

KARACHI-LANGKÆR

Udveksling ml. Langkær Gymnasium og en skole i Karachi, Pakistan via:

- Youtube
- Skype
- Blogs
- Mail



Kommentarer fra elever fra Langkær Gymnasium:

- I had imagined the Pakistan youth to be way different from us, and I must confess that I had not expected their world to be this modern and developed almost like our society here in Denmark. Our class discovered that we're listening to the same kinds of music as the Pakistan pupils, we're watching the same movies and even some of their foods, like the couscous, is something that we now know and eats in Denmark. Pakistan just got a huge problem with the extreme economical differences between the populations. Some of the people don't even have money enough to live while some are able to send their children in expensive private schools. That results that 40% of the population is unable just to write their own name, which I find pretty extreme. I can't imagine living beside people in my own city who don't have the same rights and possibilities to go to school that I have.
- We also found out, during the exchange, that almost everything we hear in the news about Pakistan is something bad or negative, and the Karachi pupils told us that it's the same the other way around. We only hear about war, problems and that Pakistan may hide secret atomic weapons. In Pakistan the only reason they knew about our country was because of the much discussed Mohammed-paintings that were published in the newspaper Jyllandsposten.

Kommentarer fra Bente Buus til Atteqa Malik:

On Sun, Apr 26, 2009 at 3:35 PM, Bente Buus <<mailto:bb@langkaer.dk>]bb@langkaer.dk> wrote:

Hi Atteqa,

I have just had the time to listen more thoroughly to the videos, and to what the students actually say. I had a hard time focusing on that during the session last Tuesday having to concentrate on other things as well.

However, I think your students focus on a very important aspect of modern communication and mutual understanding and respect in their answer to your question, "What do you think people in Denmark think about us?" It is actually what our project is about, putting a face on the real people in Pakistan/Denmark in order to get beyond the stereotyped prejudices we often judge people and culture by. It is precisely stereotyped prejudices that most often create misunderstandings and hatred among peoples. Once you get to know a person and can put a face on him/her, your views change. And this is important for the future co-existence of different cultures and mutual respect among people in the world.

One of the boys answer, "I think they hate us!" and relates it to the news we in Europe/the World hear about Pakistan - and to be true that is the only information that the majority of people have from which to form their opinions.

" Our news is bad"

And then one of the girls adds, "...just showing basic stuff .. not day-to-day stuff" meaning that we get a distorted impression of what Pakistan also is besides the political and violent news that hit the headlines outside Pakistan.

And then a question for you which I have not discussed with my students - I hope you do not mind my asking: In the video, which primarily focuses on the 4 lovely students who participate actively in the discussion, I also notice a girl sitting in the background to the far right - she is not much in the picture, however, it is obvious that once she notices the camera on her, she feels uncomfortable and wants to hide. First she takes her hand up to cover her face, then she leans forward to get out of the picture. Did you notice that yourself? Is it because she is shy, or does it have to do with the fact that she is wearing a headscarf that she does not want to have her face on the video? I have attached 4 screedumps of my observation.

How much is wearing a Muslim head scarf, or not, an issue in Pakistan and among whom? Is it something you feel among your students in class? Is it changing? (...)

Best regards - and looking forward to our final session on

Kommentarer fra Atteqa Malik til Bente Buus:

On Sun, Apr 26, 2009 at 10:38 PM, Atteqa Malik <<mailto:atteqa@gmail.com>]atteqa@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Bente,

really very interesting to read your comments, thank you so much for framing all this so well

Actually Karachi, this crazy city of 20 million plus is a true example of what a Muslim democracy would be like. we could walk into a hospital, school, park etc. and you would see people with different ways of expressing their (muslim) identity. some completely covered, some not at all, some with a scarf, people like me with the scarf only covering their chest. The way the scarf is tied, wrapped, is a great indicator of cultural, economic and sometimes ethnic background in the city as well.

Even with men there are varieties of beards, some trimmed, some unkempt, many with none at all, varieties of turbans, caps, reflecting fashion, ethnicity, or religious identity.

No one prejudices the other according to their dress. I may walk into a modern expensive hospital and I did the other day to have a man who looked exactly like the Taliban stereotype you see on tv with a long beard and cap.

He was the surgeon who stitched up my sons slashed arm so neatly and professionally and was so gentle in his dealing with my 11 year old, spoke to him in english and urdu. This image is an everyday reality. (...)

Then there is the question of the girl in the classroom. I have been observing her too for all the sessions. Very shy but extremely interested and very creative but does not interact socially too well. The other kids and I do encourage her to participate. I wonder about her background, her name suggests maybe a family that could be extremely conservative. When Suzanne (from the Netherlands) was here she moved closer and closer to Suzanne and stayed on till question time and class was over but never said a word.

Here we might see a not so nice side of our society where we decide to close ourselves off from the rest of the world using religion as an excuse. This results in stifling of inquiring minds and sometimes great restraints on personal freedom. What I can hope is that this is not the case here and if it is then this class is a small oasis for this child.

I'm going to try my best to have as many kids as possible and to make the skype session work for tuesday,