A multicultural work environment

An examination of how a multicultural organization can become a Community of Practice with support from ICT and Information Architecture

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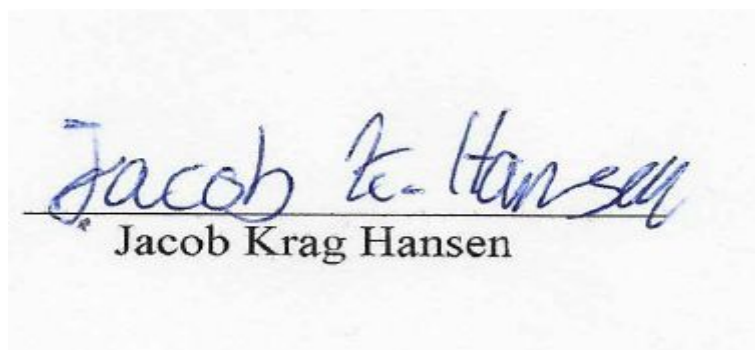
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Preface

Unfortunately, I did not pass my first attempt of writing my Master's thesis. There was an overall discrepancy between problem statement and the general conclusion of the project. As improvement for this second attempt I have focused on several adjustments. I have now included a literature review which presents former studies within the area and helped me gain inspiration to my own focus area. I also took my time and interviewed more participants to get a broader range of cultural backgrounds and employee opinions. Furthermore, I learned from my failed attempt that I needed to focus on theories which would allow me to analyze cultural aspects in a more efficient way.

For this second attempt I decided to work with the same overall theme, however, I chose to work with a new case simply to motivate myself more and start afresh.

It has surely been an educative process and I have learned a lot from previous mistakes. Lastly, I also want to thank my Supervisor, Marianne Lykke for being a great support throughout the whole process who always kept believing in me.

Resumé - Dansk

Det følgende kandidatspeciale har til formål at undersøge, hvilke typiske kommunikationsproblemer, der opstår i en dansk organisation, hvor personalet er multikulturelt, og således har forskellige kulturelle baggrunde og forskellige sprog. Dette vil blive udarbejdet igennem en problembaseret case, hvor et dansk hotel (Foldens Hotel & Café) oplever problemer i forhold til vidensdeling, kultur tilpasning og generel kommunikation.

Baseret på disse problemer vil det blive undersøgt, hvordan informations- og kommunikationsteknologi (ICT) kan bidrage til, at organisationen kan blive et community of practice (CoP) og således forbedre deres interne interaktion og generelle vidensdeling. Derudover vil der også blive taget hensyn til, hvordan informationsarkitekturen (IA) i systemet skal designes, således at denne også støtter processen i at blive et CoP.

Den teoretiske ramme vil således bestå af teori omkring communities of practice hovedsageligt af Etienne Wenger og organisatorisk læring og kultur primært beskrevet af Edgar Schein. Slutteligt vil teorien også inkludere informationsarkitektur beskrevet af Louis Rosenfeld, Peter Morville og Jorge Arango.

Analysen er opdelt i henholdsvis et induktivt afsnit og et deduktivt afsnit. Det induktive afsnit præsenterer de mest overordnede temaer/problemer som de ansatte i organisationen oplever. Her analyseres det, at de ansatte har vidt forskellige grunde til at ville arbejde i Danmark, hvilket skaber motivationsproblemer i forhold til at ville tilpasse sig en ny kultur samt sprog. Derudover er sprog også et vanskeligt problem at overkomme, eftersom de fleste udlændinge ikke taler dansk, og både udlændinge og danske ansatte har problemer med det engelske sprog.

Det deduktive afsnit vil forbinde den indsamlede data med den teoretiske ramme. Således vil dette afsnit fungere som en kontrollerende gennemgang af de inkluderede teorier, som skal relateres til de ansatte på Foldens Hotel & Café. Ved at gøre dette er det også muligt samtidig at præsentere forslag til, hvordan problemerne skal løses så de ansatte kan bevæge sig mod at blive et CoP. Teorien beskriver nogle typiske aktiviteter som er afgørende for at en organisation, eller nærmere sagt de ansatte i organisationen kan fungere som en gruppe. Disse aktiviteter inkluderer således hvordan de ansatte løser problemer, om de lærer af tidligere fejl, om de organiserer viden, så den er let tilgængelig for andre og kan blive

anvendt på et senere tidspunkt. Her konkluderes det, at disse aktiviteter på ingen måde er nok i brug hos de

ansatte på Foldens Hotel & Café. Det vises blandt andet, at de ikke deler viden med hinanden, og deres måde at løse interne problemer sker ikke på tværs af de forskellige nationaliteter, hvilket betyder, at der dannes mange små grupper og de ansatte foretrækker at tale med andre fra deres egen kultur.

Baseret på analysen vil en mulig ICT løsning blive præsenteret. Dette vil ske i form af et sitemap og adskillige wireframes. Disse viser, at der skal fokuseres på, at et simpelt sprogbrug kan støtte sprog problemerne. De viser også, at de fleste labels skal designes som tekst, eftersom mange ikoniske labels kan tolkes forskelligt alt afhængig af kultur. Den generelle IA fokuserer på at skabe en simpelt navigation, hvor der kan navigeres til alt indhold så bekvemt som muligt, og et organisationssystem, som er hierarkisk organiseret, hvilket gør at alt fremstår så synligt som muligt.

Abstract - English

This Master's thesis intends to investigate which communication problems occur within a Danish organization where the staff is multicultural having different cultural backgrounds and languages. This will be examined by including a problem based case where a Danish hotel (Foldens Hotel & Café) is experiencing problems related to knowledge sharing, cultural adaption, and general communication.

Based on these problems it will be examined how information and communication technology (ICT) can contribute the organization in becoming a community of practice (CoP) and thus improve their internal interactions and general knowledge sharing. Moreover, it will also be investigated how the information architecture (IA) within the system should be designed, so that it support the process of being a CoP.

The theoretical framework consists of theory regarding communities of practice primarily described by Etienne Wenger and organizational learning and culture mainly described by Edgar Schein. Lastly, the theory will also include information architecture as described by Louis Rosenfeld, Peter Morville and Jorge Arango.

The analysis is divided into respectively an inductive section and a deductive section. The inductive section is presenting the most relevant themes/problems which the employees in the organization are experiencing. It is found that the employees have different reasons for working in Denmark, which causes motivation problems in regards to adapting to a new culture and language. Furthermore, the language also seems to be a difficult problem to deal with, since most foreign employees do not speak Danish, and both foreign and Danish employees have problems with the English language.

The deductive section intends to relate the gathered data with the theoretical framework. This section will thus function as a verifying examination of the included theories, which should be related to the employees at Foldens Hotel & Café. By doing this, it will be possible to present suggestions to how these problems should be solved so the employees can start moving towards becoming a community of practice. The theory describes some typical activities which are crucial for an organization, to be more specific the employees within the organization to fully function as a group. These activities include among other how the employees solve their problems, if they learn from previous mistakes, if they organize knowledge which makes it easier accessible for others and thus can be applied on a later point. Here it is concluded that the employees at Foldens Hotel & Café are not benefitting from these activities. It is showed that they do not share knowledge with each other, and their way of solving problems does not happen across of nationalities. Instead, they prefer talking to colleagues with the same cultural backgrounds which is resulting in many smaller subgroups.

Based on the analysis a possible solution for an ICT-system will be presented. That is, a sitemap and several wireframes. These show how there has to be focus on simple vocabulary to support the language problems. They also indicate that labels primarily must be textual since cultures can interpret iconic labels differently. The overall IA focuses on creating a navigation where all the content is easy accessible and organized in a hierarchical way where everything is as visible as possible.

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1. Introduction

Globalization and technology are bringing people closer and closer together. This is resulting in organizations becoming a multicultural work space where people with different cultural backgrounds and languages have to interact and cooperate in order to maintain their job (Oerlemans & Peeters, 2010).

This thesis will focus on the problems and challenges which occur in this type of work environment. The purpose is thus to analyze if and how Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can support an organization in becoming a Community of Practice (CoP) which can better handle and solve their internal communication problems. In addition, the Information Architecture within the ICT should also be considered in regards to designing a system which can support the employees the best way possible.

I have been cooperating with Foldens Hotel & Café who currently is in a situation where the employees want and need to be better at communicating and coordinating with each other, which is currently a challenge mainly due to the employees' many different cultural backgrounds.

1.1 Foldens Hotel & Café

Foldens Hotel & Café is a hotel located on the top of Denmark in Skagen, which can be found in middle of the city. The hotel has opening hours all year around and due to popularity and many tourists it continues to expand. The city is especially very popular in the summer, and tourists from all over the world travel to visit Skagen.

This results in a very busy summer period, where the employees at Foldens Hotel & Café have to work hard for many hours.

The staff in a typical summer period consists of 25 employees who works with respectively cleaning, serving, and kitchen work.

Due to the high level of stress and pressure, it is crucial that the employees are able to communicate, since everyone is dependant on each other.

Unfortunately, this appears to be a problem, and the primary reason for this is that Foldens Hotel & Café is a multicultural organization with six different nationalities where the

majority of the employees are foreigners who speak very little Danish and have completely different work mentalities due to various cultural backgrounds.

Before starting the case examination I was in contact with a Danish employee (Jette - employee, 1) who informed me that the employees over the last couple of years have had a hard time communicating with each other which results problems such as:

- Distribution of work tasks becomes more difficult
- Organising and planning can be a highly time-consuming process
- Misunderstandings occur due to language barriers
- The lack of communication makes it harder for the employees to get to know and understand each other
- Danish employees are given more responsibility

Many problems obviously occur due to simple language barriers, however, the employees are also different from each other in so many ways that even small tasks get complicated because the employees have different work approaches, values and beliefs.

The employees working at Foldens Hotel & Café are all unskilled workers and most of them are not particularly skilled in computer technology. It is important to have this in mind, since there is no guarantee to how well ICT can contribute. More specific analysis of Foldens Hotel & Café and the employees is thus required in order to conclude how ICT can help their specific case.

A more thorough overview of the employees will be presented in the methodology section, (Section 4).

To sum up, the primary goal of this thesis is thus to discover the typical problems between these employees and analyse how especially ICT and IA within the system can help them solve common problems collectively. The case is therefore a mix of determining and finding problems within the environment, and later in the process the focus changes into design thinking.

These thoughts lead to the problem statement:

1.2 Problem statement

1. What type of communication problems can be identified in an organization with multicultural employees, and how can Information and Communication Technology (ICT) support them in becoming a Community of Practice (CoP)?

2. How should the Information Architecture (IA) within the system be designed to contribute the feeling of being a CoP?

1.3 Structure of the thesis

Section 1 presents a brief introduction of multicultural work environments and why it is necessary to investigate. In addition, a description of the case which this thesis will be based on will be introduced. The last part of the introduction contains the problem statement.

Section 2 contains a literature review. I will use this section to present former studies and articles relevant for this topic. The focus is to show different type of studies where multiculture is being examined. This includes among other benefits and challenges, difference in behavior, use of technology in multicultural environments etc.

Section 3 presents the methodology. Here I will describe which methodically tools I have used and how I have worked throughout the process. This includes how I made my early research about the case and the qualitative research approach I decided to use in order to gather data from my interviews.

Section 4 is an examination of the theoretical framework which I have used to analyse the problem and develop the solution. The different theories will be explained with belonging explanation to why these specific theories are relevant to use.

Section 5 contains a thorough analysis. This analysis will have three focus areas. First and foremost, I will analyse the data with an inductive approach. This will first allow me to describe and present all my findings without any theoretical factors. Second focus area is a deductive approach which intends to confirm the findings and relate them in regards to the theory. Lastly, I will include a sitemap and a number of wireframes for a possible ICT-system, which will be designed based on the analysis and IA principles described in the theory.

Section 6 is an overall discussion. I will primarily discuss how a possible design solution will look like. Furthermore, it will be discussed what was necessary and important to consider in regards to designing for a multicultural work environment. Also, the theories and how they corresponded to each other will be discussed.

Section 7 is a reflection focusing on respectively future work, thoughts throughout the whole period of writing the thesis, and which limitations there have been.

Section 8 contains the overall conclusion of the thesis, where the answers to the problem statement will be summarized.

Section 9 contains an overall overview of all the references used for the thesis.

Section 10 presents the appendixes for this Master's thesis. These include a transcription of all the 15 individual semi-structured interviews I have conducted as well as one focus group interview.

2. Literature review

In the following section I will outline earlier scientific research within the area of multicultural work environments. The purpose of this literature review is to identify problem areas that have already been investigated by researchers. This contributed in me gaining knowledge of challenges and benefits, behavior, acculturation in work places, and how technology can be a significant factor within this area.

Furthermore, the literature review allowed me to gain inspiration to formulate my own problem area to focus on.

Prior studies have revealed that many modern workplaces are becoming increasingly more multicultural. This means that more and more employees need to interact despite of speaking different languages and coming from different cultures (Oerlemans & Peeters, 2010).

Acculturative stress in a multicultural organization

In their study about organizations' attempt to adapt to multicultural issues, Amason, Allen and Holmes (1999) found that the number of hispanics entering the American workforce has increased since the early 1980s. They set out to investigate cultural differences in employees perceptions of social support received from coworkers and supervisors in a multicultural organization. They found that diversity in language and culture overall affected both the hispanic employee but also the native one, especially if the management is not aware of the situation (Amason et al., 1999). Furthermore, the hispanic employees most often viewed themselves as "outsiders", due to language barriers, pronunciations as well as heavy accents. However, the results showed that the hispanic employee had just as much communication with the supervisors and coworkers as the American did. In addition, both felt that that they were treated well, and described a good supervisor as caring and one who gives compliments such as "good job".

In this study, Amason et al. (1999) presents 'acculturation', which is the term used when a group of people transfer to another group of people who have a different culture. The challenge is that people need to adapt to the new culture and this way unlearn many habits from the previous one. This includes language, values and general attitudes. According to Amason et al. (1999) this is a longer learning and unlearning process where the employee has to undergo several changes.

Benefits and challenges with multicultural employees

Fitzsimmons, Miska & Stahl (2011) claim that even though multicultural employees are becoming more common, few organizations know how to benefit from having employees knowing more than only one culture. Unlike Amason et al. (1999), Fitzsimmons et al., (2011) does not emphasize the term acculturation where people have to unlearn their previous culture.

In their study they highlight different elements where multicultural employees can be an advantage, and how an organization can reach the full potential of their employees.

Fitzsimmons et al. (2011) mention that having a diverse team of employees with different background and cultures will get you a better team with more creative solutions.

In this study, Fitzsimmons et al. (2011) suggest a training/development program to secure that the 'multiculturals' become conscious of their own personal skills, but also to develop similar skills as the 'monoculturals'. They also state that multicultural people are more successful in international businesses, since they are more mindful about how culture influences behavior.

Green, Lopez, Wysocki, Kepner, Farnsworth & Clark (2015) agree with this and say that companies need to embrace diversity since it has the potential to yield better work productivity and competitive advantages. They wrote an article "*Diversity in the Workplace: Benefits, Challenges, and the Required Managerial Tools*" with the purpose of creating awareness about diversity in workplaces since managers and organizations need to learn how to adapt to having a multicultural team.

Even though Green et al. (2015) claims that diversity in a workplace can result in increased productivity, greater marketing opportunities and creativity, they also admit that there are certain challenges that must be considered. Among these are challenges in the personnel due to discrimination and stereotyping, which can affect the productivity. Furthermore, general negative attitudes and behavior can affect relationships between employees.

In their article, Green et al. (2015) also comment that a diverse team requires certain tools in regards to management. They suggest that a safe place to communicate where people can speak and listen to each other is crucial. Furthermore, managers should implement programs allowing people to access information and opportunities as easy as possible (Green et al., 2015). It will be interesting to investigate in my case, whether the team acknowledge that they are a multicultural team, or if they simply do not think about it and work as a monocultural team.

Duran and Popescu (2014) investigated in a study how members' national culture will impact the team as a whole. This study was interesting to include, since their team works in a virtual system where basically all communication is electronic and not face to face. Among other they found that the employees in virtual teams prefer to use humour and use extra open questions in order to avoid misunderstandings. Interestingly, they also found that 96% of their members appreciate the benefits of having a multicultural work environment (Duran and Popescu, 2014). Even though this a very specific type of IT, it is a fairly interesting result. It

concludes that the employees in their team had basically only positive experiences with having a multicultural work environment with support from an electronic system. They are thus a great example of how communities of practice can use IT as support and tool to interact and manage knowledge.

Behavioral differences

When investigating multicultural employees working together in organizations, it also seemed vital to include a research about behavioral differences between cultures. In her study Chevrier (2003) presents multiple types of work-related behavioral differences. When managers experience cross-culture related problems, they often do nothing and feel that it is legitimate not to talk about (Chevrier, 2003, p. 145). This raise the questions whether it is the proper choice to avoid this. When managers purposely set up that there should be no difference in treatment between employees in spite of different cultural backgrounds, heterogeneous interpretations and practices coexist (Chevrier, 2003, p. 145). The lack of management of cultural differences means that the managers rely on the team members to handle and solve the eventual difficulties, which can have an unpredictable outcome. An interesting example which is highlighted by Chevrier, is that Germans in a project group would not tolerate when other Germans came to a meeting unprepared, however, they would accept it if a French coworker would do the same. Even though very irritated, they would do anything to avoid a possible conflict (Chevrier, 2003, pp. 145-146).

