

University of Luxembourg

IACCP - virtual Conference – 27-31 July 2021

Visual primes as culture-sensitive method to understanding acculturation processes

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- Context
 - Globalization
 - Luxembourg
 - Theoretical background

- Method

- (Results)

- Conclusions

- One facet of contemporary societies is their increasingly diverse composition.
- Era of super-diversity (Vertovec, 2007)
 - Heterogeneous population in terms of origin and **migration status**
 - Complexification, acceleration of changes and increased *fluidity* of societies (Grzymala-Kazlowska, A. & Phillimore J., 2018)
 - Exposure to multiple cultures is becoming the norm rather than the exception (p. 963, West et al. 2017)

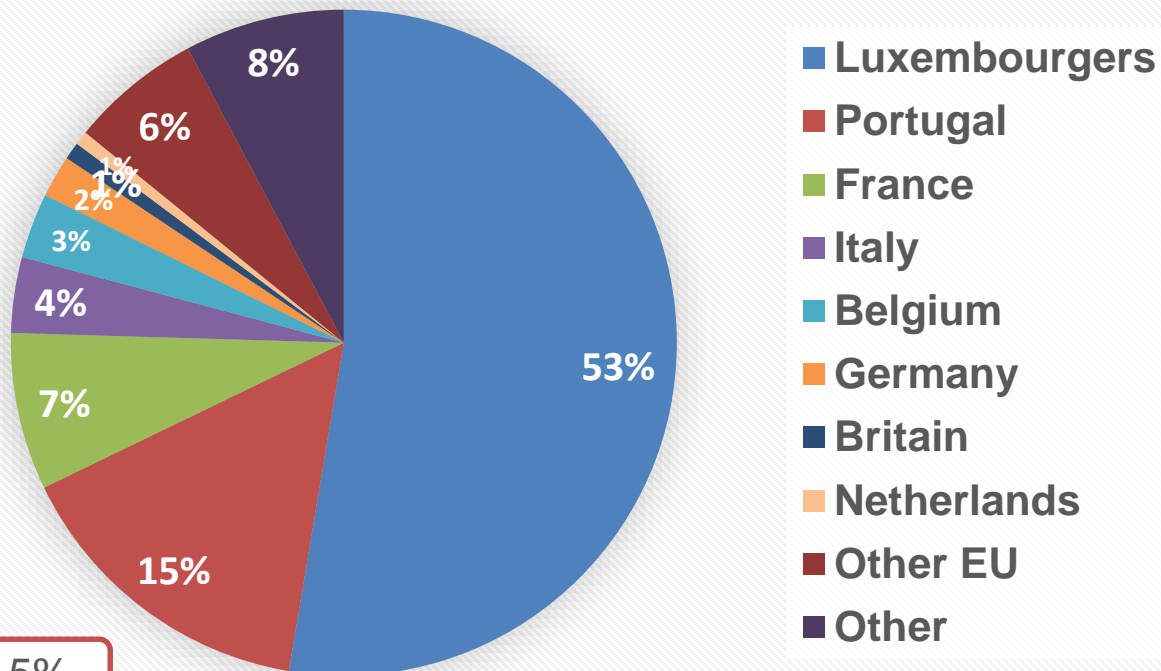


- Luxembourg has experienced different **immigration waves**
- Immigrants – predominantly of European origin
- Diverse population (length of stay, generation status, socio-occupational roles, origin...)
- Luxembourg is **trilingual** (LU, FR, DE) with EN and PT widely spoken
- **Mixed national families** – children growing up with more than one cultural point of reference
- **Opportunity for (direct) culture contact** - omnipresent

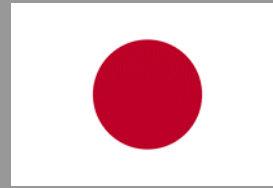


- Learning from Luxembourg (Murdock, 2017)
 - Foreign population percentage 47.5% (Statec, 2020)

Luxembourg Population Structure – 2020
Total: 626,100



Japanese - < 0.5%



- Make up only a very small percentage of the total population
 - 0.32% of Ville de Luxembourg Population (VdL, 2020)
- Cultural difference to Luxembourg:
 - Relative **homogeneity** in Japan – extremely low foreign population percentage - monolingual
 - Cultural **distance** to Luxembourg (Hofstede, 2011)

