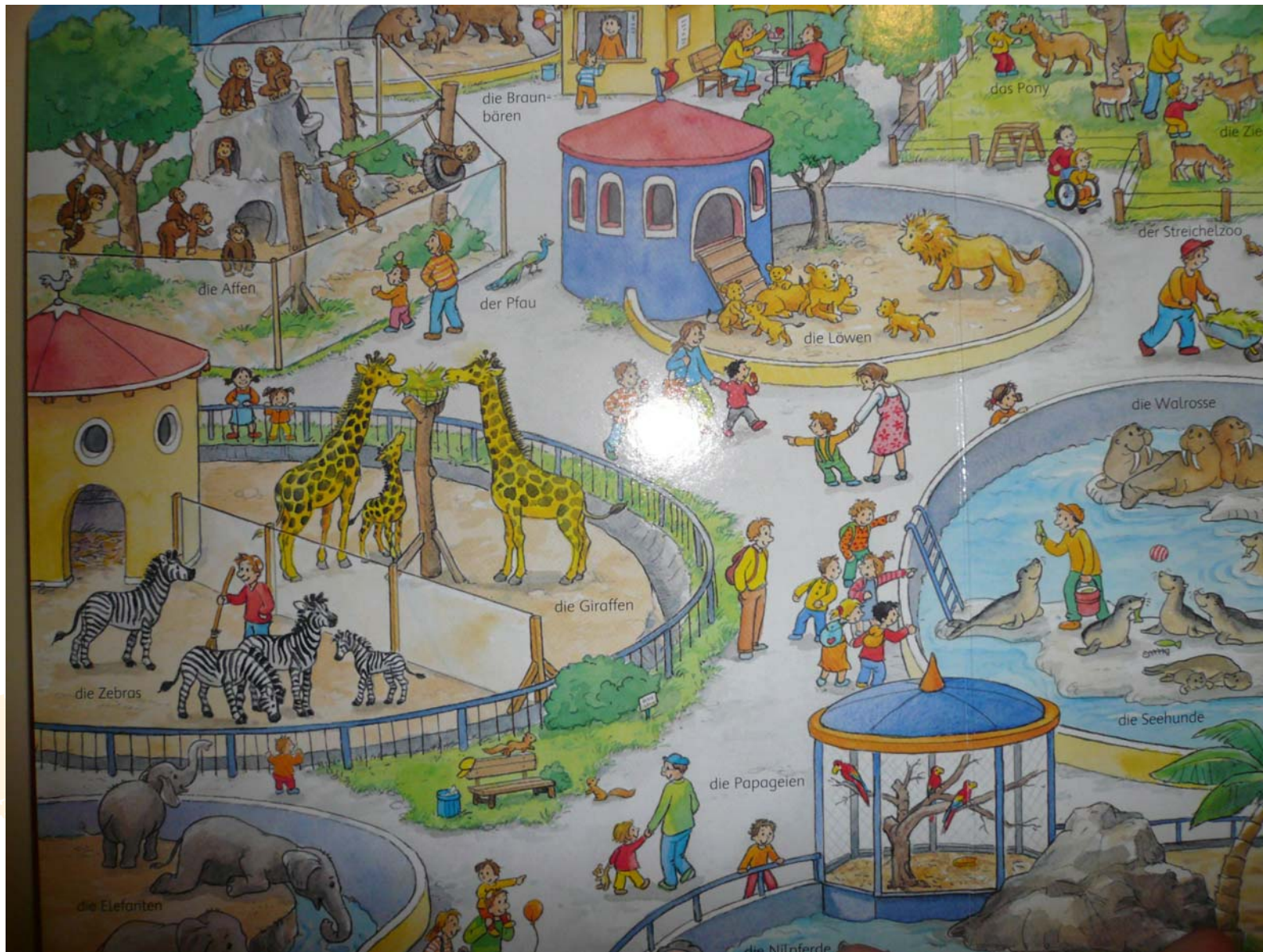
Teacher competences

Teachers need to know:

- How to see their own culture in relationship to society's history and current power realities
- How to effectively adapt their teaching style and curriculum content to their children's needs
- How to engage in cultural conflict resolution with people from cultural backgrounds other than their own
- How to be critical thinkers about bias in their practice
- How to be activists to create change

Termine für und mit Eltern

26.01.	20:00	Schulanfängerelternabend in der Kita- Immergrün
18.03.	16:00	Eltern- Kind- Spiele- Nachmittag
26.03.	ab 9:00	Sprachheiluntersuchung für interessierte und besorgte Familien
17.06.	20:15	Thematischer Elternabend in der Kita- Immergrün
08.07.	15:00	Sommerfest
11.07.		Stadtteilstadtfest



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www.elias.bilikita.org



The ELIAS project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

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**Herzlichen Dank für
Ihre Aufmerksamkeit.**

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