This study furthermore suggests that people from Southern Europe are more eager to express their meaning, where people from Northern Europe only tends to speak when they disagree with what is being said (Chevrier, 2003).

In their book "Leadership in a diverse and multicultural environment" Connerley & Pedersen (2005) mention that cultural similarities are just as important as cultural differences in order to protect against stereotyping. Furthermore, they state that multicultural awareness can be learned but not taught (Connerley & Pedersen, 2005). To support this they say that proper training can create great conditions in order to obtain multicultural awareness and thus be able to interact with all people.

Technology in multicultural environments

Technology and general IT knowledge seems to be growing rapidly. However, not everyone has the necessary competences to use the technology properly, which might end out in a negative outcome. Back in 1998, Damarin (1998) wrote an article about this specific topic, where she studied how technology should be applied in the multicultural education room. She discusses how the growth of computers and how schools in the US are becoming increasingly more multicultural which should be taken into consideration. The focus is that people from different cultures have different purposes of using technology, and thus have different set of skills, which can be crucial in regards to how technology should be executed and designed.

As an example Damarin (1998) mentions a black woman who said "*Well, computers are in our culture, but they're not really part of it*". Furthermore, this woman went on and implied that black children learning with a computer was tantamount to denial of black culture (Damarin, 1998, p. 14).

Technology in the hotel industry

Information technologies (IT) have been a crucial force in regards to the positive change in the hotel industry (Gonzales & Gidumal, 2015, p. 30). Recently, one of the most important strategies in the hotel industry is to find out how technology can be used with the purpose of making better decisions based on the right information (Mohammed, Rashid, & Tahir, 2014, p. 197).

Technology in hotels has recognized worldwide success in regards to customer service (Gonzales & Gidumal, 2015, p. 30). For example, Ruiz-Molina, Gil-Saura & Moliner-Velasquez (2010) made a study with the intention of investigating whether technology could make a difference in Spanish hotels, which is relevant since Spain is the third largest tourist industry, and this equals many hotels (Ruiz-Molina et al., 2010). They found that IT can be a crucial thing to incorporate for smaller hotels since it can help them to improve internal processes. They suggest that managers should focus their attention on this in order to improve efficiency, whether the technology is used for customer service or internal purposes. There is significant differences in implementation levels of technology, but basically all hotels use basic technology to keep them competitively prepared (Ruiz-Molina et al., 2010).

Technology can furthermore contribute in becoming a solution for employees' needs for timely and accurate information (Law & Jogaratnam, 2005).

Another thing is also that hotels are in an environment where the competition is only getting more aggressive. Mohammed et al. (2014) also suggest that information technology can be used as a system to help assist hotel employees, serve customers and in general improve the overall performance of the hotel.

Conclusion of the literature review

The literature used in this review all focus on multicultural environments with different approaches. It is a topic relevant to examine, since multiculturalism and diversity in work environments is happening right now and becoming more and more normal (Oerlemans & Peeters, 2010). I have mainly used Google scholar to search for literature, where I have used keywords such as: *multiculturalism, multicultural workplace, multicultural behavior, multicultural employees, challenges and benefits in multicultural environments, technology and multiculturalism, diversity.*

Depending on what keywords included in the search bar there were many different results and more studies than I had imagined before starting the search process.

Searching for "multiculturalism" on Google scholar provided me with more than 500.000 results, which seemed too confusing and not specific enough. In combination with narrowing in the focus and finding literature which accorded to my specific case I decided to focus on searching for literature about benefits and challenges, technology and employees in multicultural work environments. Each of these provided between 60.000 and 80.000 results on Google scholar.

There seems to be an overall agreement in studies that we in multicultural environments can find both benefits and challenges and that the cultural differences will affect the behavior and thinking of the people. Stahl, Mäkelä, Zander & Maznevski (2010) talk about satisfaction in regards to cultural diverse teams. In their study they mention that people who are more similar, will have more satisfying interactions, and thus making the group more operationable (Stahl et al. 2010, p. 442). This study also indicates that especially students and managers show interest in working with people from other cultures due to the learning potential and the fact that it can generate new ideas (Stahl et al. 2010, p. 443).

The participants in the case of this following thesis, however, are neither managers nor students. They are all unskilled workers and they might have a completely different view on the situation.

In regards to my search on technology and multiculturalism, most results were studies about technology for education and school environments. This was indeed interesting reading, however, I believe that it is relevant to understand that technology can be used differently in regards to each specific context.

Furthermore, as I indicated in the introduction, Gonzales and Gidumal (2015) say that information technology has been a significant factor in regards to a positive change in the hotel industry. This technology is especially used to support customer service, which has turned out efficiently, however, this thesis will look towards an ICT-system which can be used between the multicultural employees at the hotel.

The purpose of this thesis is thus to investigate if and how modern ICT can contribute to solve eventual issues in a multicultural work environment and help them become a community of practice.

3. Methodology

In this section the methodology used in this thesis will be presented. The overall paradigm is qualitative research, since the primary obtained data comes from interviews which have produced qualitative data (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2005). The reason why this is efficient will be explained in the following section where qualitative research will be described (Section 3.1). The problem statement of this thesis is a mix of a general issue and a concrete design assignment. The qualitative research approach helps with investigating the current problems. This furthermore includes semi-structured interviews, a focus group interview and participant observations.

Moreover, I will include the PACT framework described by Benyon (2010). This PACT framework will function as an early research method contributing in understanding the people, which in this case are the employees working at the hotel. It is also an efficient tool in order to prepare myself and ask the right questions in the interviews, since it serves to

provide an understanding of the people and their activities, as well as the work context and technology used presently. Hence, PACT is a useful framework to guide my design process for the wireframes.

Lastly, this section will include af description of inductive versus deductive research approach and how I have used them both versions for my analysis

3.1 A qualitative research

The intention of a qualitative research approach is to identify and understand certain phenomena 'from the inside' (Kvale, 2007). We do this by analyzing individuals or groups of people, analyzing interactions and communication, and analyzing documents such as texts or images.

As explained by Mack et al. (2005) a qualitative research is a scientific research with the purpose of understanding a given problem from the perspective of the people involved (Mack et al., 2005, p. 1). Mack et al. (2005) also mentions that the strength of a qualitative research is that it can contribute with information about the "human" side of a problem. That is, individual relationships between the people involved, different beliefs, and subjective opinions. This is highly efficient, since I want to investigate values, beliefs, and opinions from employees coming from five different cultures. The basic problems and history about Foldens Hotel & Café was informed to me by a Danish employee.

I, as a qualitative researcher, am thus interested in accessing experiences from employees with other cultural background than Danish and investigate the overall situation in the natural daily context.

Some of the possible methods to use in a qualitative research is participant observation, interviews and focus groups interviews. This project will focus on both semi-structured interviews, focus group interview and participant observation.

The primary reason for including this research method is because it is so flexible compared to a quantitative research approach. It allows me to ask different set of questions to different employees, but more importantly, it will allow me to ask questions such as how and why (Mack et al., 2005, p. 4).

3.2 PACT framework

The acronym PACT stands for respectively:

- People
- Activities
- Context
- Technology

(Benyon, 2010, p. 26)

According to Benyon (2010), PACT is a useful tool in order to think about a certain design situation. That is because designers can benefit from understanding the people using the system, which activities they undertake and in which context this happens. Lastly, they also need to know about relevant features to incorporate in an interactive technical system (Benyon, 2010, p. 26). The PACT framework is usually beneficial in order to understand how people use a technology system and in which context. However, in this case I use the framework as an early research tool to understand the overall current situation. This means that activities are not necessarily focusing on technical activities such as entering data and thinking about navigation systems. Rather, the focus lies within which typical work activities the employees make during the day, and this way later in the thesis analyse how an actual ICT-system can contribute in regards to solve problems related to this.

3.2.1 People

Currently, there are five Danish employees and twenty employees with cultural backgrounds in Lithuania, Romania, Czech Republic, Eritrea and Poland. In order to properly investigate the situation at Foldens Hotel & Café and identify as many problems as possible, I needed to include the right people. To do this I was inspired from terminology from sampling. Sampling is widely used in the qualitative research in order to identify and select rich information (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan & Hoagwood, 2016). Sampling methods intends to increase efficiency and validity (Palinkas et al. 2016). In this case, where the qualitative research is emphasized, the purpose is to achieve an depth in understanding. To achieve this, I have been in contact with and interviewed 15 employees. I have thus

managed to get in contact with five out of a total of six different cultures. This is what Palinkas et al. (2016) refer to as a 'typical case' strategy, where the purpose is to find out what is typical or average. All these interviews will highlight the typical and overall situation. However, another sampling strategy is to focus on 'homogeneity'. The purpose with this is to describe a particular subgroup in depth. I wanted to include as many subgroups/nationalities as possible in order to be able to compare and analyze as many differences as possible. Furthermore, I was able to gather not only one but three employees from each nationality, which has helped me to get a broader overview from each nationality.

The people included are respectively:
- Three employees from Denmark
- Three employees from Romania
- Three employees from Eritrea
- Three employees from Czech Republic
- Three employees from Lithuania

First of all I focused on getting a brief overview of these employees. Benyon (2010) highlights two different focus areas, namely: Physical differences, psychological differences and social differences. Physical differences focuses on elements such as height, weight etc. This is less relevant for this case, however, the remaining two are fairly interesting to look further into. As regards to psychological differences, people from different cultures have different ways of interpreting things. That is for example, some buttons or labels on a website might represent a certain thing in one culture, but a completely different thing in another culture (Benyon, 2010, p. 32).

As to social differences, Benyon (2010) mentions that there is a significant difference whether you are designing for expert or novice users of technology.

I have been interviewing 15 employees where the majority is in the category "novice" which was important to consider throughout the design phase of the system. Moreover, another interesting aspect is that it should be considered whether this group of employees was homogeneous or heterogeneous. A homogeneous group of people are very similar and want the same things. A heterogeneous group of people, however, are completely opposite since they are extremely different from each other and might have different values and goals (Benyon, 2010, p. 34). This was crucial to contemplate, since the employees might appear to

be a homogeneous group of people sharing the same work place and thus the same mission. On the other hand, the employees are so different from each other that design for a heterogenous group of people also should be considered.

As the literature review in section 2 also indicates (Chevrier, 2003), there is a significant difference in how these people's mentalities and cultural backgrounds are reflected in their work life, dependant on where in the world they are from.

These many differences affects the employees' relationships and it is these specific differences which I want to get a deeper insight into.

3.2.1.1 Employees

Following section provides a brief overview of who the employees involved are. The purpose is to create a picture of their nationalities combined with age and for how long they have worked in Denmark at Foldens Hotel & Café. All names have been anonymized.

	Employee 1	Employee 2	Employee 3
Denmark	● Jette ● 54 years old ● Employee for 10 years ● My contact person ● Work in cleaning, cooking, customer serving.	● Birgit ● 58 years old ● Employee for three years ● Work in cleaning and kitchen work.	● Lis ● 49 years old ● Employee for 13 years ● Work in cleaning, as cashier, ordering products
	Employee 4	Employee 5	Employee 6
Romania	● Elisabeta ● 24 years old ● Employee for 1.5 year ● Work in cleaning and breakfast serving	● Mirina ● 23 years old ● Employee for 1 year ● Work in cleaning and breakfast serving	● Zelma ● 29 years old ● Employee for 3.5 years ● Work in cleaning and breakfast serving
	Employee 7	Employee 8	Employee 9
Eritrea	● Mariam ● 42 years old ● Employee for two years ● Came to Denmark as a	● Liah ● 30 years old ● Employee for two years ● Came to Denmark as a	● Aster ● 32 years old ● Employee for two years ● Came to Denmark as a

	refugee ● Work in cleaning, and preparing of breakfast	refugee ● Work in kitchen (Dishwash) and preparing of breakfast	refugee ● Work in kitchen (Dishwash) and preparing of breakfast
Czech Republic	Employee 10 ● Milana ● 28 years old ● Employee for three years ● Work in cleaning	Employee 11 ● Radomila ● 22 years old ● Employee for 10 months ● Work in cleaning.	Employee 12 ● Kristina ● 20 years old ● Employee for 10 months ● Work in cleaning.
Lithuania	Employee 13 ● Goda ● 37 years olds ● Employee for one year ● Work in cleaning	Employee 14 ● Monika ● 27 years old ● Employee for one year ● Work in cleaning	Employee 15 ● Greta ● 24 years old ● Employee for four months ● Work in cleaning

Figure 1, Employee overview

3.2.2 Activities

Many characteristics of activities need to be considered (Benyon, 2010, p. 35). In an early meeting I had with 'Employee 1' as well as in the interviews, I learned about some of the daily activities they do. Most of their work related activities are very frequent which means that they have a certain amount of tasks which they do everyday. This includes activities such as:

● Room cleaning

● Preparing of breakfast and other meals throughout the day

● General kitchen work (Cooking, dish washing etc.)

● General customer service

● Ordering products (Towels, cleaning products, beddings etc.)

The purpose is among other to learn which activities the employees do and get an understanding of where and why mistakes or problems appear. These activities will thus be taken into consideration when designing the ICT-system.

3.2.3 Context

Foldens Hotel and Café is a private hotel in Skagen, where the primary hotel is placed in the center of the city. However, there are smaller departments around the city, which means that the employees are not always able to physically talk to each other. It is important to mention that the environment the employees work in is very stressful, which can also affect the relationship between them but also the performance of the activities. They do not seem to have time to talk about problems and therefore, these same problems are getting more and more serious. Another relevant thing is the lack of support they have for many of the activities. Benyon (2010) refers to this as 'social context'. He says that a supportive environment will offer plenty of help for an activity (Benyon, 2010, p. 37). This includes e.g. training manual or tuition. According to my contact person, 'Employee 1', a lot of responsibility is being put on the Danish employees. This revolves around training and teaching new employees, which sometimes seems like a chaotic job. Danish employees will lose time to do their own daily work tasks, and the foreign employees do not get the proper introduction and are forced to find information and knowledge by themselves, which most often is obtained by asking Danish employees.

3.2.4 Technology

Currently, there are no specific technologies to analyze used between the employees at Foldens Hotel & Café. But this thesis intends to investigate whether it might be part of a possible advantage to include in such a multicultural environment.

However, the literature review also indicated that not all cultures are used to applying information technology systems the same way and with the same set of skills. This, combined with my knowledge of many employees being novice users clarified that I needed to take this into consideration and ask relevant questions in the interview, which would allow me to gain more precise knowledge in regards to the employees technical skills and needs.

3.3 Interviews

According to Kvale (2007) doing interviews is one of the major approaches in regards to collecting data. I want to talk about what type of interviews I have done as well as how I did it. Furthermore, I will also present the final interview guides I used for my interviews.

3.3.1 Seven stages of an interview inquiry

First and foremost, this section will introduce Kvale (2007) and his seven stages of an interview inquiry. The purpose of this is to describe in details how I worked throughout the whole process of doing interviews.

Thematizing revolves around concluding what the whole purpose is with the investigation you are setting out to do. This is the process before you start the interview where you want to ask yourself questions such as *what* and *why* (Kvale, 2007, p. 35-36).

By conducting interviews with people from different countries and cultures, I wanted to learn about them and how they would describe the whole situation of working in a different culture than they have been used to.

The PACT framework helped to get an early understanding of respectively which group of people I wanted to interview, the context and their activities as well as current technology available for them. I wanted to get an early feeling of why the foreign employees decided to work in Denmark, if they had any particular reason at all. In addition to that I also wanted an early understanding of how Danish culture differs from their original. This allowed the employees to talk about positive and negative elements of both cultures.

Designing is where we want to focus on the actual design of the whole study (Kvale, 2007, p. 35-36). In my case, I thought about what type of interviews would benefit me the most. I decided that a combination of semi-structured interviews and a focus group interview would be highly efficient in regards to collecting useful data.

Benyon (2010) mentions that interviewers often are armed with pre-prepared questions, but are allowed to explore new topics as they arise (Benyon, 2010, p. 152).

I designed and prepared a set of questions, however, it did not limit me from asking new questions which could be relevant to ask during the interview process. In the interview guides the questions which were not predetermined will be highlighted in an *italic* style.

Interviewing is the process where we conduct the interviews based on the previous research. I made agreements with 15 employees and conducted each separate interview at Foldens Hotel & Café.

First and foremost I decided to include a semi-structured interview conducted on each of the 15 employees.

Semi-structured interviewing is normally used when we have a certain amount of knowledge within the problem area, yet more information is still needed. These interviews are therefore a great source to collect evident data that can clarify what some of the information and communication problems are. Another reason to use this type of interviewing is that it is essential in gathering attitudes, opinions and user goals (Wilson, 2014, pp. 24-25). Semi-structured interviews are thus optimal for collecting data on people's personal perspectives on the given situation (Mack et al., 2005, p. 2).