	Japan	Luxembourg
Power Distance	54	40
Individualism	46	60
Masculinity	95	50
Uncertainty Avoidance	92	70
Long Term Orientation	88	64
Indulgence	42	56

Research Question:

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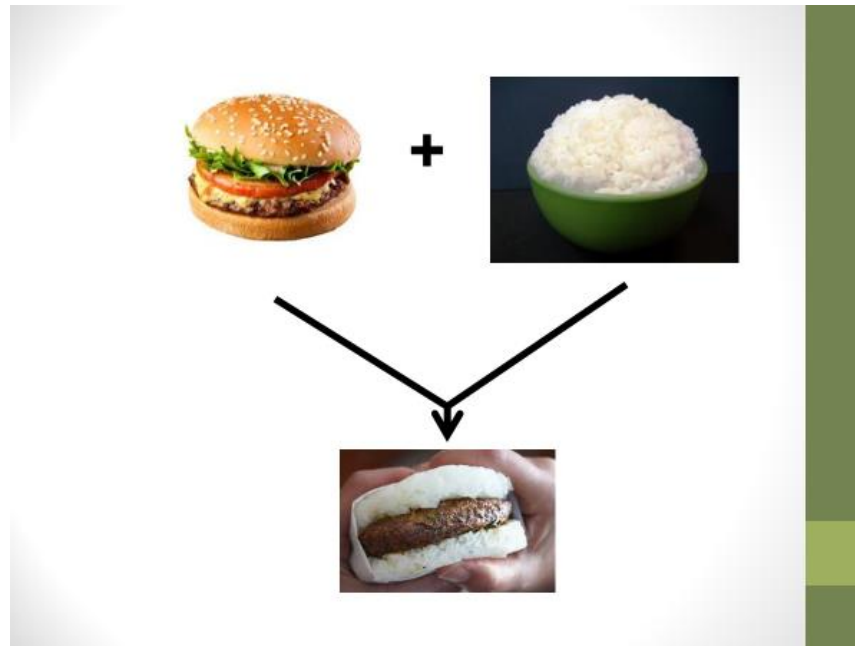


- Acculturation/ Proculturation (Gamsakhurdia, 2018) **process**:
 - How do women of Japanese origin living in Luxembourg *navigate* through their cultural worlds?
 - What cultural negotiation processes or dialogues do they engage in?
- How can we bring these inner negotiation processes to the surface?
 - Culture-sensitive Method - visual primes

Visual primes – culture Mixing

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- **Culture Mixing** = The coexistence of representative symbols of different cultures in the same space at the same time



Ying-Yi Hong
(2016)

Visual primes - “contaminated” versions

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- Cultural contamination studies: Cheon, Christopoulos, & Hong (2016)
 - Mixing - context to express **ambivalences**



- Explanation of Method

Participants:

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- 8 Japanese women living in Luxembourg
 - All were born in Japan & spent their childhood and youth in Japan and come from different regions in Japan
 - All have family members living in Japan and visit Japan regularly.
 - All have lived in at least one other country before moving to Luxembourg
 - All married to a partner of European, but not Luxembourgish background.
 - All are mothers
 - All are active in the Japanese Women Association in Luxembourg

➤ **Multiple cultural influences**

Implementation: Qualitative Study

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- Interviewer – Young Luxembourgish male student
 - Location - choice of participant
 - Consent form in English & Japanese
 - Socio-demographic Questionnaire
- Semi-structured interview: guided by visual prime exercises:
 - Opening phase: Business cards exercise
 - Exercise 1 - 5 domains of 3 images
 - Exercise 2 – relationship with Japan/ Luxembourg
 - Closure:
 - Thank you – please pick your favorite image which will be printed as a gift.



