

Introduction

The students of HLT have a unique biography, just like any other children and adolescents. What distinguishes them from “native” children and youths who grow up monoculturally, and what contributes to their uniqueness is (among others) their migration story – be it that they experience it themselves or that they grow up as children or grandchildren of migrated parents or grandparents. In both cases, the migration background is a significant existential resource of these adolescents, although it does not receive the corresponding appreciation in society.

The migration background, the culture of origin and life in and between two cultures, are central themes in HLT. The examination of one’s own migration history here reflects the influence of the migration on one’s own biography, and the students are thus sensitized to the challenges with which they have to deal in the host country. Conversely, they become aware of their specific resources and learn how they can use them in daily life as well. They learn about the migration process as part of their family history and develop respect and appreciation for themselves, and for the accomplishments of the parents and grandparents.

Besides dealing with their own migration history, the students should also examine those of their peers and other people from different cultural circles who live in their neighborhood in order to consciously experience and render cultural diversity visible. Through the analysis of other people’s migration biographies, they can reconsider their own history, as well as show understanding for the others. This biographical learning enables them to recognize the varied causes and consequences of migration, and to experience the opportunities and challenges of living together with people of different cultures. At the same time, they learn through this examination of migration biographies on different levels to understand the social, political, and economic implications of migration and to develop their own strategies and possibilities for action. They develop tolerance and recognition with respect to cultural and linguistic diversity and thus expand their own intercultural competences.

The initial position of the following seven teaching suggestions rests on the identity experiences, resources and potentials of the students. The instructors assume an important role, of course, with their self-experiences and external experiences at their disposal and which serve as an important resource in their preparations of the teaching units.

The assignments to classes and levels are broadly conceived; most of the proposals can easily be modified according to age and proficiency level.

Three proposals (2.7a–c) concern more extensive projects, which are especially suitable as cooperation projects with regular classroom education within the framework of project days or weeks.