



COMMUNITYS OF
PRACTICE

HOW DO WE LEARN FROM LANGUAGE CAFÉS?

STINA ÅMO
OSLOMET -
STORBYUNIVERSITETET
OSLO, NORWAY

THE SITUATION IN NORWAY 2016

- 13.4% of Norway's population was immigrants (SSB, 2016).
- The public libraries expressed that they wanted to be an arena for integration and wanted to attract more people with minority background.
- Fewer groups of immigrants had rights to free Norwegian language classes due to changes in laws in 2004 and 2005.
- Language Cafés became more common from about 2013, almost every public library in Norway had a café by 2016.

MY SITUATION UP TO 2016

- Student (bachelor) and substitute at Deichman library (Oslo).
- Started a language café at Deichman Furuset 2014.
- From 2014 to 2016: Involved in different ways in 6 different language cafes in Oslo.
- Published two articles about language cafes.
- Tried to convince people we needed a forum, a place to cooperate and exchange ideas.

CHRISTMAS AT LINDBERG

INTEGRATION
(...am I doing this correctly?)

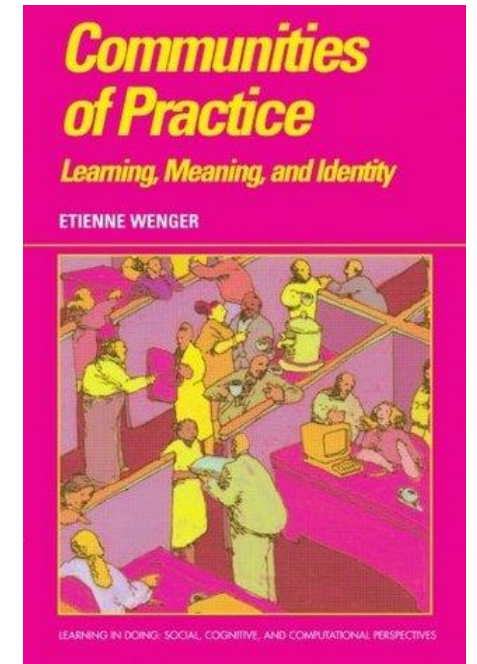
RESEARCH QUESTION

How can we make sure that the learning potential from the operation of language cafés can be safeguarded and developed in the library sector?



WHAT IS COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE ?

- «Communities of practice is groups of people that share a concern or a commitment to what they are working with - they learn from each other how they can do better because they interact regularly» (Rundberg, 2009).
- Organisations do not really learn anything, individuals learn.
- Another perspective is that organizations learn through formalizing / developing routines and / or attitudes.



DIFFERENT DEGREES OF INTERACTION BETWEEN THE LIBRARY AND THE VOLUNTEERS:

I MADE THIS!

I recruited the volunteers.

I made the topic of the day.

I listened to everyone in the pause.

I'LL BE PRESENT WHILE YOU DO THAT..

I will be in the library, and I will make the coffee, but I have limited time to talk to you, I need to work.

OUTSOURCED

Please leave a note about how many attended, I need it for the statistics.

METHOD

Case:

- Two departments with Deichmanske Library (Oslo, Norway).
- Both departments ran their own language café.
- Both departments were located in areas with relative high proportions of immigrants.

Qualitative interview :

- Leader of the department.
- Coworker in charge of multilanguage collection.
- The one in charge of the language café.

HOW TO MEASURE LEARNING?

- We identified three possible indicators that learning had taken place :
 - Change in language of information aimed at immigrants.
 - Change in the multilingual collection.
 - Change in services aimed at immigrants.

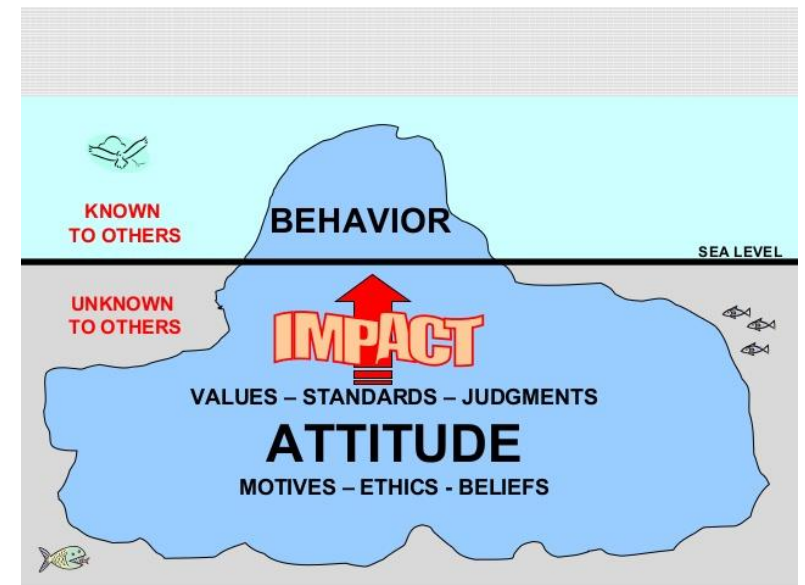


RESULTS - LEARNING

- Report – for the most part not written, seldom read, never discussed.
- Topic of the day – saved, reused within a year, seldom adjusted after feedback from participants or volunteers. Seldom shared.
- Asking others for tips – the ones that knew about others that worked with language café had asked for tips.
- Only one person had been asked if they needed some sort of course or if they wanted to attend some sort of seminar.
- The language café and/or integration was not a fixed point on the agenda at staff meetings, but people talked a bit about it during lunch.
- The department with the closest ties between coworkers had higher score for learning.