- Identification of culturally meaningful domains.
 - **Literature research**
 - Identification of Japanese traditions & customs
 - Learning of the Japanese language
 - **Ethnographic work:**
 - Active involvement in Japanese clubs/ associations in Luxembourg
 - Field trip to Japan – pilot testing of the images

➤ **Context for narration**

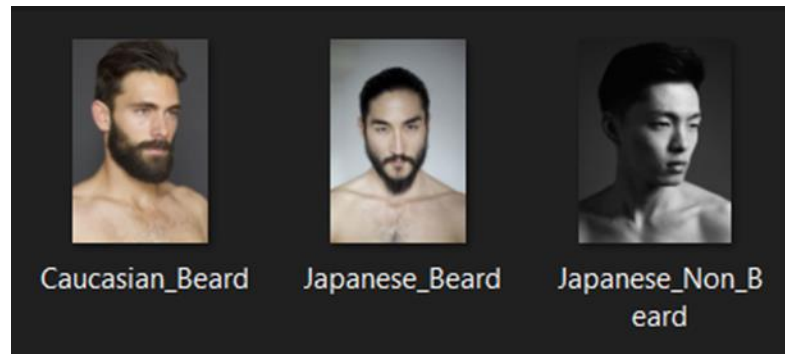
- Identification of five domains:
 - Beauty standards (Beard)
 - Food (Bento Box)
 - Leisure (Bath – Onsen)
 - Living (Japanese Entrance to a house – Genkan)
 - Family (potential daughter-in-Law)

➤ **Anchoring in everyday phenomena**

Stimulation of narration:

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Examples: Beauty – Man with beard

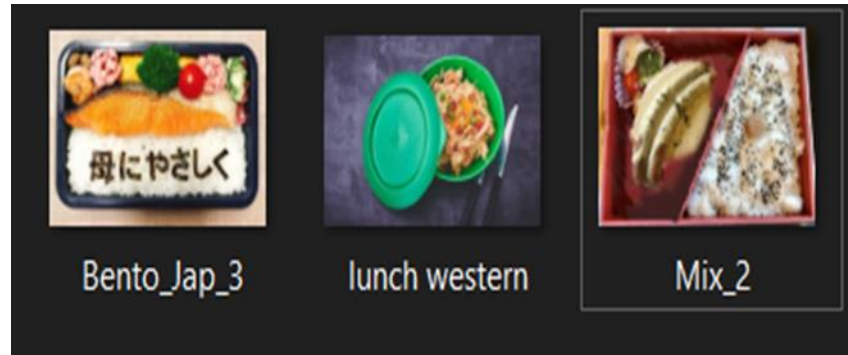


- Instruction:
 - Could you please rank those men from 1 to 3 (best looking to less good looking)
 - Could you please explain why you ranked them in this way?

Visual primes – other examples

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■ Food:



■ Instruction:

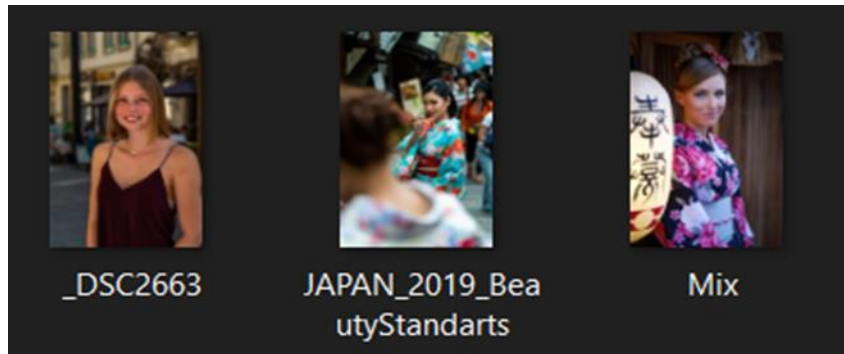
- Please explain, which type of food you would prefer for your lunch
- Can you explain why?
- Can you please state which type of food you would chose/ prepare for your son or daughter
- Can you explain why?

➤ Perspective taking

Visual primes – other examples

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■ Family



■ Instruction:

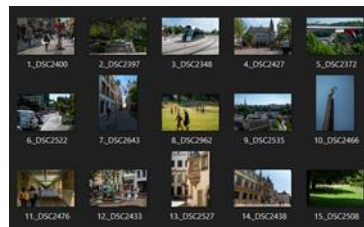
- Imagine that you had a son in the age of these young women. Which of these young women shown here would you like him to have a relationship with? What would be the best choice for him?
- Can you explain why?
- And which of the young women would you prefer as a partner for me (the Interviewer)?
- Can you explain why?

