



Module – Mobility

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1. Why teach this module?

Human mobility is a phenomenon that is related to all important historical processes. All over the world, people travel in search of better living conditions, better educational opportunities, or just for a change in themselves. In the context of a classroom or a schoolyard, you have probably encountered with a student who came to your class after his or her family moved out of their homes, forced to do so because of a conflict or a climate change, or you have admitted a student who came for a student exchange program, or perhaps you personally participated in one of the EU mobility programmes. What can you do to make it easier for a new student to adapt to the new setting and how can you prepare yourself for participating in the Erasmus+ mobility programme? Mobility, as a global phenomenon, is taking different forms and getting more attention in the context of education. Participants taking this module will gain anthropological insight into the complexities of the phenomenon of human mobility, no matter what shape it takes. The module is structured to help and stimulate discussions of different applications of the concept of mobility in educational settings, as well as to help teachers balance complexities, which are affected by the different ways' mobility occurs in the educational context, in their teaching process.

2. Ethnographic Entry Points

Movement from one school to another for pupils can be an activity that they experience in their schooling process. The data from USA, show that in the period from 1998 to 2007, there was up to 31% of children who changed their school once (Fiel, Haskins, Turley 2015). If we go to our local context, we can find examples where children for various reasons change schools. This kind of mobility of pupils, affects their schooling period as well as the work of teachers and others who are a part of the education process. In the effort to help pupils deal with issues caused by movement from one school to another, professors can find their role by implementing different mechanism in their teaching.

In the field of educational anthropology, the concept of mobility was discussed in the relation to migration, with the focus on issues of social inequality of migrants children, addressing the role of the schools in incorporating immigrants into the receiving society. Little or no attention was given to lives of migrants prior their migration as well as their mobility practice (Olwig, Valentin 2015).

In her study of migration from Nepal to India, Karen Valentin discusses the diverse meanings "ascribed to education in processes of physical mobility". It is to her understanding that by migrating from one location to another, people, in this case young men from Nepal decide to migrate to India as part of their educational strategies. Rao and Hossain (2012), show that migration is a learning process, a process that gives the migrant an opportunity to adapt to new learning environment. The migration process gives an individual the opportunity to attain "new forms of knowledge and skills" recognizing that social and geographical space of migration is a learning environment in itself (Valentin 2012).

3. Ways of understanding

The anthropological study of mobility is inherently comparative. The characterizing feature of mobility is that is multilayered and complex, incorporating cultural, social, economic, and religious dimensions. New forms of movement and the complex realities facing people on the move today are juxtaposed with previous movement patterns, and patterns of movement in Africa are compared with those of Europe or Asia. Among key issues are the social aspirations of individuals and families and the many structural challenges that frame current global forms of movement (and immovability). In this regard ethnographic studies of that focus on different types of human movement - from nomadism, war,



migration, asylum seeking, pilgrimage, tourism, travel (business, student and cosmopolitan) to everyday commuting and virtual travel can be of sort of help.

Human mobility is enabled and restricted by different circumstances. Wars, colonialism, natural catastrophes, climate change, political and economic expansion and deroute stand out as the primary generators of human mobility. Present processes of globalization have intensified the movement of people, goods, ideas, pathogens, and capital, and changed the world as we have known it. The term mobility, according to Salazar (2017) refers to the *fluid, continuous movement of people, ideas, and goods through and across space* is an interdisciplinary concept that includes both spatial, temporal, and social movement and incorporates different imaginaries and experiences.

Mobility and related concepts of routes and rootedness, social anchoring and belonging, integration and marginalization are prominent topics in social and humanistic research today. Anthropologists study belonging among those who move and those who stay in place to understand connections between a person's sense of belonging to a place and the degree to which they feel settled or social anchored, and social included in this place. Disconnecting from one place and connecting to another place involves complex emotional processes for individuals, families, and communities as a whole. New insecurities emerge from mobility regarding new forms of diversity, inequality, lack of a feeling of rootedness. The module will focus on understanding mobility in all its dimensions, by exploring the lived experience of individuals as well as the structural arrangements of institutions affected by mobility.