After having conducted all semi-structured interviews I also chose to conduct a focus group interview. McLafferty (2004) defines a focus group interview as a semi-structured group session moderated by a leader with the purpose of collecting information within a specific topic. The main purpose of including a focus group interview in this thesis was to force a conversation between the employees and let them discuss things which had been touched upon in each of their individual interviews and also to share opinions with each other. This type of interviewing is also useful for reflecting the social realities of a cultural group (McLafferty, 2004, p. 189). This corresponded well with my specific case, since I have a multicultural group of people who are facing certain problems, which might can be solved through better communication and understanding of each other.

This focus group consisted of me as a moderator (researcher) asking the questions. A focus group should be a small group consisting of six to nine people (Dilshad & Latif, 2013, p. 192). I, however, decided to use five people, since this made it possible to include one employee from each of the cultures involved. I purposely wanted to avoid including more from one culture than the others, which might result in one specific culture being more

dominant than the others. By including only one from each I created an equal and fair baseline for all the employees. I began with highly open-ended questions to secure an open and calm environment.

It is also important to mention that this focus group interview and the questions in it were based on the answers from each semi-structured interview. This means that I intentionally wanted the employees to talk about the problems and focus areas which had been brought up in the earlier interviews.

Transcribing is the stage where we prepare our received material for further analysis. For example if the interviews have been orally recorded it needs to be transcribed into words (Kvale, 2007, p. 35-36). According to Kvale (2007) the common way of recording interviews for documentation has long been with the use of a tape recorder. This allows the interviewer to concentrate on dynamics such as specific words, pauses, tones etc.

My interviews were all audio recorded on my mobile phone and therefore needed to be transcribed into words. Transcribing an interview from an oral version into a written version is already an initial analysis (Kvale, 2007, p. 94). Important factors which Kvale mentions is time and resources for transcription, and reliability and validity. I have taken my time to listen to the recordings several times and also go back in forth to secure sentences which were harder to hear due to background noise as well as audio quality. Being able to listen to the recordings again has contributed in reliability, since it made it possible to fully interpret the sentences.

My demand for details has been fairly high and in regards to validity, Kvale says that there is no correct valid transcription. However, he says that a more a more constructive question is to ask "what is a useful transcription for my research purpose?" (Kvale, 2007, p. 98). There has been smaller language barriers when interviewing many of the foreign employees. For my purpose I decided to make adjustments in the transcriptions and correcting grammatical errors. Moreover, the interviews with the Danish and Eritrean employees were conducted in Danish and later translated into English.

However, I still emphasized the importance of not changing too much, to secure that no data would be lost.

Examples of my grammatical adjustments/corrections and translations are as follows:

Original sentence from recordings	My transcription
"My husband get work here. I come also later and work."	"Because my husband got work here in Denmark. Then I also came later and got a job here."
"I am not good in English and Danish is very hard. The language on cleaning products are often Danish. That is problem because we are often only one Danish employee around who is able to understand it and answer"	"I am not good at English and Danish is very hard. The language on cleaning products is often in Danish. That has been a problem since there often only is one Danish speaking employee around who is able to understand it and answer."
"Eritrea. Det er mest fordi jeg er lidt bange for at spørge ind til dem, da jeg ved de har været igennem nogle svære ting i deres eget land."	"Eritrea. Mostly because I am afraid to ask them about stuff, since I know they have been through a lot of hard stuff in their home country."

Figure 2, Example of translating and transcribing

Analyzing is the stage where we have to find the most appropriate analysis method (Kvale, 2007, pp. 35-36). I did this based on the data gathered from the interviews and research within the topic in the literature review. In order to analyze this data I decided to include relevant theory such as communities of practice, organizational learning, organizational culture, and information architecture. It was crucial to analyze the cultural aspect, which organizational learning and culture helped me with. Activities in theory of CoP helped me to analyze which activities are done now within Foldens Hotel & Café.

More information about these theories and how I used them as analysis tool can be found in respectively the theory section and analysis section.

Verifying the data throughout the process and assuring that the results are reliable was an interesting stage to go through. In this specific phase I focused on different aspects such as:

- Not asking any leading questions, which will force the participant to answer differently
- Taking precaution for the different employees and their nationality
- Investigating the topic of multiculturalism to gain inspiration for my specific focus area

At first, my intention was to ask the same set of questions to all the participants. However to get the most out of the interviews I needed to ask the foreigners a couple of additional questions in order to learn about their reasons for working in Denmark as well as some of the cultural differences they experience. Obviously, all of the different foreign nationalities are also different from each other, however, they have one thing in common, which is the fact that they all come from another culture than they are working in and needed to adapt.

Reporting is where we communicate all the findings from the interviews and the methods used to reach those.

The thesis is based on a qualitative research which has provided a larger amount of data than if I had used a quantitative approach which could be presented in numerical and in graphs etc. In order to work efficiently with this interview data I split up my analysis in respectively an inductive section and a deductive section. The purpose of the first part is thus to analyze and get an overview of all the problems I have discovered. Afterwards, I am able to verify the data in relation to the theories which I have included.

3.3.2 Interview guides

In this section I introduce the interview guides I used for the different interviews. For the semi-structured interviews I created two versions; one specifically for the three Danish employees, and one for the remaining 12 foreign employees. Lastly, based on the data and information I received from these interviews I was able to formulate a set of questions for a focus group interview.

Interview guide for Danish employees

Can you mention some of the typical work tasks you do?

Do you believe you have any problems due to the language differences. If yes, can you mention a specific example where it has been an issue?

How do you recognize that people are from different cultures, e.g. different mentalities and behavior?

Which nationality is the most different from you?

Which nationality is the most equal to you?

Does your manager express reservations that you are all from from different cultures?

For what tasks, do you use technology?

If in doubt, how do you typically find information/gain knowledge?

Besides work, do you have a good relationship to your colleagues?

Overall, how do you like working in a multicultural environment?

Interview guide for foreign employees

Why did you choose to work in Denmark?

What is different from working in your home country?

Can you mention some of the typical work tasks you do?

Do you believe you have any problems due to the language differences. If yes, can you mention a specific example where it has been an issue?

How do you recognize that people are from different cultures, e.g. different mentalities and behavior?

Which nationality is the most different from you, and why?

Which nationality is the most equal to you, and why?

Does your manager express reservations that you are all from different cultures?

For what tasks do you use technology?

If in doubt, how do you typically find information/gain knowledge?

Besides work, do you have a good relationship to your colleagues?

Overall, how do you like working in a multicultural environment?

Focus group interview

What did you think of the questions I asked you?

Basically, all of you said that if you needed more information you would ask a colleague or the manager, is that because it is something you have never thought about before or because you are always sure that a colleague can provide you with the answer?

How often do you use a computer, tablet etc at home?

It seems like Danish have more work tasks and more responsibility, is that true?

All said your manager do not really think about culture. Do you have any examples to what should be done?

Do you have any suggestions to what should be included in an ICT-system specifically for you employees?

3.4 Participant observations

Peloghitis (2006) claims that even though interviewing is a powerful medium, there is a gap where much information is being lost. Both the form of questions as well as the answers provide incidental information about the participants cultural and social identities which is often overlooked (Peloghitis, 2006, p. 48). Based on this statement I will also focus on participant observations. Participant observations can also be found within the qualitative research area (Mack et al., 2015, p. 13).

Spradley (2016) says that when for example ethnographers observe and study other cultures, they need to focus on three aspects: What people do, what people know and what people make and use.

Generally, we learn about cultural inferences by using different types of information. We learn about cultural behavior by observing what people do, we learn about cultural artifacts by observing what they make and use such as tools or technologies in this case. Lastly, we learn by listening to what people say (Spradley, 2016, p. 10).

As informed by Mack et al. (2010) participant observation should always take place in community settings where the people do their daily activities. It is important that the participants are in their usual environment, so the researcher can observe what life is like on the inside seen from the outside (Mack et al. 2010, p. 13).

Participant observation is among other efficient in gaining understanding in social and cultural context in which the people live/work.

Furthermore, Spradley (2016) states that a large part of culture is tacit cultural knowledge, since there will always be certain things the participant will not talk about. Therefore, observing behavior and watching what artifacts is being used can be helpful.

As I mentioned earlier, I conducted all my interviews at the employee's usual work environment. In addition to that I was able to spend almost an entire day walking with employees and following their daily routines.

Combined with interviewing the employees where I learned by listening, this was a useful tool since it allowed me to learn by observing their behavior and observe what tools or lack of tools they work with in order to communicate etc.

First of all I followed Danish employee 2, Birgit for one hour. She was working mostly in the kitchen, where she seemed very experienced and under control.

I also followed Lithuanian employees 14 and 15. They told me in the interview that their overall work tasks were room cleaning which I observed to be true. These two spent a lot of time together. I observed how they communicated and completed their tasks. With me I carried a small piece of paper and wrote down notes of what I was witnessing. For example I noticed how it is typically a Danish employee who is delegating work tasks, even though they are having the same job title and supposed to do the same work.

3.5 Inductive and deductive content analysis

The analysis of this thesis will take advantage of both an inductive approach as well as a deductive approach.

Rothchild (2006) implies that induction is a form of logic which identifies similarities within a group of particulars, and deduction is a form of logic that identifies a particular by its resemblance to accepted facts (Rothchild, 2006, p. 2).

A more simple way to separate these terms is explained by Elo & Kyngäs (2007):

An inductive approach is usually used when basically no theories or knowledge are known or used as analysis tools, and the results are therefore based on your own observations.

A deductive approach, however, is applicable when the analysis is based on former theory and knowledge, where the purpose is to test these theories (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007, p. 109).

Both approaches can be useful in relation to what you are investigating and I find both approaches relevant and useful for this case.

My analysis will therefore begin with an inductive approach. Beginning with this approach allows me, as a researcher, to investigate and present something which was not expected from the beginning. I will use this approach to compare the employees with each other based on their different cultural backgrounds.

Afterwards, I will put my theories into perspectives and analyse how they can be related to the results I have gathered in the interviews.

All this information will then be used in a concrete matter, in order to transform this data into design for my wireframes for the ICT-system.

4. Theory

In order to investigate the case of Foldens Hotel & Café and analyse the collected data, it is crucial to focus on using the proper theories.

Through the interviews and early meeting with my contact person, I have learned that Foldens Hotel & Café experiences a certain amount of internal communication related problems.

In order to investigate this I have chosen to focus on theory of Communities of Practice (CoP) mainly explained by Etienne Wenger. This theory revolves around people in a group who benefit from each other and learn from each others problems and experiences. The intention is thus to find out if and how Foldens Hotel & Café can be a CoP, because under the current circumstances they do not seem to fulfill the requirements.

Afterwards, I include theory of respectively organizational learning and organizational culture mainly described by Edgar Schein. Where CoP is included to understand what they need to be in the future, these two theoretical concepts are included to provide an overview of how the current situation is within the organization.

Lastly, I will present theory of Information Architecture described by Rosenfeld, Morville & Arango (2015) and taxonomies described by Lambe (2007). This will function as a tool in order to design a sitemap and various wireframes for an ICT-system based on IA theory.

4.1 Communities of practice

Overall, communities of practice (CoP) are groups of people who share the same concern, problems or passion about a topic, and deepen their knowledge in their common area by continuously interacting with each other (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002).

They do not necessarily have to work together, but an important thing in order to be a CoP is that people meet with each other because they find value in their interactions (Wenger et al., 2002). They share insights and advice and basically help each other solve problems. Wenger et al. (2002) says that CoP have been around as long as humans have lived. Back when people lived in cages and gathered around the fire, until today where people use advanced technology in a company to work as efficiently as possible together. Both of these examples are a CoP and can serve as examples of how and where these communities can exist. In order to be a CoP, characteristics such as gender, age and class are completely irrelevant. The people only need to share the same practice. Through joint activities a CoP develop their own relations, values, beliefs and ways of doing things. People in larger communities, however, tend to have more problems building personal relationships due to less contact (Wenger et al., 2002, p. 121) and the whole process of trust building only happens within a community when individuals begin to connect.

Cultural differences also seem to have a significant impact on personal relationships. Most people find it more comfortable to connect with people from the same cultural background as themselves, and for a moment this can also help them with an increased feeling of membership. However, the feeling of belonging to the whole will be diminished (Wenger et al., 2002, pp. 121-122).

To sum up, a CoP is:

- Sharing identical problems
- Having the same passion
- Interacting to get knowledge
- Sharing values and beliefs

These focus areas will therefore function as guidelines for what Foldens Hotel & Café need to improve on.

In my early meeting with the contact person, I learned that the employees among other:

- Barely interact with each other

- Do not communicate and share problems

- Are working in the organization for different reasons

By interviewing the employees, I will get a more specific understanding of the problems. However, it already appears obvious that even though they all share the same work place and work tasks, they are not performing the necessary activities which a CoP requires.

It is also important to mention that most communities have some sort of tools provided to the community members, making it possible for them to share ideas and help each other solving problems (Wenger et al., 2002, p. 76). Since Foldens Hotel & Café does not have any type of ICT-system to help them I want to investigate how this can be beneficial.

Wenger (2004) also connects CoP with knowledge management and says that CoP is the cornerstone of knowledge management. CoP is about enabling the management of knowledge and put it in the hands of the practitioners (Wenger, 2004). Knowledge has become the key to success and companies need to understand what type of knowledge will give them an advantage (Wenger et al. 2002, p. 6). It is not the communities that are new, but rather the need for organizations to focus on them to better be able to manage knowledge between employees. Then they need to deploy this knowledge and share it across the whole organization.

It is a combination of three elements, which allows communities to manage knowledge: *Domains, communities, practices*.

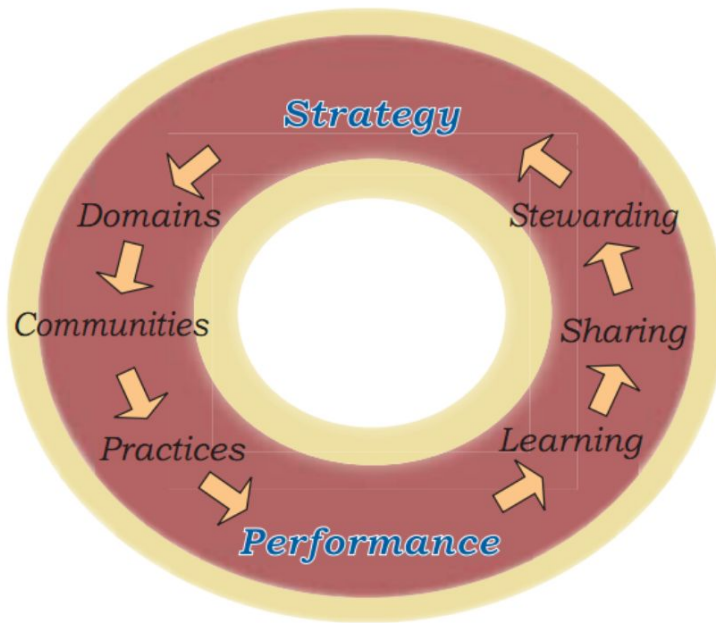These are part of Wenger's donut model:

Figure 3, Donut model

Domains:

An area of knowledge which brings the people together and defines the main issues that need to be addressed (Wenger, 2004).

Communities:

The group of people to whom the knowledge is useful and the quality of the relationship between community members (Wenger, 2004).

Practices:

The practice is the body of knowledge, which focuses on the methods and tools to manage knowledge. It does not have to be a technical tool. Wenger (2006) further provides an example that when nurses meet everyday for lunch in the cafeteria, they may not realize that the discussions they have are one of the main sources of knowledge about how to care for their patients.

A combination of these three is what makes a community practice their knowledge.

It is important to mention that the development of CoP is a bottom-up as well as a top-down process. Knowledge management within the CoP is a never ending process, which starts and ends with a strategy.

A community can also develop their practice through a set of activities.

"*Communities of practice manage their knowledge. If you had enough knowledge to micro-manage communities of practice, you would not need them.*" (Wenger, 2004).

This means that people in a community are dependant on each other and need to interact with colleagues, because of the stimulation it gives them and because knowledge from any field is too complex for any single individual to cover (Wenger, 2004).

Wenger (2006) has made an overview of typical activities which people in a CoP do to support and help one another.

The left marked with grey is the category names of Wenger's activities and the right side is brief explanations of what I intend to focus on in regards to these activities. In the analysis these activities will be investigated in regards to the situation of Foldens Hotel & Café. I want to understand if they currently benefit from any of these activities and bring suggestions to how they can be used.

Problem solving	How do the employees currently solve problems? Do they help each other?
Request for information	"How can I find the rules?" Do they ask each other for requests? If yes, how?
Seeking experience	Do they learn from each other? E.g. "Have anyone dealt with a customer in a situation like this?"
Reusing assets	Do they store/organize information which can be reused later on. E.g. general information which can be used by all.
Coordination and synergy	Do the employees coordinate with each other? E.g. do they coordinate work tasks across the organization to improve efficiency?
Discussing developments	Do the employees discuss with each other? "What do you think of the current way we serve breakfast? Is it good enough?"
Documentation projects	Do they learn from their mistakes? E.g. document things so the mistake will not happen again.
Visits	Do they know anything about each other's

	cultures? Do they seem to have an interest in it?
Mapping knowledge and identifying gaps	Do they have a type of division of knowledge, where certain employees know one thing and other employees know another thing. Do they know who to contact?