➤ Perspective taking

Relationship with Luxembourg / Japan

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- Presentation of 15 matched typical images of Japan and Luxembourg on a Tablet computer.
- Participants are asked to pick their favourite 3 images first for Luxembourg – then for Japan.
- They then have a chance to explain their choices.
 - The photos were taken by a professional photographer
 - A wider selection was also tested in Japan – and based on the results the final choice was narrowed to 15.



■ Examples for narration

HD 5 Lunchbox

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Bento_Jap_3



lunch western



Mix_2

- HD5: ***Of course.*** [Jap] ***Of course this one is very good, but I would not write something on the rice. The others are not that good for the nutrition.***
- I: The second questions would be if your child would ask you to make him a lunchbox, which one would you like to prepare for him? And Why?
- HD5: ***This one.*** [Jap] ***Because of the nutrition.***

SE3 Lunchbox me vs child

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Bento_Jap_3



lunch western



Mix_2

- SE3: *Eh-. What is this?*
- I: Luxembourgish “Wein-zossis”.
- SE3: [laughing] *Ah-. Okay. Zossis.* [laughing]. ***This one*** [Jap]
- I: The first one?
- SE3: ***Yes because of fish. And the vegetables I see.***
- I: Is there another reason?
- SE3: ***Because of the fish and the rice. I need rice. And colors also. Colors are very important for Japanese. That's it.***
- I: ... and for your child?
- SE3: ***This*** [Lux] Yes. [laughing] ***My daughter goes to Luxembourgish school. And this is normal usual and can be put in the microwave. Which we did not have at home. So that would be better for her.***



_DSC2663

JAPAN_2019_Bea
utyStandarts

Mix

- BO7: *I have no Idea. They all look nice, I would have no Idea until I talk to them.*
- I: Only by the first impression.
- BO7: [pausing longer] *Maybe her. (Lux)*

- I: Why?
- BO7: *She looks most natural.* [pausing longer]
-

- BO7: *With you? With you? Maybe her. (Mix)*
- I: Why?
- BO7: *I think she enjoy different culture like you do. And yeah that is it. When you have the same values. Something in common you know. Yeah it is really nice.*



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JAPAN_2019_Bea
utyStandarts

Mix

- SE3: [laughing, short] **Very interesting. Hm-. She.** [pausing, short] **Wait, no not with BH. No** [Lux] [laughing] **Hm-. The third one.** [Mix]
- I: Can I ask why?
- SE3: **That is because, hm-. She wears kimono correctly and I like her smile, it is natural.** [mix]. **If she would wear something different, but not with BH.** [lux] [laughing] **But not naked. That is, it.**
- I: The last Question would be now. Which of those three girls would be matching with me?
- SE3: **With you. Wow. I don't know.** [pausing longer]. **Hm-. One or two** (lux and jap) [longer pausing]
- I: Can I ask why?
- SE3: **She looks natural, but she is just focusing on the picture. Which one do you prefer? Hm-, the third one. It is just she is fine. She is clean. She doesn't wear to much make up. Difficult it is difficult too choose. I can not choose. They are all cute.**



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JAPAN_2019_Bea
utyStandarts

Mix

- US8: *Difficult. [pausing short]. Maybe number **one**. Or maybe number **three**, can I change? Number three, because em-. Because the lady could be maybe interested in my culture. Number **two**, I assume is completely Japanese, but this is going to be a bit difficult and I don't know if I could get along with her. Yes, that is the reason. Well number one is also nice to. She looks the most honest of the girls. But just because the situation, this one [Mix] looks more interested in his culture. I think this picture also demonstrate that. Yes.*

- Visual primes as culture sensitive method:
 - Identification of meaningful cultural domains providing the context for narration.
 - Indirect – space for narrative
 - Perspective taking
 - Mixed images – context to express ambivalences
- Visual – less focus on language.

■ Careful preparation:

- Knowledge of documented cultural differences – identification of meaningful domains is crucial.
- Willingness to engage with and appreciation of the cultural origin of the participants
 - Careful preparation of material (professional photographer)
 - Testing of the material (pilot study)
- Careful planning of the presentation of the material
 - Opening questions
 - Establishing of trust
 - Order of the exercises
 - Closure – offer of a present – in the form of a photo

Visual primes → made negotiation processes visible



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This research was supported by a grant from the Fonds National de la Recherche, Luxembourg C16/SC/11337403/SWITCH/Murdock

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