Core anthropological questions include in which social and cultural contexts does mobility takes place, what opportunities and challenges does mobility pose to individuals, families, and to sending and receiving states and regions (Brettell 2003, 2016, Sheller and Urry 2006, Glick Schiller, Basch, Blanc-Szanton 1992.; Povrzanović Frykamn 2004, Malkki 1992). While people are forced to move due to the displacements of war, they may also be immobilized, detained in camps, or not allowed to cross borders. These processes are affected by differential power distributions and the dominance of groups that are able to define and shape mobilities.

Approaches to mobility are useful for discussing and understanding:

- the role of education in the interrelated processes of geographical and social mobility: as Olwig and Valentin (2015) wrote, migration for educational purposes again is a mass phenomenon. Ever since the 17th century and Grand Tour travels which were the normative for the upper class, in the last decade, traveling for educational purposes has become a global phenomenon. Today it is associated with the possibilities offered by various educational, professional and cultural exchange programs. The phenomenon is referred to as “educational migration”
- role of education in producing social mobility: education can facilitate upward social mobility but it can also reproduces existing inequalities, apart from creating new ones (see more in Olwig, Sørensen 2002) discussing the notion of “mobile livelihoods”.

4. Suggested Exercises

Participants in this module will work with mobile ethnography, a method that involves traveling with people or following things, participating in their continual shift through time, place, and relationships with others (Urry 2007). Movement, that is, the phenomenon of mobility is thus both an object and method of study. It is possible to develop others exercises based on the ideas of the ones suggested:

1. **Mapping of the space and place** – This exercise draws on sensory ethnography (Pink 2009), which considers the interconnectedness of the mind and body and the materiality and sensorially of movement. The exercise involves mapping specific route/s of significance for educational settings. These may include everyday routes to and from school, school trips and excursions or other forms of movement, such as children's paths on the playground. The map will be based on ethnographic data on how people move, where they go or don't go, including



photographs, videos, essays or blogs. The map may also include emotional or sensory information. The finished maps be presented and discussed in class. This exercise may be developed for working with children – to generate awareness of the way they move through neighborhoods or other environments.

2. **Routes and Rootedness** - To move, to uproot oneself, to be mobile is as basic a human activity as putting down roots (Rabo 2017). In this exercise, participants will conduct interviews and carry out participant observation– 'walk and talk'? – to collect information on their respondents' memories of travel routes and cultural roots. This short research exercise will generate narratives of mobility and rootedness, to explore what it means to people to move along routes and to be rooted.

5. Learning Prospects

- Participants are introduced to the basics of the mobility and other (anthropological) theories regarding mobility and its related phenomenon's and who they are implemented in the educational setting
- Participants are familiarized with the mobility as material, technological, emotional, and embodied forms of movement
- Participants are able to name and define different forms and types of mobility and immobility as well as some specific concepts as stuckness, existential mobility
- Participants are able to understand and reflect related concepts such as rootedness, motility, connectivity, transnationalism, stuckness and provide ethnographic examples.

6. Literature

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COMPAS, Migration Research at the University of Oxford: <https://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/>

International Migration Institute, University of Oxford: <https://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/>

Centre for Mobilities Research, Lancaster University: <http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/cemore/>

EASA Anthropology and Mobility (ANTHROMOB) network:

<http://www.easaonline.org/networks/anthromob/index.shtml>

SIEF Working Group on Migration and Mobility: <http://www.siefhome.org/wg/mm/>

IUAES Commission on the Anthropology of Tourism: <http://iuaes.org/comm/tourism.html>

IUAES Commission on Migration: <http://iuaes.org/comm/migration.html>

Mediterranean Mobilities: <http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/fass/projects/medmobilities/>

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