Figure 4, CoP activities

4.2 Organizational culture and learning

4.2.1 Organizational culture

In this section I want to describe the two terms: organizational culture and organizational learning. I want to include these two terms in the same section, since I believe they supplement one another in a unique way. Organizational culture can help understand how things are being done within an organization, and organizational learning represents the process of learning new things and adapting to these.

Edgar Schein describes organizational culture as a pattern of basic assumptions, which a group has invented or developed in order to learn to cope with its problems such as internal integration and external adaptation. These invented/developed assumptions work well enough, to some extent, to be taught to new members as the correct way to think and feel in relation to those problems (Schein, 1984, p. 3). To say it in a more simple way, the organization's culture represents the overall process of how things are done within the organization (Joseph & Dai, 2009, p. 243). This includes the management of employees, leadership style and knowledge strategy system (Joseph & Dai, 2009, p. 243).

In regards to Foldens Hotel & Café I intend to investigate especially how employees work together being in a multicultural environment. I do not only want to learn about their external culture such as where they are from, but also the organization's internal culture. This might help me get an understanding of how they currently distribute things between each other, what role their manager has, and if they have any sort of strategies within the organization.

Schein (1988) split the term organizational culture into three levels; Artifacts, Values, and Underlying assumptions.
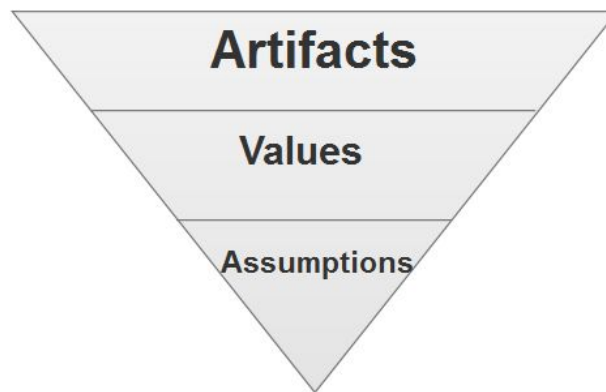
Figure 5, Three levels of organizational culture

4.2.1.1 Artifacts

Artifacts deals with the feelings, observations and senses one has when entering a new culture. These are the things we can see such as the behavioral patterns of the employees. They also represent visible artifacts, such as technology, documents, architecture etc.

However, even though we easily can see how the employees do and which tools they use to do so, we cannot understand the logic behind it and understand why a group behaves the way it does.

4.2.1.2 Values

In order to understand this logic we can begin to analyze values, beliefs, norms and goals of the people within the specific culture. The values of employees should most often correspond with the values of the leaders (Schein, 1988, p. 9). Having different perspectives of how the organization should be run and different mentalities towards work might result in problems. This knowledge is often accessed by interviewing members of the organization, however, it is important to understand that this only represent what the members say is the reason for their behavior (Schein, 1984, p. 3). The underlying reasons still remain concealed, and that is why we need to also focus on more underlying assumptions.

4.2.1.3 Assumptions

Schein (1984) refers to this level as underlying assumptions which often are being taken for granted. These are the things we will only discover when digging deeper into the problem, and to really understand an organization's culture this is crucial to investigate. Schein says that these assumptions originated as values who turn into behavior and are dropping out of awareness, and thus become an underlying assumption of how things are. An example is if a manager of an organization has a belief that a certain strategy will work, and it indeed does for a couple of times, it will be assumed that this specific strategy is correct and it will cease to be questioned (Schein, 1988, pp. 9-10).

Assumptions in organizational culture include among other relationship to the environment and nature of human relationships. Schein does argue that these underlying assumptions are difficult to detect. One needs to ask the right questions as well as have an insider who makes the assumptions (Schein, 1984, p. 4).

In order to detect underlying assumptions, I focused on asking the right questions to the employees both in single semi-structured interviews as well as in one focus group interview. Combined with this, observations of the employees also served as a supplementary tool to see if their reactions were fitting with their answers.

4.2.2 Organizational learning

First of all, the term 'organizational learning' date back to 1958, however, over the last couple of decades it has been growing rapidly due to mainly three reasons: Speed of technology change, advance of globalization, and growing corporate competition (Easterby-Smith, Snell & Gherardi, 1998, p. 259).

Organizational learning revolves around a change that happens in an organization as the organization acquires experience (Argote & Miron-Spektor, 2011, p. 1124). It can also be described as a process which develops a new way of seeing things or understanding them within the organization (Chiva, Ghauri, Alegre, 2014, p. 689).

The organizational culture positively impacts the organizational learning (Joseph & Dai, 2009, p. 244). A knowledge-oriented culture namely challenges the people within the organization to share knowledge with each other.

Robinson (2001) says organizational learning can be described as a process of adaptation to the environment, but that this also erroneously suggest that the external environment is the only right source of wisdom for the organization (Robinson, 2001, p. 59). This is a highly relevant statement for this case, as the immediate objective not is to focus on only the foreigners adapting to Danish culture. The goal is rather to emphasize that it is a multicultural organization and also will be in the future. Therefore, it is necessary to focus on the organization as a whole which needs organizational and cultural learning.

The purpose of including these two concepts in this thesis is to be able to decide on how the culture and learning process is within Foldens Hotel & Café. I want to examine their willingness to learn and understand the current culture within the organization in order to determine if and how they communicate and share knowledge with each other. A current assumption is that the employees are very different from each other and therefore have a hard time establishing as one big group. And this is crucial since a group or organization cannot survive if it cannot manage itself as a group (Schein, 1984, p. 10). Furthermore, it can help me get an overview of current values and forgotten values in regards to Schein's model.

4.3 Information Architecture

Having used the previous theories to help understand and find problems within the culture of Foldens Hotel & Café, this part of the theoretical framework will focus on a more practical part including tools which can help me in the design phase. These tools include:

- Four overall IA components
- A sitemap
- Wireframes

Lambe (2007) quotes in his book "Organising Knowledge: Taxonomies, Knowledge and Organisational Effectiveness":

"*Given the distributed character of organisational knowledge, the key to achieving coordinated action does not so much depend on those 'higher up' collecting more and more knowledge, as on those 'lower down' finding more and more ways of getting connected and interrelating the knowledge each one has*" (Lambe, 2007, p. 49).

My purpose is to create a new way for the employees to share information and knowledge, and thus make it easier for them to interact.

A backlash in the huge advance in ICT and intranets, however, is that we easily can experience a huge information overload (Gilchrist, 2001, p. 94). I want to focus on how ICT can help Foldens Hotel & Café, which will be a new way for the employees to get connected. Providing them with a completely new ICT-system will also require some serious thoughts in regards to information overload as well as the design and organization of the content, since the majority of the employees are novice users of technology and it should therefore be simple to use. Architectural improvements can be utilized for improving the performance on computer vision tasks which are dependant on visual features and quality (Szegedy, Vanhoucke, Ioffe, Shlens & Wojna, 2015). This is where IA becomes useful.

IA can support creating a common language and a better organisation of relevant topics for the employees. It can help them in facing less obstacles when finding and using information since they have easier access to it and easier can support each other as a community. As further argument for using IA, I also want to introduce the term *taxonomy*:

A well-designed taxonomy can among many things reduce the chances of the users getting lost (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 176). Taxonomy means 'arrangement' or 'ordering of things' and is an important part of IA (Lambe, 2007, p. 4). Earlier I related Communities of Practice with knowledge management, and taxonomy is also quite an important factor in knowledge management. Lambe (2007) describes three key attributes of an effective taxonomy:

- Classification scheme
- Semantic
- Knowledge map

A classification scheme is designed to group related things together, so if you are looking at one certain thing within a specific category it will easy to find other related things (Lambe, 2007, p. 5). This will be relevant to consider when focusing on the organization system within the system.

Taxonomies in knowledge management are also semantics with the purpose of creating a vocabulary that can describe the knowledge and information assets and be meaningful for the users (Lambe, 2007, p. 6). This will most likely be important to focus on in regards to designing labels, since I am going to design for a group of people who speak different

languages and have different approaches to using IT. If a label is called 'Calendar' all employees regardless of nationality should know what to expect behind it.

Lastly, taxonomy is also a type of knowledge map (Lambe, 2007, p. 8). This refers to that it should be easy to navigate, and regardless of who or where the user is, the taxonomy should allow everyone to get an understanding of what to find and more importantly where to find it.

Going back to the overall term Information architecture, there is no easy and simple description of what this represents.

However, some of the the primary focus points which is highlighted by Rosenfeld et al (2015) are following:

1. Structural design of shared information environments.
2. A combination of organization, labeling, search, and navigation systems within physical as well as digital systems.
3. The art of shaping an information experience to support findability, usability, and understanding.
4. A discipline or community of practice focusing on bringing principles of general design and architecture into the digital world.

(Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 24)

IA is not only about the above mentioned focus points. It already begins with the people using a certain system, since they had a reason to come there and had a specific need (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 39). The first and most important matter when designing IA is to satisfy people's needs. Therefore, it is important to understand which needs the users have and make it as easy as possible for them to find answers on the system (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 39).

Following section will consist of a description of the four components of IA described by Rosenfeld et al. (2015): *organization systems, labeling systems, search system, and navigation systems*. Each of these four components cover their own important elements regarding creating a proper design. I will use these four components as my overall and guiding design principles when I later in the thesis will propose wireframes for an ICT-system.

4.3.1 Organization systems

"Some say that knowledge can not be organized, since it resides in peoples heads. What can be organized, however, is information such as documents and information" (Lambe, 2007, p. 1).

Organizing information is crucial in order to understand, explain and control (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 97). We organize information so that we easier can find answers to our questions and in this modern world, digital medias have made it so much easier for us to design and organize this information. Organization systems are highly affected by the perspective of the user, since everyone will have a different view, but in order to design usable organization systems, we need to escape from our own perspective and focus more on the users (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 102). We need to accept that one way does not fit all not matter what, but by getting an understanding of the users and their needs we can provide them with an organization of content which will benefit them as much as possible (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 102).

There exist different types of organization schemes which we navigate through everyday (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 104). Examples are supermarkets and libraries who both try to provide easier access to their products by using organization schemes. Some organization schemes are easy to follow and some are difficult (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 104). It is easy to find the meaning of a word in a dictionary, since it is in alphabetical order, however, finding a specific item in a large unknown supermarket can be frustrating and rather difficult.

Some of the different types of organizational schemes are:

Exact organization schemes

Exact, also called objective organization schemes, divide information into well-defined sections (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 105). Things are usually listed in an alphabetical order. This is also called *known-item* searching where you know the name of what you are searching for, and thus making it easier to navigate/find. It is, however, required that the user already know the specific name of what they want to find (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 105). This type of organization scheme is usually easy to design, maintain, and use (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 105).

Ambiguous organization schemes

Ambiguous, also called subjective organization schemes, are a lot harder to design and maintain (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 108). They are divided into categories that defy definitions. This type of organization, however, can be more useful, because we do not always know exactly what we are looking for, and finding just a bit of information can influence what you might look for afterwards (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 109).

In the analysis it will be looked further into, which type of organization scheme Foldens Hotel & Café will benefit the most from.

4.3.2 Labeling systems

Just as words can represent our thoughts, a label's role is to represent a larger chunk of information (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 133). A typical example of a label seen on most websites is the "Contact" function. When clicking on this label the user will often be introduced to different type of contact information such as telephone number, email etc. (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 133). Too much information available can distract the user especially if it is information the they don't even need. Therefore, this is a perfect example of hiding information behind a label, which is easy to find and represents exactly what the user will expect.

The conversation between a user and the owner of the environment/system begins when the user enters the front page of a website. The labels on the front page are also closely combined with how the site has been organized. That is global navigation and local navigation such as menu points (Home, about us, buy, contact etc.) (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 134). These labels are often successful if they appear invisible for the user. This means that they do not get in the way and attract too much unnecessary attention. The labels should be clear to understand, and the users should almost be sure of what to find when clicking on it.

Labels are usually divided into two formats: textual and iconic (Rosenfeld, 2015, p. 140). Textual labels, however, are more common and can include:

Conceptual links which are hyperlinks that leads to more information on other sites or other places on the same site. The "Contact" function mentioned earlier is an example of a conceptual link (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 140).

Headings that are not clickable, but has to describe the information right beneath them (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 140).

Navigation system choices are labels that represent the possibilities available in the navigation system (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 140).

Index terms are elements such as keywords and smaller subject headings which represent content/information that can be browsed or searched for.

These are not the only and final categories for labels, but simply the one emphasized by Rosenfeld et al. (2015).

I intend to focus on following principles in regards to the labels:

Familiarity: It has to be easy for the employees to distinguish between the different content and know what is related to what.

Consistency: Shapes, colors, text fonts etc. Things should be consistent throughout the whole system to prevent confusions and misunderstandings.

Vocabulary: It is crucial to use a simple vocabulary since the employees will have different language skills.

4.3.3 Navigation systems

Generally in life, humans have developed navigation systems to prevent us from getting lost and make it easier for us to find whatever we are searching for. We have done the same in the digital space where navigation is crucial when designing and creating a website (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, pp. 174-175). It can be very frustrating to visit a large and confusing website and then get lost forcing one to use another website. The job of the navigation systems is therefore to add different doors and windows (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 175). This means that the user will have several options in order to reach a specific goal and thus have more flexibility.

There exist different types of navigation systems, and the most regular are the global, local, and contextual navigation systems.

Figure 6, Navigation systems (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 175)

The global navigation is usually the main menu and it tells you where you are on the website. The local navigation tells you what you can find nearby on the website.

The contextual navigation consists of smaller links usually found within the 'body' of the website that can redirect the user into smaller subpages (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 177).

In regards to the employees' navigation opportunities I am especially going to focus on following principles:

Flexibility: Since the majority of the employees are not skilled in using IT, it is crucial that they have flexibility. This means, multiple ways of reaching their goals or navigate back and forth.

Prevention of errors: Again, based on the IT skills the employees besess, I need to focus on error prevention.

First of all, I need to specify the needs of Foldens Hotel & Café. After that I can start investigating how the users of the systems will access information in the ICT-system to solve some of these needs.

4.3.4 Search systems

The first important thing regarding search systems is to ask yourself if your system really needs a search function. Some people will prefer using a search bar to fulfill their information

needs, where others prefer browsing through the site. Therefore, there are some possible issues that should be considered before choosing to include a search function on your website (Rosenfeld, 2015, p. 212). First of all, it is important to establish whether you have a lot of information on your site or not. The more information you have the more likely you will need a search function. It also depends on how the information on the site has been organized. If you have a website selling books or movies, it would be preferable to search for it (Rosenfeld, 2015, p. 212).

Instead of including a search function, an option is to have more focus on the actual navigation system. It is always important to have a strong navigation system, but the user can actually benefit even more from having both a strong navigation but also a search system.

4.3.5 Sitemap and wireframes

In order to use these IA components I will focus on designing different wireframes, which will be designed based on the primary needs of the employees as well as the aforementioned IA components. Furthermore, I will also include a sitemap in order to get an overview of all the elements that need to be included and how they relate to each other.

A sitemap can help with determining where content should go and how it should be navigated in the system (Rosenfeld et al. 2015, p. 407). Therefore, it will be a great starting point to design a sitemap, which will give an overview of all the content which need to be in the ICT-system. I will focus on creating a relatively simple sitemap, which will show how each element should be connected to each other.

Wireframes on the other hand, focus on depicting how an individual page needs to look like from an architectural perspective (Rosenfeld et al. 2015, p. 407). These wireframes will allow me to connect all the IA of the ICT with its interaction design.

A good reason to include wireframes, is that it helps in understanding where the navigation systems need to be on the site as well as grouping content components.

Rosenfeld et al. (2015) highlights the importance that wireframes should not be seen as a replacement for "real visual design". Everything such as labels, fonts and colors are there to illustrate how the IA will impact an individual site.

I will design medium-fidelity wireframes. This type requires a greater effort, however, it also brings the site to life and make it more realistic.

5. Analysis

Following part of the thesis intends to present and analyse the results of my research. I have collected data consisting of a literature review, semi-structured interviews and one focus group interview. Later in this section I will use a deductive approach where the data will be associated and analysed in regards to following theories: Organizational learning and culture, Communities of Practice and Information Architecture.

However, I will first of all analyse the data from an inductive perspective. Based on my findings I have created themes which represent the most frequent observations and relevant problems I have discovered. The purpose of these themes is to create an overview of the differences between the employees and the problems they experience. This is also where I am able to present data which was not expected from the beginning.

Furthermore, it will help me to understand if employees from the same nationality have the same overall opinions.

5.1 Themes

5.1.1 Age

The first theme I want to present is the age of the employees. Below I have made a brief overview of the average age of the employees in each included nationality. The precise age of each employee can be seen in figure 1 in the method section.

Nationality	Average age
Danish employees	53,6 years old
Romanian employees	25,3 years old
Eritrean employees	34,6 years old
Czech Republic employees	23,3 years old
Lithuanian employees	29,3 years old

Figure 7, Average age

Having this overview of the age differences might help to understand some of the problems that occur within this multicultural environment. Even though the employees from Denmark are the oldest subgroup, two out of three Danish employees answered that they saw themselves as most equals to the employees from Czech Republic who are the youngest subgroup. Apparently, age has had nothing to do with this choice, rather other functions such as humor and similar lifestyle seemed important for them. Besides this I did not find any suggestions or indications that the age of the employees plays an important role for the relationships between them.