RESULTS - ATTITUDES AND VALUES

- Ethics, professional values and corporate social responsibility (CSR) has always been central values within the library profession. We found that these values had a big impact on all of our informants.
- Our informants declared they were positive towards immigration.
- These findings were important as attitudes and values shapes peoples behaviour.



AND NOW?

- Immigration from Syria has slowed down. In Norway there are fewer refugees to be settled. Better economy in East-Europa has led to fewer migrant workers (SSB, 2017).
- Deichman (Oslo, Norway) has chosen to cooperate with Red Cross Norway for operation of the language cafés at the big public libraries in the inner city (Outsourcing).
- The National library in Norway have examined the prevalence of language cafés in Norway.

Burundi situation

DR Congo emergency

Iraq emergency

Rohingya emergency

Syria emergency

Central African Republic situation

Europe situation

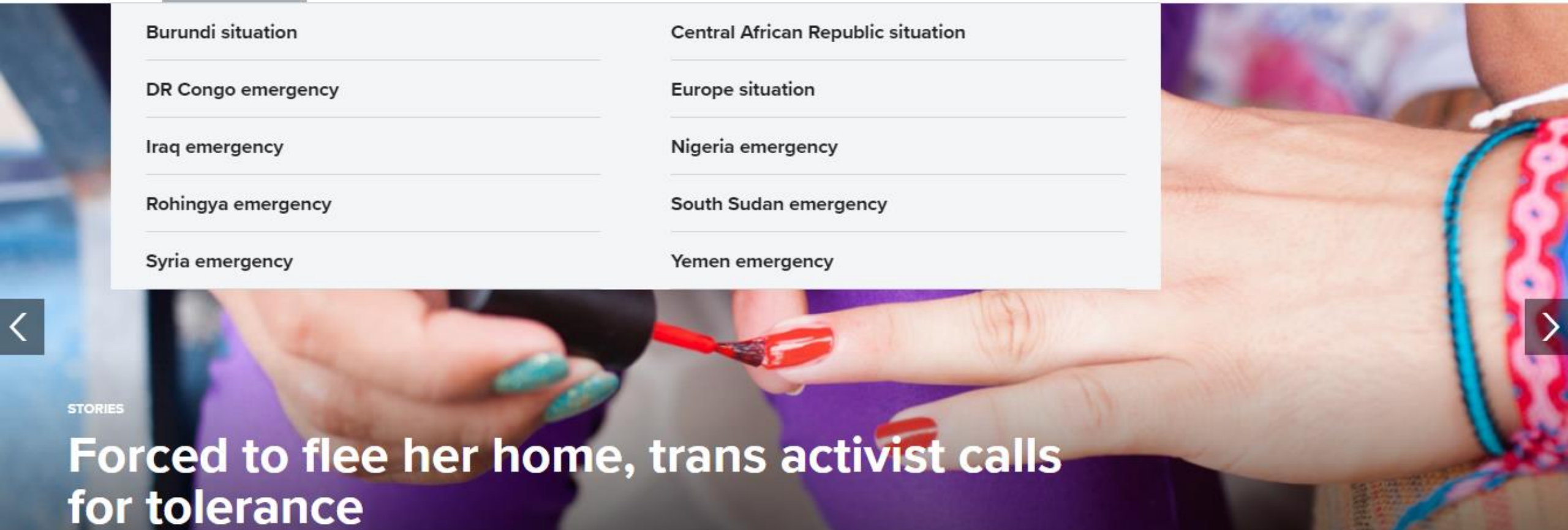
Nigeria emergency

South Sudan emergency

Yemen emergency

STORIES

Forced to flee her home, trans activist calls for tolerance



INTEGRATION - AM I DOING THIS CORRECTLY?

“We are the Borg. Lower your shields and surrender your ships. We will add your biological and technological distinctiveness to our own. Your culture will adapt to service us. Resistance is futile.”



IT'S A KIND OF MAGIC...

- Build trust.
- The magic happens with interaction.
- Offer information +
- Transfer values -

SUMMARY

- What role should the public libraries have?
- Close interaction gives more opportunities for learning.
- Integration goes both ways.

- It is imperative that the library continues to be a public agency with high trust in the public.
- Offer information and be a safe place to ask questions.
- Involve immigrants.

AND SO...

- Issue: What are the success criterias for achieving a well-functioning partnership between the volunteers and the public libraries?
- (Stakeholder teori)
- Frivillig.no contains alot of interesting research on volunteers.