Not alone is the Danish subgroup by far the oldest, they are also the ones who have been employed the longest.

This theme serves to provide a quick overview of the ages of the employees. It can be argued that there is not enough employees to create an average age scheme which can be used, however, it is included as the very first theme as a supporting tool to better understand the employees.

5.1.2 Time of employment

I learned that the Danes are also the ones who have been employed for the longest with two employees having been employed for more than 10 years. Interestingly, I found out that the longest anyone from a foreign country has been employed is 3.5 years which is employee 6, Zelma from Romania. I quickly became aware that this could be an important part of the puzzle. It results in continuously new employees arriving and that is definitely also a reason for why it is difficult for the employees to connect and to become a CoP. It becomes harder to get to know each other, and especially the Danes seem to have given up on this. When I asked about how their relationship besides work was, the answer from the Danes were also the most negative. They answered that they did not talk with any of their colleagues outside work, however, they also indicated that they wanted the general communication to be better. Employee 3, Lis from Denmark quoted:

"I think that most foreign employees believes that I don't like them, when in reality I am just very stressed out. I would wish if it was better but currently, this is the way it is. However, us Danish employees have better communication and we can sometimes drink a cup of coffee a different place, but to be honest I think that the main reason is because we are so busy at

work all the time and have very little energy at the end of the day." (Denmark - Lis, employee 3)

It seems like the stressful work routines are part of the reason to why the employees do not talk together, but maybe also because it is more difficult to socialize across different cultures and languages.

Elisabeta from Romania also indicated that lack of time was the primary reason for not talking to anyone, and Mariam from Eritrea said that the physical distance was the reason since she lives in another city.   These reasons are understandable, but I believe that an ICT-system will allow the employees to communicate as a community regardless of distance and still save time. It also seems to be a fact that there will always be new employees in this business, and therefore this system should also contribute in better communication and interacting, regardless of how long the employees have worked there for.

5.1.3 Similarity and differences

In this theme I want to provide an overview of who the employees feel most equal to and who they feel most different from. In this theme I have divided each nationality into their own headline to create a greater overview.

Denmark

When asked about which nationality was most equals to hers, Jette from Denmark mentioned following:

"I would say Czech republic. I say that since their humour is the most resembling to ours in Denmark." (Denmark - Jette, employee 1)

She continues later in the interview and says that the Lithuanian employees seem to be from a culture reminding a lot like the Danish compared to the Romanians who come from a very competitive culture, where you have to fight for the jobs which might results in people hating each other within organizations because they talk behind each other's backs in order to promote themselves.

And to the same question, employee 2, Birgit also chose Czech republic with the following reason:

"They are highly educated and seem to live like we do. They are here to work before going back home to study and travel. They can handle everything themselves and actually are a lot better than us a speaking English" (Denmark - Birgit, employee 2)

This was unexpected since one might could anticipate that the closer the employees are in age the easier they might have to communicate. However, this does not seem to be the case. Instead, the Danish employees emphasized other elements such as similar humor and general way of living which I mentioned earlier.

When they were asked who they felt most different from all three Danish employees chose Eritrea. The explanation was most frequently that they are afraid to ask them because they seem very aware of the fact that the Eritrean employees have experienced some difficult things in their home country. Furthermore, employee 1, Jette also says that they pray before eating every meal which she thinks is very odd. Even though all Danish employees chose Eritrea as the most different culture from Danish, they also emphasized the importance of them really trying to adapt by attending language courses and being nice and humble, compared to most other foreign cultures.

Romania

All three of the Romanian employees answered that they felt most equal to the Lithuanian employees. They could not provide any in depth explanations besides that it was easier for them to talk and become friends with them. On the other hand, the Romanians feel most different from the Danes and Eritrean employees. They state that the employees from Eritrea are very nice, but just so different from them. Employee 4, Elisabeta believes they are different because they did not came here to earn money in the first place like most other employees do. Employee 5, Mirina chose Denmark as the most different culture and said: *"I feel like many of us foreign employees are more equal. The Danes decide more, but that is obviously because they can talk better with customers and so on."* (Romania - Mirina, employee 5)

Through the interviews with the Danish employees I learned that the Danes seem to have more responsibility and work tasks. Therefore, it was also interesting to hear a foreign employee who has the same understanding. And the fact that she feels that she is more equal

to the foreign employees than the Danish employees can be a reason to their communication problems such as hierarchy between the employees.

Eritrea

Two out of three employees from Eritrea felt most equal to the Danish employees. They explained that the Danish employees had taken better care of them when they came and are always willing to teach them. The last one mentioned Czech Republic and explained that they communicate well and are teaching each other respectively English and Danish. This is a specific example where I believe a small community of practice is occuring. They benefit from each other and interact with the purpose of creating more knowledge which can improve their daily work.

All three of them mentioned Romania as the most different culture from them because they often stay to themselves in smaller groups and only speak Romanian. Employee 7, Mariam, however, also mentioned Denmark as a very different culture. She explains that Eritrea is a very religious country where they pray. That is very different from the Danish culture where they talk openly about almost everything and even laugh at religion. She had to get used to that and understand that it was not personal and that is normal to do in Denmark.

Czech Republic

The employees from Czech Republic mentioned both Lithuania and Denmark as the most resembling nationality. They say that both Danish and Lithuanian employees are easy to talk to and that they have a lot of fun together. As many of the other employees, the colleagues from Czech Republic also mentioned Eritrea as a very different culture, mostly due to lack of contact and communication. They also mentioned Romania with the explanation that they never know when they are joking or being serious.

Lithuania

The Lithuanian employees all mentioned Czech Republic as most equals to themselves, because they are not afraid to joke and they have fun together. Humor is clearly an important thing among all the employees and it is something many employees have based their answer on when asked this question. Employee 14, Monika also mentions Romania along with Czech Republic and says she feels equal to them because they are also foreigners who are new in the country, and the Danes appear to be higher in hierarchy. However, the employees from Eritrea are also just as new in Denmark, but she does not include them. Instead, Eritrea is also the ones the Lithuanians consider most different with one reasons being:

"Simply because our conversations always gets confusing. It can be difficult to even ask a question like "Do you know how if we have to meet early tomorrow?" (Lithuania - Monika, employee 14)

Employee 15, Greta says that she thinks both Eritrea and Romania are very different, however, she also says that her only reason for saying this is that she does not talk to any of them. She says that the Romanians act like they do not want to talk to her, and that the Eritreans are just very quiet of nature. She actually has one thing in common with an Eritrean employee, which is the fact that she also think that Denmark is a open-minded culture where people talk and share private information with each other.

To sum up, this theme *similarities and differences* intends to create an overview of the general opinions from each nationality. It serves to provide an understanding of who is interacting more with each other and who they have problems communicating with. This will be relevant to understand when designing an ICT-system and its content.

5.1.4 Motivation/purpose for working in Denmark

It turned out that some employees feel it is less important to get to know each other than it is to work hard. The Romanian employees are here solely for the money, and also expressed that they wanted to go home within a few years. The Eritrean are clearly here to stay. They have come to a completely different culture, yet they are trying to adapt. The Czech employees are young and also intends to stay for only a short period of time. However, they have a clear interest in getting relationships with their colleagues and learn about the culture they are working in. Lastly, the Lithuanian employees also specifically mentioned that they are primarily working here to earn more money than at home. This means that I got three overall reasons for the employees to be here: Earning more money, getting more experiences, and coming here to stay.

Two out three Romanians, as well as two out of three Lithuanians mention that they came to Denmark to earn money or because their husband got a job and they simply followed. This is not necessarily a problem, but the fact that they do not stay seems to be. It results in new employees arriving who have to be trained, but more importantly, it results in them not even

wanting to adapt to the new culture and interact with their colleagues, since they know they will not be staying.

Even though the Eritrean employees are willing to adapt to Danish culture and motivated to stay, they were by far the most separated subgroup. That is because they are being taught Danish, but not English. They are simply not being taught to work in multicultural environment, but rather a Danish environment.

Although the Czech employees expressed they would not stay for a long time, they still manage to do a great work in regards to communication because of their language skills and open minded appearance.

This theme will be relevant when designing the ICT-system, since it has taught me the reasons for the foreign employees working there. This confirms that the system should be able to gather and attract the employees, regardless of how long they intend to stay.

5.1.5 Language problems

In this theme I focus on highlighting the most common examples of problems the employees have informed about the language differences. Just like the theme above I am dividing each nationality into their own headline to create overview and separation.

Denmark

To begin with, the Danish employees were the ones who mostly expressed to experience language problems in their daily work. There is no specific subgroup who is more dominant in numbers than the others, so this can not be the reason. The reason might be that the Danish employees feel more responsibility and are being relied more on. Lis, employee 3 said that there always has to be one Danish speaking employee among the foreign employees.

Jette, employee 1 said following:

"Yes. If we for example ask a foreign employee to put an extra bed in room 2, it can end up in room 22. Also we have certain cleaning products, which we need to be careful about. Some of it is too strong and can only be used in specific places, but since they cannot Danish, some foreign employees just guess and use what they think is the best." (Denmark- Jette, employee 1)

At first sight, this could seem like very shallow language mistakes, but if they appear on a constant basis it can be time consuming and frustrating and it can definitely have an impact

on the communication between the parts. In the end this will contribute in degrading the quality of their work.

Birgit, employee 2 also wanted to emphasize that part of the problem is that the Danes speak just as poor English as the foreigners do. She often experiences that a foreign employee does not understand what she says even though they nod and pretend like they do. This causes insecurity between the two parts. She says that the foreign employees are afraid to admit if they have not understood what is being said. Whether they are afraid of showing weakness or they do not want to learn, it appears to be a significant problem in the long run. Having weak or different skills in language thus result in problems with general understanding and anxiety. Therefore, it will be important to help the employees deal with this.

Birgit, employee 2 also mentions a specific example of where this typical type of misunderstanding becomes important.

"A typical problem is the confusion that can occur when you ask a foreign employee to meet an hour earlier the next day, because this is often misunderstood." (Denmark - Birgit, employee 2)

Romania

The first Romanian employee I spoke to, Elisabeta, employee 4 told me that she attends a Danish course to learn Danish. She says that it was difficult to work in the beginning because of all the misunderstandings. But she also thinks that it will be a lot easier now that she can speak just a little Danish, because they do not have to be fluent in the end.

The Romanian employees did not provide me with any specific examples, but that is maybe because they do not experience as serious problems as the others do. Zelma, employee 6 said that it was no problem at all that the employees are from different cultures, since everybody is there for the same purpose which is to work. I have learned multiple places in the interviews that the Romanians are hard workers and also want to show it. In fact, all three of them mentioned money for their reason to being here in Denmark.

Zelma, employee 6 furthermore said:

"Well I think the Danish employees speak very fast. I often don't understand what they say and I have to ask several times." (Romania - Zelma, employee 6)

Earlier I mentioned how Birgit from Denmark felt many foreigners seemed afraid to admit if they have not understood something. It is clearly not only the Danes who have thought about

this. The Danes might also need to adapt and learn to speak slower and more precisely to prevent less misunderstanding and better communication in general. Two out of three Romanian employees informed that everything seems to go faster in Denmark than what they are used to, which is obviously not only the language but the whole culture of working.

Eritrea

The Eritrean employees are the only subgroup besides Denmark who has learned how to speak Danish. The Eritrean employees have been forced to attend Danish courses since they came here as refugees and not voluntarily. I was surprised how well they are able to speak Danish when thinking about they have only been here for around two years. In regards to language problems I learned something very interesting. Mariam, employee 7 told that she sometimes avoid talking to the other foreign employees since she has problems communicating with them, as she has learned Danish but not English, which is the only language the other foreigners can communicate in. She also mentioned that it seems like that the Romanian employees don't even want to learn Danish.

Liah and Aster, employee 8 and 9 also say that it is confusing and annoying that other people speak different languages even though they know they are the only one who can understand it.

"Some of the other foreign employees do not want to learn Danish and speak it. I think that is very weird coming here and then keep speaking their own language." (Eritrea - Aster, employee 9)

With my interviews with the employees from Eritrea I have definitely learned that they are the culture which is most different from the others. They have seemed very eager to adapt and learn the new language and they seem to be confused how the other foreign employees have no intention of learning it.

Czech Republic

As the table in figure 7 shows, the employees from Czech Republic is the youngest subgroup and they were by far also the most skilled at speaking English.

When asked about whether she experiences language problems or not Milana, employee 10 answered:

"In the beginning I did not think it would be a problem because I think i am quite good at English. I was surprised how bad many of the others were. I had to work with a woman from

Lithuania, where everything should be shown because communication was so hard." (Czech Republic - Milana, employee 10)

Even though the employees from Czech Republic seemed unprepared to work in such a multicultural work environment, they are without a doubt the nationality which has been talked most positively about by the others in the interview. They explain that they focus on being happy and talking to as many colleagues as possible. Radomila, employee 11 describes how she often notice that people always spend their breaks with people from their nationality, which can be a perfect place to better get to know each other. Kristina, employee 12 says that one of her language problems is that the Danish employees usually have to explain things and delegate work tasks, and it can be hard to understand, since they are not very good at it. However, she still emphasizes that they also get some funny situation out of it where they can laugh.

Lithuania

A language problem for Goda, employee 13 was the cleaning products. She works with room cleaning and told me that a lot of the cleaning products are only in Danish, which is a problem for her, and continues with the explanation that there is always only one Danish speaking employee around and therefore it can be time consuming if you do not understand and need help. Monika, employee 14 has just as many problems with language. She said that she purposely stay most with and talk to her Lithuanian friends simply to avoid misunderstandings. She seemed very despairing and it seems like she was aware of the problems, however, she has accepted the situation and following the majority of the other foreign employees. She specifically said that many foreigners are only going to stay for a short period and that it does not seem worth it to even try and learn Danish.

Greta, employee 15 also seemed fairly negative and quoted:

"Once I have asked a Danish employee how her weekend was just to smalltalk. It ended up with her answering, and me not understanding her answer. The conversation quickly died, so I tend to avoid these conversations even though I like such ones" (Lithuania - Greta, employee 15).

When employees do not spend time with each other they unconsciously miss out on a lot of possible important knowledge or wisdom. In the theory section I mentioned the example of

nurses who unintentionally learn from each other and share knowledge in their lunch breaks. The employees at Foldens Hotel & Café are unconsciously stripped from this opportunity which makes it even more complicated in regards to becoming a community of practice in this multicultural environment they are in.

Problems occuring because of language differences and misunderstandings will most likely always be part of the multicultural organization, however, the focus is to minimize them. Greta, employee 15 from Lithuania said that even though she experiences many language problems with the colleagues from Czech Republic she still seem to understand them in the end, and she thinks that they are the ones she learns the most from despite of being from different cultures and speaking different languages.

This theme is useful when designing the ICT, since it provides an overview of what each of the nationalities typically experience in regards to language problems. It will be an advantage to know this before designing the system, since this system should support this type of problem as well.

I will now proceed and analyze the data according to the theory introduced in section 4. My purpose is to learn when and where Foldens Hotel & Café does not fit the standard of a CoP and then propose how ICT and later on also IA can help the employees. Furthermore, in the following section I will also analyse how the organizational learning and culture is based on this previous inductive analysis.

5.2 Communities of practice

On page 33 I indicated that people in larger communities tend to experience more problems building relationships. In the interviews I have learned that the employees have certain work tasks they do. This means that not all of the employees have the opportunity to get to know each other since they cannot spend much time together at work. Furthermore, Wenger et al. (2002) also mentions that cultural differences have an impact on these relationships, since people typically prefer to connect with people from their own culture. This statement is something I also discovered to be true. Employee 9, Aster from Eritrea mentioned that the

Romanians very clearly preferred to talk to other Romanians and typically are walking around in small groups speaking their own language.

Also Monika from Lithuania indicated that she could feel people were from different cultures, since they stick to the ones they know, which is most often people from their own country. When asked about problems in regards to language she answered:

"*Yes, I like to talk to my Lithuanian friends the most, because when I talk to the other colleagues we often misunderstand each other.*" (Lithuania - Monika, employee 14)

This means that she is fully aware of it and has purposely decided to talk more to other Lithuanians than the rest of the foreign employees. The process of working in a multicultural environment where the majority of the employees are poor English speakers is already challenging. However, if the employees are already in a state of mind where they have given up, it will only become even harder for them to connect. The manager must also focus more on helping the employees, because the Danish employees are spread across the different departments and doing different work tasks. I noticed that many of the people with the same nationality also work together and have the same work tasks. This includes for example the Lithuanian employees who all work exclusively with room cleaning. Even though many of the other foreign employees have the same work tasks, I noticed through my participant observation that they often are divided by nationality. This has a negative impact on the community as a whole.

5.2.1 Activities in a CoP

In this section I will include the activities from figure 3 in the theory section. Wenger (2006) made these activities since they are examples of typical activities people within a community of practice do to help one another. I will therefore go through them in order to learn whether Foldens Hotel & Café benefit from any of these activities and simultaneously propose suggestions.

Problem solving

In the semi-structured interview I asked how the employees would find or learn new information. There was obviously no specific place to do this, and 15 out of 15 employees answered that they will ask a colleague or the manager if they were in doubt. Milana, employee 10 from Czech Republic told me that she first of all prefer to use google and find

out herself, but also said that she most often has to ask a Danish colleague. Most of the employees also became more specific and said that it most likely is a Danish colleague they will ask since they have a better chance of knowing and helping.

Eritrean employee 8, Liah said that when she experiences a problem she first of all will try to ask one of her friends from Eritrea, because she feels more comfortable with them. I believe that this mindset is one of many reasons to why the employees keep experiencing problems, since they are either afraid of misunderstandings or general communication. Overall, introducing ICT for the employees will provide them with more ways of solving problems, since they will get another platform to communicate on and find relevant information. If an employee is afraid of misunderstandings and language barriers, then he or she can find it in the ICT-system or maybe even ask a colleague in there. More specific examples of these problems are to be introduced in the wireframes.

Request for information

This activity is closely connected with problem solving. It revolves around how well an organization or the members within the organization is to store information, which later can be used by other members of that organization.

Radomila, employee 11 from Czech Republic said that she often find herself in situations where she lacks information. She quoted:

"We have so many cleaning products in my department and you would think they all can be used right. But we have certain rules of what to use in which places and that gets confusing. Then I have to ask one of the more experienced colleagues." (Czech Republic - Radomila, employee 11)

This is an example where ICT will be a useful tool to organize and store information of this type. This can result in less confusions for each employee and also less misunderstandings because the employees will be able to find the information by themselves.

Furthermore, in the focus group interview, all of the employees were very positive towards having a digital place where they can find and share information and as Jette from Denmark said:

"..I think it is something we have needed for a long time" (Denmark - Jette, employee 1)

Even though I learned in the process talking to my contact person (Denmark - Jette, employee 1) that many of the employees are novice users of technology I also asked in the focus group interview how much and frequently they use computers and tablets at home. I did this to ensure that they are willing to use it and more importantly that they know how to use it. Even though the employees expressed they were no experts, they all use a computer, mobile or tablet everyday to search for information or new knowledge. I also asked them to rate their IT skills from 1-10 and no one gave themselves a score of less than 4, which was very positive from my perspective. This means that the employees are used to search for information which has been stored by other people making it easier for them to find, and I therefore had a great starting point for making this ICT-system.

Seeking experience

I wanted to understand if the employees were able to seek experience, whether it was from each other or their own specific way of improving themselves and learning. The Eritrean employees for example began with Danish courses before even starting the job which they believe helped them a lot. It has clearly helped them communicating with Danish employees and entering a new culture. In the literature review I mentioned the term ' acculturation' described by Amason et al. (1999). They describe the term as a process where people transfer from one culture to another culture and need to adapt to that in order to learn new habits and unlearn old habits. The employees from Eritrea seem to be the only foreign employees who are willing to adapt to a new culture. The other foreign employees have not adapted and not learned Danish. Furthermore, the Romanians seem to bring a competitive mindset from the work culture in Romania, where employees compete against each other instead of helping each other. Romanian employee 4, Elisabeta also said that the Romanians work harder both here in Denmark as well as back in their own country. Therefore, they might feel that asking for or searching experience is a weakness which they do not want to show.

My overall impression was that all of the employees do not get much experience from each other whether it is intended or not intended experience. Goda, employee 13 from Lithuania quoted:

"It depends on what I need to know. I prefer finding out myself, but sometimes that is impossible" (Lithuania - Goda, employee 13).

As I mentioned in regards to problem solving some employees prefer to solve problems and find solutions without having to physically ask a colleague or manager. This can also be associated with seeking experience. The employees are multicultural and they do speak different languages. This is currently a fact, and therefore I will focus on that it will continue to be this way. It is important that the employees learn from each other. That is one of the biggest cornerstones of being a community of practice. If many of them prefer to seek experience by themselves they should be provided with a way to do this. The ICT-system should therefore distribute information which the employees can learn from. In the system they can learn from each other in a completely different way than they are used to.

Reusing assets

There was no indication that the employees reuse any type of assets. It appears that no information is being stored anywhere, and the employees have therefore no easy access to knowledge. This could for example be information about cleaning products, work schedule and general contact information which can be relevant for all the employees. These are examples I have learned the employees have experienced problems with and this is also where an internal ICT-system could be useful for the employees. In an environment where there often are arriving new employees, this function will be useful.

Coordination and synergy

In this activity I intended to learn about how well the employees were able to coordinate with each other in order to improve the overall efficiency. I came to the conclusion that the coordination and synergy between the employees and between employees and their manager is quite poor. There is barely any communication with the manager, since all responsibility is being placed on the Danish employees. A better coordination could help distribute work tasks to all employees making responsibility more equal. For this specific problem area the ICT-system could contain a calendar with employee information where it would be possible to coordinate work tasks. Furthermore, the ICT will also allow for easier communication between all parts so tasks can easier be distributed.

Discussing developments

I mentioned in the literature review how Green et al. (2015) believes that a diverse team requires certain tools in regards to management. They suggest a safe place for the people to communicate and discuss and listen to each other.

The employees do currently not discuss with each other, and if they do there seems to be a

tendency of only discussing with colleagues with the same nationality. This does indeed help the smaller communities of practice there might be within Foldens Hotel & Café, however, it is a significant disadvantage for the group as a whole, since they do not interact and support each other. In the ICT-system the employees will have easier doing this. Green et al. (2015) also concluded in their study that managers should implement programs allowing as easy access to information as possible for the employees regardless of nationality. The ICT should therefore contain a feature which allow for the employees to discuss relevant and selfmade topics.

Documentation projects

There was no indication that the employees document things with the purpose of learning from their mistakes. Danish employee 2, Birgit says that they never have any meetings with their manager, which would have been a good place to start for the employees to discuss with each other. Since things and experiences are not documented, they can risk experiencing the same set of problems when new employees are arriving. Having physical meetings with each other and the manager is one way to document these things with each other. The ICT-system can make this process faster and less complicated. A suggestion would be to have overall guidelines and work rules which are always available for the employees.

Visits

Wenger's (2006) example in this activity was to visit other who has experienced what you are experiencing with the purpose of learning and gaining new inspiration. With this activity I wanted to focus on if they know anything about each others' culture and if they have any interest in it. The employees from Czech Republic seemed most interested in learning about their colleagues and their background. They expressed having a general interest in working abroad and learning about other cultures, and this can be related to why most employees mentioned Czech Republic as the most equal culture or as the ones who are easiest to talk to. They are easy to interact with and are willing to share and distribute their own knowledge. The Romanian and Lithuanian employees, on the other hand, seemed less interested in this even though they also answered and acknowledged the employees from Czech Republic and their type of interaction and openness. The Eritrean employees were the ones the other knew least about and employee 15, Greta from Lithuania said following about the Eritrean employees:

"I have to say those because I don't really talk to them. Like I said the colleagues from Eritrea seem shy and quiet" (Lithuania - Greta, employee 15)

Many of the employees indicated this way that the reason for feeling different from the Eritrean employees was lack of knowledge about them and communication with them. In general, most employees seemed interested in getting better communication, even though they felt it was difficult. I can imagine the ICT-system will make it easier for the employees to share knowledge about each other and their culture. It might also create more interest which will strengthen the relationship between the employees and thus in the end get closer to become a community of practice. Radomila, employee 12 from Czech Republic argued that she liked learning about Lithuanian culture from her colleague and that she liked sharing information about her own culture. This proves that at least some of the employees are interested in learning about each other, and that this makes the employees wanting to interact and communicate more with each other.

Mapping knowledge and identifying gaps

Without having a decided division of knowledge between the employees it seems quite clear that the Danish employees are the ones who besess most knowledge and the foreign employees also seem to be aware of that fact. However, it might not be necessary that the Danish employees are being given so much responsibility, if the foreign employees were provided with the opportunities to actually do more. In the focus group interview I decided to ask if the employees felt the same way, and the answer from everyone was yes.

Kristina from Czech Republic said:

"Yes, I also think that. And I think it is hard for them, because they still have to do their usual work, while for example teaching us new employees." (Czech Republic - Kristina, employee 12).

In the individual interviews, two out of the three Danish also mentioned that it is their responsibility to train new employees, yet they are not told how or provided extra time for it. In my literature review I brought up Fitzsimmons et al. (2011) and their study about how multicultural employees is an advantage for organizations. They suggested that a training/development program should be implemented to ensure that all the multiculturals will develop similar skills.

A training or development program is something which could benefit Foldens hotel & Café since many employees come and go, and there are almost always new employees who need training. Almost all of the foreign employees mentioned that they have learned by doing and that there was no specific training when starting the job. Furthermore, as long as the Danish employees keep having so much more responsibility they will also gain more knowledge than their foreign colleagues, which is not the purpose. They should have similar skills, which will also make it easier for them to share knowledge with each other.

I have focused on providing brief suggestions to how ICT can help in each of these activities, however, I will present a more precise list of solutions in regards to what should be implemented in the ICT-system. This will be presented in section 5.4.

5.2.2 Managing knowledge within the community of practice

In this section I want to relate this case with Wenger's Donut model, which is described and shown in figure 3. How the activities in the previous section are executed will have a significant impact on the knowledge management within the community. In order to be a CoP, knowledge should be enabled and put it in the hands of the practitioners. The employees need to continuously share knowledge with each other, which currently is not happening effectively enough. I will therefore also analyze the situation according to this model that includes three elements which are all crucial for communities in regards to managing their knowledge. The purpose is to get the full overview of Foldens Hotel & Café also seen from a strategic knowledge management point of view.

Domains

According to Wenger (2004) the 'domain' in the donut model is the area of knowledge which brings people together to solve similar problems and thus be able to manage all type of knowledge within the organization. A big part of being a community of practice means that the people involved share identical problems and interact together to solve these.

The employees at Foldens Hotel & Café, however, seem to experience different sets of problems. They could all agree that it is difficult to work in a multicultural work environment, but they do not share identical problems and they especially do not interact with the purpose of solving these. Neither are they currently provided with any tools to share the problems. The ICT-system will be a place where the employees can meet and share problems

with each other. It will create easier access to knowledge, but it will also allow the employees to learn about the problems which other employees are facing.

Communities

Communities refer to the group of people to whom this knowledge is useful. The interviews have showed that the problem is that there are multiple subgroups within the organization who almost practice their own communities of practice. This includes among other employees who are afraid of too many misunderstandings and therefore avoid speaking with other employees. In the literature review I focused on presenting both challenges and benefits of working in a multicultural work environment. Among the challenges I mentioned were negative attitudes and behavior which can affect the relationship between employees. This is something I noticed in this case also, but mostly based on shallow misunderstandings and lack of knowledge about each other. I asked the question about which culture was most different, however, I never got the feeling that there was hate involved. The employees do not benefit from any particular benefits of being a multicultural organization, which I believe should be part of their overall long term strategy. Therefore I intend to include a function in the ICT-system which can support this.

Practices

In order to manage knowledge effectively an organization most often need tools and certain methods to do this. A Romanian employee for example said:

"*Everybody is working so hard, so we don't really have time to get to know each other*"
(Romania - Elisabeta, employee 4)

They do not seem to realise how important a source of knowledge that general communication with each other this can be.

The two other Romanians mentioned that they talk mostly to the other Romanians in their spare time. A repeatedly statement from all the involved employees was that they consider themselves friends with everybody, however, most of them do not spend any time with their colleagues and talk about 'not work-related' matters. The Romanians argue that it is simply easier to talk in their own language, where an Eritrean employee blame the distance and geography:

"*Yes but I live in Frederikshavn which makes it more difficult. But I would love to talk more to them. It would be fun.*" (Eritrea - Mariam, employee 7)

Whatever the primary reason is, it only becomes more difficult to manage knowledge due to lack of communication. Even though Wenger (2006) says that the body of knowledge does not necessarily need to be technical, this is what this case will focus on, and I believe that it can be a significant advantage for especially multilingual employees. I base this statement on my knowledge from the literature review, but also from my current knowledge of how the employees are intentionally avoiding interaction.

The purpose with Wenger's Donut model is that it should be an ongoing and never ending process of strategy planning and managing of knowledge. To sum up, Foldens Hotel & Café does not seem to focus on managing knowledge between employees. There is no strategies to do this, and it is therefore not possible for employees to share knowledge across the organization. The circle of knowledge management and strategy planning does therefore not seem to be present at Foldens Hotel & Café. My purpose with the ICT-system is to improve these three elements so that the management of knowledge becomes easier for employees, and it becomes an ongoing routine.

5.3 Organizational learning and culture within Foldens Hotel & Café

Having discussed and analysed this will make it easier to look into the organizational culture and determine how the learning process within Foldens Hotel & Café is. It quickly became clear that a part of the internal culture is that the Danish employees experience more pressure and are being given more responsibility. It is difficult for the employees to learn from their previous mistakes due to bad communication but also because of the short period of time many of the employees are there for. ICT can thus be used by new employees to learn and participate. I do not see Foldens Hotel & Café as a knowledge-oriented culture, since the employees do not really share knowledge with each other. In this section I will describe and analyse the situation in regards to Edgar Schein's three levels model.

5.3.1 Artifacts

All the foreign employees expressed that it was difficult coming to a new country and culture like Denmark. However, the employees from Eritrea seem to be the only subgroup who was willing to fully adapt to Danish culture.

In that case it is important to emphasize that the employees from Eritrea are the only one who is not coming to Denmark with the purpose of going home after a couple of years. Therefore, they also seem more motivated to adapt to a new culture, since they know that it is a necessity.

In this level we can focus on how the employees do, but it is in the next levels, *values* and *assumptions* where it can be analysed why they do this way.

The majority of the employees are not used to working with technology, and when I asked in the interview if and how they use technology for work, most of the them answered that they do not use it all. The reason for this was that they do not feel it is necessary. The receptionist will print out cleaning notes for the employees, however, it is still only the Danish employees who can use it since it is written in Danish.

It might not seem necessary using technology in order to complete the actual work activity such as cleaning, however it can support them in other activities such as learning, sharing and preparing information. The artifacts also revolves around how people's feelings are when entering a new culture.. In the next two sections; values and assumptions I will dig deeper into how this is reflected in the organization.

5.3.2 Values

In regards to the overall values and beliefs within the organization, a big problem is that there is not enough focus from the management that they actually are a multicultural organization with employees who sometimes cannot even understand each other. In the literature review I described how Chevrier (2003) talked about a manager/leader's role in a multicultural organization. She said that when managers purposely do nothing about cross-culture problems, the organization will exist of heterogeneous practices, and this will result in many smaller communities instead of one big (Chevrier, 2003, p. 145). Schein (1988) also said that the values of the employees should correspond with the values of the leaders. Basically all of

the employees told me in the interview that they have very little communication with the manager and many of the foreigners had barely spoken to him/her before. My interpretation of the employees values and goals is, as I mentioned earlier, that they have different goals of working in the organization. The Lithuanian and Romanian employees, whose reason was that they could earn more money here, all seem to be interacting most with each other and finding many resemblances. Based on the interviews with the employees, I did not consider the Romanians as being particular interested in working a multicultural organization, however, Zelma, employee 6 from Romania said:

"I learn a lot of things about cultures and languages which I would never have learned elsewhere. That is exciting." (Romania - Zelma, employee 6)

This confirmed that she indeed was interested in learning about culture, and that she could see benefits from working in this environment. However, she continued her answer with saying that since every employee is there with the same purpose, to earn money, she did not find any problems by working with multicultural colleagues.

5.3.3 Assumptions

Underlying assumptions are often being taken for granted, which Schein (1984) quoted. Observing the participant helped me to dig deeper and get a broader understanding of the situation. I noticed in the focus group interview that the Danish employee would almost always be the first to answer. If not, the other foreign employees would at least look at her before answering. This shows a hierarchy between the employees, and in fact Jette from Denmark said following in her individual interview:

"In general, there is a sort of ranking order, where the one who has been here longest, want to decide more." (Denmark - Jette, employee 1).

The Danish employees have been there longest, and the Romanian seem to be fighting for the second place.

In the theory I brought an example of an underlying assumption. Schein (1984) said that if a manager of an organization has a belief that one certain strategy will work, since it did the first couple of times, then this strategy will no longer be questioned. I believe that this is what has happened in this case also. The manager has put all responsibility on the Danish

employees which might have worked out the first couple of times. However, now there is only 20 % Danes and more and more foreigners are coming. The strategy does not seem to work anymore, and the manager needs to be more involved and focus on changes.

Another important thing to mention is also that the Danish employees might have accepted the situation as it is. Employee 12, Kristina from Czech Republic said that the Danish employees keep their problems to themselves. Even though they know the situation is not ideal, they have accepted it.

A part of my method was also participant observation. When I followed the two Lithuanian employees, Monika and Greta I noticed that they were speaking almost only in their own language. This did not come as a surprise, however, I also noticed that they suddenly panicked and had to run for a Danish employee. When they returned I found out that they had run out of a certain cleaning product and had to use another one. It took almost 20 additional minutes and therefore struck me as a waste of time in order to get answer to such a dilemma which must have occured before.

The employees from Eritrea stated among other that the Romanians were intrusive and that the Danish were too direct and loud. My interpretation, however, is that the Eritreans are from a culture which is so different that it is difficult for them to interact with the others. This has resulted in all other nationalities mentioning that they know nothing about them. So even though they are the most dedicated in adapting to Danish culture, they seem to be the worst in adapting to the community in general.

The Romanians for example also appeared very kind and eager to work. However, many of the other employees indicated that they appeared to competitive and hard to communicate with. My personal interpretation though is that they are like this because of the culture they come from. They are used to having more competition where they need to prove themselves worthy. The problem, however, is that this behavior seems to be a disadvantage and has a negative impact on the community.

5.4 Content to implement in the ICT-system

Based on the employees' problems and needs I have made a list of what should be implemented in the ICT-system with the purpose of them becoming a community of practice

who can easier interact and help each other solving problems. Furthermore, I have made a brief explanation of my choice to each point as well as how I intend it should be used.

To help focusing on the most important needs I gained inspiration from Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Lambe, 2007, p. 19). The essence of his model is that the most basic needs must be fulfilled before more detailed and individual needs can be taken into account. This will also be clear in the final design of the wireframes where the content will be organized in a hierarchical order. For this specific case it means that before creating a lot of subpages containing the content the employees need, I must first of all focus on designing a front page which will allow the employees to navigate and find the needed information with as few complications as possible.

1. <u>A nice and simple frontpage</u> - For the front page I will use the four components of IA, which I described in the theory. This means that I will focus on an overall manageable and simple design combined with a simple navigation to all the menu categories. The labels will also be an important factor here, since they need to be understandable for all employees regardless of nationality.

2. <u>Training/development program</u> - I have chosen this as the second most important feature of the ICT-system. This is based on that both Danish employees and foreign employees agree that Danish employees have too much work and responsibility in regards to training new members of the organization. Therefore, I believe that an online program can contribute in providing guidelines in regards to how new employees should be trained and what they must learn. In regards to IA, this function will be able to support findability and usability, where the employees have easier access to knowledge. Also, the semantics in taxonomies will be highly taken into consideration to secure an understandable vocabulary.

3. <u>Calendar</u> - An online calendar where the employees can always keep track seems important to include. I learned in the interviews that they do experience problems in regards to people meeting late because of misunderstandings. Through participant observations I discovered that a typical way to distribute work tasks and meetings times is happening physically between the employees. It will be important to make it understandable and easy to navigate through.

4. Contact information - Including contact information about all employees and managers in this ICT will provide everyone with easier access to contact everyone. My experience from the interviews is that many employees often have questions and this will allow for easier access to general communication. This should be organized well, since it will function as a mini knowledge map to employee information.

5. Guidelines - In the interviews I also learned that some employees have problems regarding guidelines/rules for which cleaning products to use. Therefore, it is crucial to include this in the system as well, so the employees can always find the information. These should be organized based on IA criteria and prevent information overload, which Gilchrist (2001) mentions is a significant problem with modern ICT and intranets.

6. Chat room - Many employees expressed that they had very little contact with each other outside of work, yet many were also interested in communicating more. This chat/discussion room will function as a forum where the employees can create topics and discuss with each other whatever they need or like. Furthermore, it will be a great starting place for the manager to communicate with the employees.

7. Order delivery - I found out that the Danish employees are also the ones who order new products such as cleaning products, towels etc. They do this by using their private phone. Therefore, I have included this as an option in the system, with the purpose of gathering as many things as possible and create more user friendliness. Also, this might allow for all employees to participate in this process where things can be ordered online. Again, special focus on semantics such as vocabulary will be important here.

8. News - I have decided to include a 'news' category. This is based on many employees apparent lack of interest of working in a multicultural organization. This page should therefore include news about the hotel as well as general news around the world which can benefit all employees.

9. Pictures as a learning tool - Milana, employee 10 from Czech Republic said that she sometimes has to show everything due to language barriers. Therefore, one way to

support this is to include a lot of pictures as a learning tool in the ICT. This will among other be included in the 'news' and 'rules' section.

Figure 8, ICT content

These are the things which I believe can be effective to use in the ICT-system and support the employees in solving the problems and needs which I have discovered. Some of the employees are already connected on the social media 'facebook' and I found that those they were connected with on 'facebook' where also among the ones they talked most to besides work. Goda from Lithuania argued that outside of work she talked mostly to Romanians and the colleagues from Czech Republic. She furthermore said that it was not because she did not want to talk to the other colleagues, but it was easier to stay connected on e.g. facebook.
"*..these are the ones I for example have contact with on facebook. That helps a lot.*"
(Lithuania - Goda, employee, 13)

Before moving on, it is important to mention that many of the problems the employees are experiencing can not be avoided since they are caused by language barriers which would require a more complex and longer approach. But the ICT can definitely be a contribution. In the literature review I highlighted the example of a multicultural team working together in a virtual system, where they only communicate electronically. They used open questions and humour to avoid misunderstandings and 96 % of their team appreciated the fact that they were a multicultural team (Duran and Popescu, 2014). The employees at Foldens Hotel & Café can not solely communicate electronically, but it will provide them with a new way of communicating which can prevent misunderstandings and create more interest in communicating. It can also contribute in them being able to ask more open questions where they will be have more time to consider their answer and perhaps feel less pressure.
Knowing that the employees have different skills in technology, it is important to be cautious with the design and therefore the IA within the system will also be essential. As I mentioned in the theory, my primary focus of using IA is to support findability and usability, but also

bringing principles into the digital world to support the community of practice (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 24).

My overall components, also described by Rosenfeld et al. (2015) are following: *organization, labeling, navigation and search system.*

Following section will present a sitemap and the wireframes and their belonging design justifications.

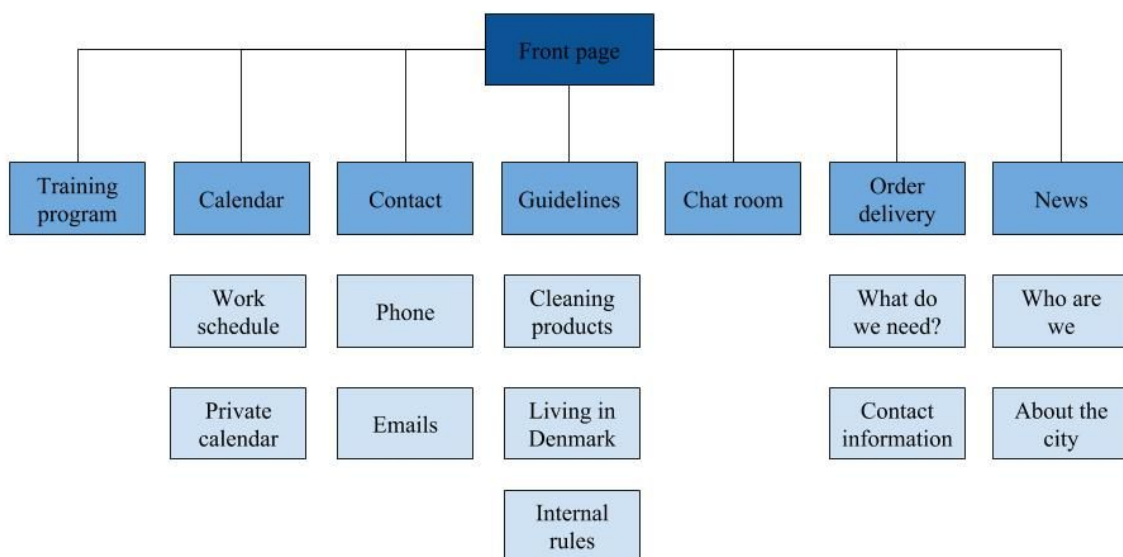## 5.5 Solution for an ICT-system

5.5.1 Sitemap

Figure 9, Sitemap

5.5.2 Wireframes

This first wireframe depicts the front page of the ICT-system, and is the first thing which the employees will be introduced to.
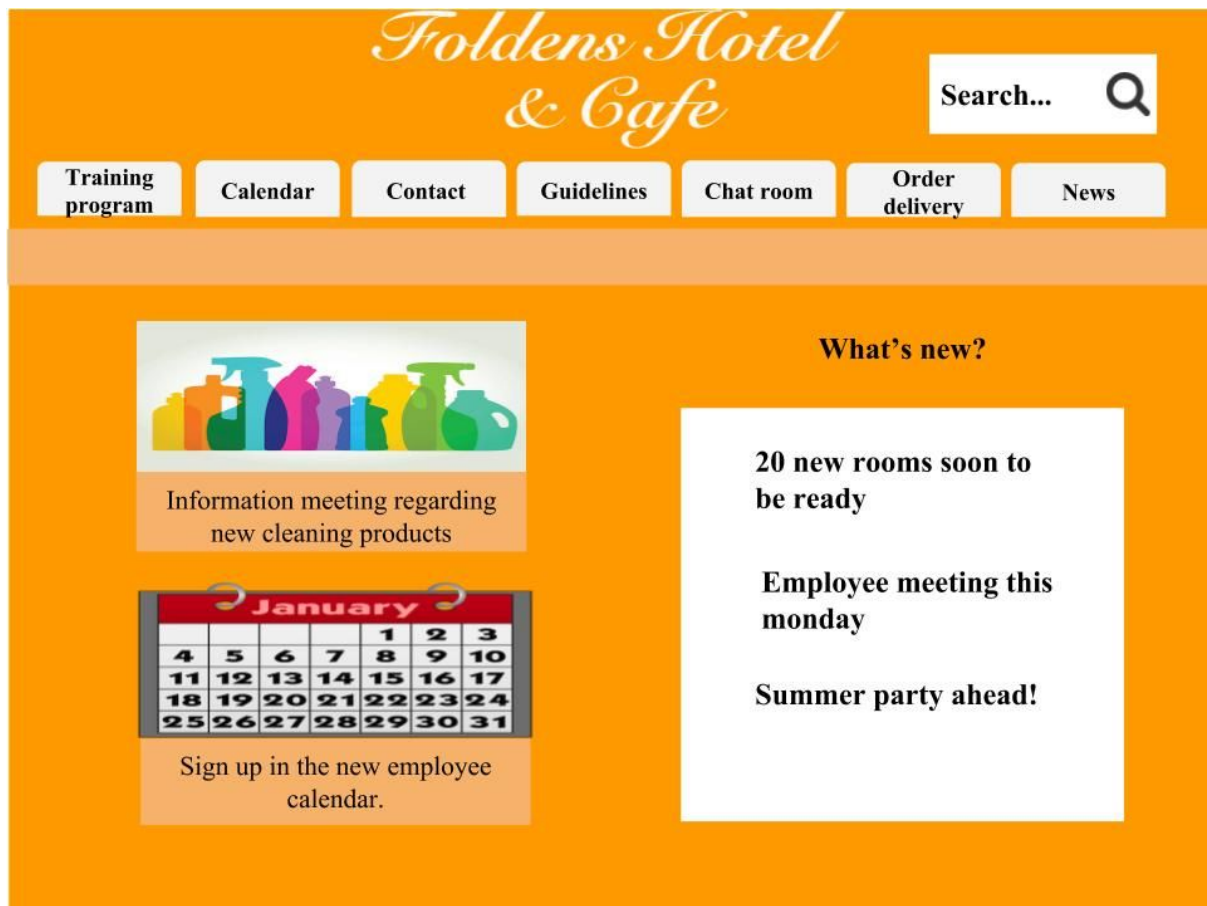
Figure 10, Front page

Organization

It was important to think about how the content should be organized. I have focused on including realistic examples with information that should be part of the system to support the idea of how the content should be organized. Employees at Foldens Hotel & Café have different knowledge which cannot be organized, therefore it is important to organize information which can later turn into knowledge. As Rosenfeld et al. (2015) says, we organize so we can can easier find answers for what we need. This is among other why I have focused on what the employees would need the most. I have made a simple classification of the content, where all the menu categories are placed next to each other in a specific order (See also figure 9). Furthermore, I have made a white box containing contextual links which support the fact that the employees can find other related things within in this box.

On top of that, I have mostly focused on creating an overall exact organization scheme. The exact organization scheme intends to organize and divide information into structured and alphabetical sections. This is efficient when the user already know the name of what he/she is

searching for, and is therefore referred to as *known-item* searching (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 105). The purpose of this ICT-system is that it should cope with the themes from the analysis and overall problems the employees are having. It should thus function as an internal intranet which the employees can interact through and manage/share knowledge in. Therefore, they will benefit from this type of organization since they most often will use the system with a specific purpose. On the other hand, I have not fully excluded the benefits of an ambiguous organization scheme. This would be more useful in more crowded websites though, where you not always know what you are looking for (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 105). However, I still emphasized including a search bar in the top left corner of the system in case an employee wants to search for more information and also to include news stories on the front page to create more interest and variety in the system.

Moreover, I have also focused on organizing the content in a hierarchical order with the most important on top of the page. That it, the logo will always be in the upper part of the site together with the global navigation which is the menu categories.

Labels

I have decided to focus on creating simple, understandable and primarily textual labels, since I learned in the analysis that the employees are not only from different cultures but are also primarily novice users of IT.

As mentioned by Benyon (2010), some buttons or labels on a website might represent a certain thing in one culture, but a completely different thing in another culture. He provides the example of a tick in USA will mean acceptance and a cross will mean rejection. But in Britain both are used for acceptance (Benyon, 2010, p. 32). This means that I cannot expect that everyone knows what they represent without making a further investigation of the employees. When deciding the names of all the labels in the menu I particularly had to be cautious, since these names are supposed to be a headline or representation of all the information which can be found when clicking on the label. I focused on making them sound as clear as possible. 'Contact' is both a noun and verb, and in this example it should make no difference in regards to understanding the label. Labels such as 'training program' and 'chat room' will probably be the ones who could cause doubt for the employees, however, an important thing in regards to IA is also to focus on continuously research such as user experience to understand how the user's will use the system (Rosenfeld et al. 2015, p. 166).

However, I decided to call it 'training program', since many employees used the word 'training' in regards to not getting any training as a new employee as well as Danish employees mentioning that they have to train new employees. I felt that 'Chat room' would sound more understandable than for example 'forum'. These menu categories are all 'conceptual links' which are clickable and will lead the employees further into a new subpage. I have also included one 'heading' label. This specific label is not clickable but functions as an informing label which describes the content beneath it. This label is on the front page and is called 'What's new?'.

One iconic label I have included, however, is the logo of the organization. It is placed in the very top of the front page, and it also functions as a home button. This function is important to include since it help preventing errors. Or it will at least allow the users to click on it and always be directed back to the front page. It can also be referred to as a 'navigation system label'. No matter where the user is in the system, this label will always be placed in the top of the system. This logo is also supposed to create familiarity for the user when navigating the system, and represent that this is the organization which all the employees are part of.

I highly emphasized not to include too much content on the frontpage to avoid information overload but also to let the labels be fully functional. In general I have used pictures as labels and they are all quite big. The reason is not only to prevent small errors such as misclicking, but also to support the employees' understanding of the text, as I have learned in the analysis that many of them are not used to speaking English.

Navigation

In the theory I mentioned how humans have developed navigation system to prevent us from getting lost and easier find what we need. Without even thinking about a digital system, the employees seem to be in need of a better navigation system. They currently had no specific answer to how they would find new necessary information. They simply answered that they would just ask a colleague and most often a Danish, which is not a tenable situation, since the Danish employees are already being given too much responsibility which affects the community as a whole. ICT will provide them with a more simple way of navigating. They will be able to navigate through the system and find answers to problems such as cleaning products rules, meeting times, and ordering products, which are all daily activities where mistakes and misunderstandings seem to happen.

In regards to the more specific navigation in the ICT-system, the employees should be able to see all navigation options already from the front page. The front page will consist of a global navigation system which is the main menu. There is no specific local navigation included, however, there are contextual navigation which is found in the middle of the system. These are the hyperlinks/conceptual labels which will lead the employees into a new subpage. It is important to mention that the contextual navigation system will always be there. The pictures and text will change based on what is relevant to place on the front page for the employees, but the placement will be static.

Search

In a small and private ICT-system like this, it might not seem necessary to include a search bar. The purpose is that the employees should be able to use the system on a daily basis and the system should therefore be updated regularly. Therefore, there will be new information as well as old information to find, and a search bar will thus be useful.

Another reason to include the search bar is to support the problems in regards to their IT skills as well as english language skills of most employees. If an employee is insecure of how a word is spelled the search bar will be a great tool to support this.

The next wireframe will show an example of the new online training program, which I believe should be an important part of the ICT-system.

Figure 11, Training program

This is also a part of what Fitzsimmons et al. (2011) from my literature review suggested as part of their strategy for a multicultural organization.

The purpose in this case is that there should be a clear guideline and division of training and helping new employees whether it is Danish or foreign employees. The example in the wireframe shows a division of how all employees can be part of training new employees, instead of only Danish employees having all responsibility as it is currently.

This function, along with 'chat room' and 'news' also intends to create a place where employees can feel more equal. The literature review also highlighted the example of hispanics who identified themselves as outsiders in the American work market even though they were treated the same way from the management. I got the feeling that many foreigners at Foldens Hotel & Café feel also feel the same way. Not only should this function provide better guidelines for how to train new employees, but it should also help spreading the assignments between all the employees which should create a better group dynamic. This will

help the problem with the Danish employees experiencing more responsibility, as well as it create more responsibility to all the other employees and thus create a more equal work division between the employees and work more like a community. Everyone should also be mentioned by name, and it is also a possible solution for the manager to get in contact with other employees than only the Danish.

The next two wireframes are showing the calendar.

Figure 12, Calendar 1

Figure 13, Calendar 2

These two wireframes are included to depict how the employees will view their new online calendar system. I included this function to help avoid misunderstandings in regards to meeting times. I did not get loads of indications that this was a problem, however, Birgit employee 2 from Denmark said that foreign employees were afraid of admitting when they were in doubt, which earlier has resulted in misunderstood meeting times, but also misunderstandings in regards to which room number to clean. The first page when clicking on the 'Calendar' label will therefore be a highly visual calendar where the employee can click on a date, and when doing this they will be provided with an overview of which employees are working that day, when they are meeting and what specific work tasks they are going to do. In regards to navigation I focused on creating a list of the employees, which for future work could be listed alphabetically which is also part of the exact organization scheme I talked about earlier. The employee is also able to search for his/her own name in an additional search bar. This also allows for more flexibility in regards to finding either

yourself or another specific employee name. Overall, in these wireframes I have focused on making clear headlines so the employees will experience as little confusion as possible. An example in this subpage is the headlines 'name' and 'work task'. In regards to IA, these function as both a 'heading' which represents the information beneath them, but it can also be argued that they are 'index terms' which represent which topic that can be browsed for or searched for (Rosenfeld et al., 2015, p. 140). In this example it will be the employees names and work tasks which can be searched for.

In regards to consistency I focused on shapes of the various labels so they are mostly square and also quite large in size. The headlines have a different coloured background to make it stand out and be more clear for the user.

The purpose is also that the employees should be able to click on their own name and have a personal calendar to keep track of their working hours etc.

This feature, just like many of the other features I have included, requires a certain amount of indorsement and support from the manager. I learned from several studies and articles from the literature review that in order for multicultural organizations to function, the manager must take precautions for employees having different values and management must be adapted.

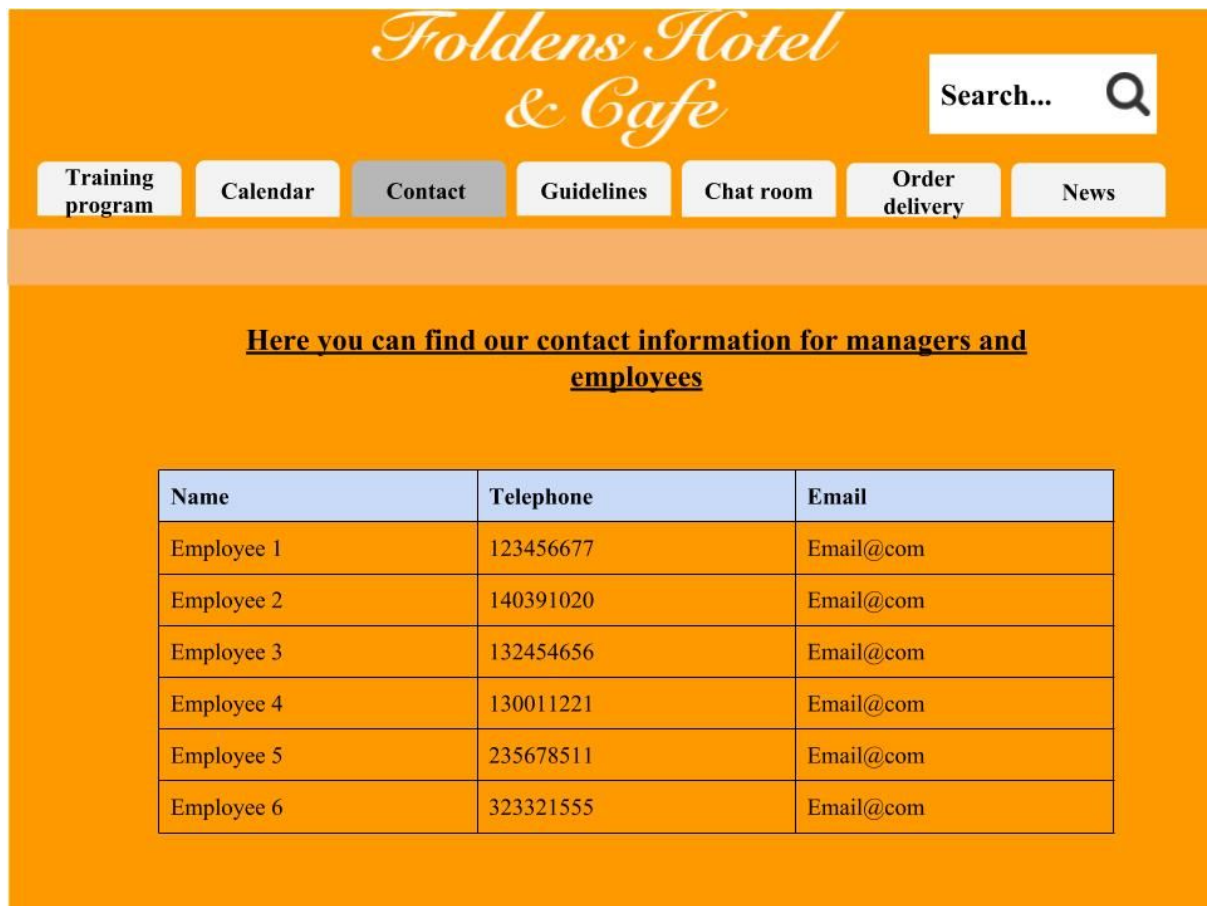Following wireframe is showing the contact page.

Figure 14, Contact

In this wireframe I wanted to show a simple lineup of contact information which the employees might benefit from. Presumably, they already have this information somewhere, but as I indicated in the theory a big part of organizing knowledge, is to provide the users with more ways of interacting and getting connected (Lambe, 2007, p. 49). They can easily navigate through the different contact options, and this whole contact table functions as one big textual label. The three categories covered in a light blue background colour; name, telephone, and email function as 'heading' labels and are representing the information which can be found right beneath.

The employees often have to contact each other, since there is only one Danish employee among many foreign employees and a reality, which the analysis also indicates, is that the majority seek help from the Danes. So whether they need to contact each other in a

work-related situation or besides work this function will provide them with more access and easier distribution opportunities.

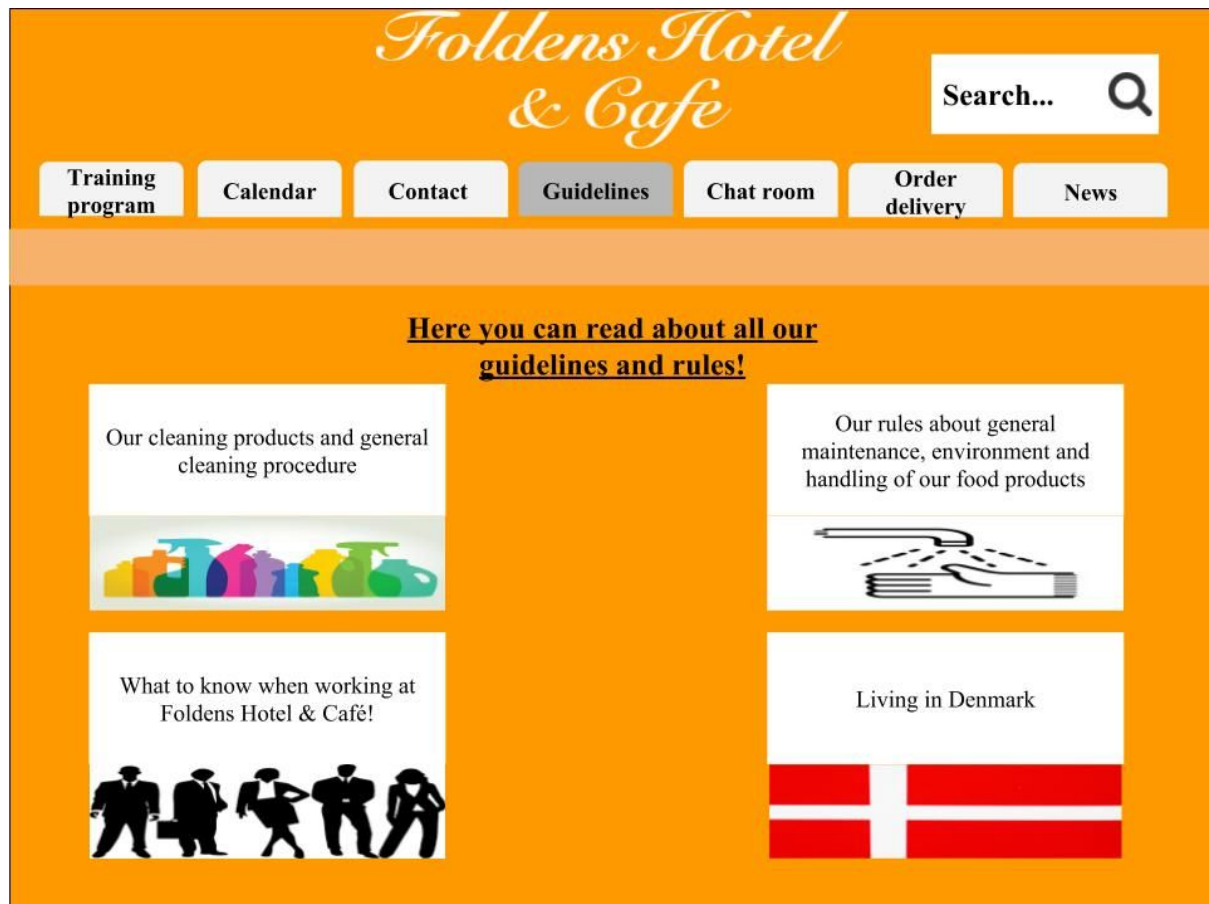Following wireframe shows the 'Guidelines' subpage.

Figure 15, Guidelines

I learned that there often are hired new employees, who will need to learn rules or guidelines, whether it is about what cleaning products to use or general rules when working in this business. Including a section of this in the system make it easier for the employee to find this information and become more motivated to learn it. They will thus be able to besess the same amount of knowledge within the area, which can help this specific activity. I think that a big problem currently is that the employees not have the same amount of knowledge or access to knowledge which is necessary to be a community of practice where all members help each other to improve the organization. I have previously concluded that the manager seems to

rely on Danish employees and give them more responsibility. My intention is to create a system where the employees become more equal, at least in regards to management and sharing of knowledge. This section will allow all employees to read about their common guidelines. I have got a clear understanding that a majority of the employees are poor English speakers. Therefore, I decided to focus on semantics such as the vocabulary. The system needs to use simple English and short sentences. In addition, I have focused on consistency and put each set of rule into white boxes. This will help distinguishing between each rule subject and also create familiarity for the user. The pictures are included to support the understanding of the sentences. In regards to navigation, I have included a simple headline *"Here you can read about all our guidelines and rules"*, which purpose is to secure that the user understand where in the system he/she is, but also to state that it is guidelines which are applicable for all employees. To support this, the 'guidelines' menu category is coloured in a darker grey to indicate that this is where the employee currently is. This applies for all the subpages, no matter where you are in the system. Employee 13, Goda from Lithuania also informed me that a big problem with the cleaning products is that they are in Danish, which only makes it even harder to understand for foreign employees.

Next wireframe is the chat room:

Figure 16, Chat room

Following wireframe will give an example of what my intentions are by including a 'chat room' function for the employees. When I asked the employees who they felt most equal to and different from, I received some very mixed answers, but it was surely the Eritrean employees who seemed to be the nationality to stand out the most. Furthermore, the interviews also confirmed that almost all employees have little to no contact with the manager. The purpose with this function is therefore to encourage to more communication and make it easier for the manager to communicate with the employees as well as the employees communicating with each other. They will be able to create a topic and discuss and talk with whoever is interested. According to my interpretations many employees actually do share the same humour and interests, they simply do not know because of lack of communication. This feature should help them get to know each other better and motivate them to do so regardless of their overall purpose for working in the organization.

I have mentioned several times how important it is for the manager to acknowledge that this in fact is a multicultural organization and the employees should be treated after this. This option will allow the manager to distribute information information to the employees way easier than before, where the information is distributed first to the Danish employees and then to foreign employees.

The wireframe of this subpage is made very simple. I want to focus on having a list in the right side where employees can find topics which have been discussed. They should be able to scroll down through this list. In this box there are both contextual labels and headings. 'Chat subjects' is a heading for the whole box, and in the box there is first of all a contextual label, e.g. 'coffee'. This label is clickable, and right beneath I have added yet a heading label, which describes what the contextual label is about. It is also possible to click on the button 'See all' which should provide a complete overview of all the discussion subject. This is also where the search bar again would be useful, since a new employee for example could search through the list and find valuable information and this way easier get integrated in the community.

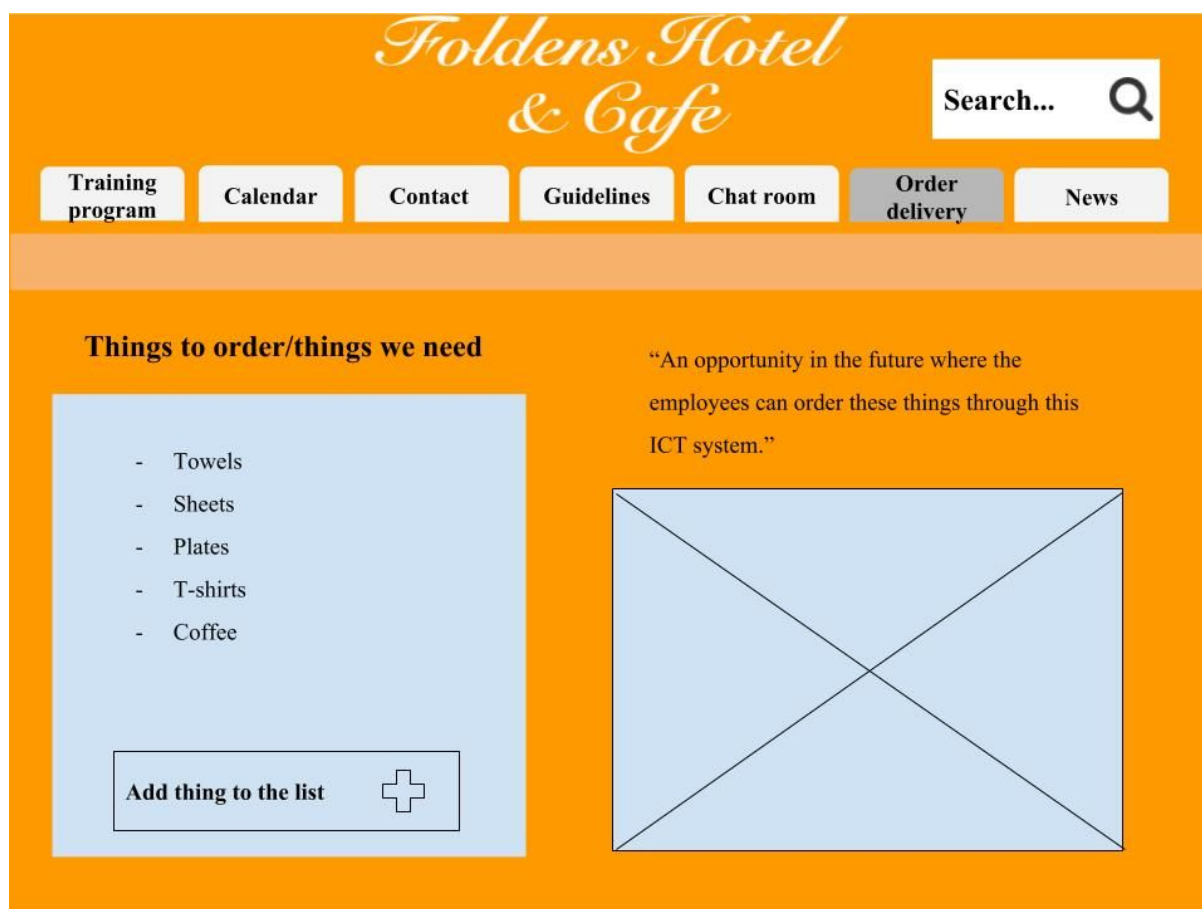The next wireframe shows 'Order delivery'.

Figure 17, Order delivery

I included this feature as an extra future function, which I believe could be quite effective to incorporate in the system. The already existent tools to communicate such as telephone will be gathered in this ICT-system, but this feature will also make it possible for employees to take part of updating what needs to ordered. Examples are in the wireframe. I got inspiration to include this since Danish employee 2, Birgit indicated that she is using her own telephone to order things such as towels and beddings. This is also where I learned that it is only Danish employee who do this. My whole purpose with designing an ICT-system is to support the organization in becoming a community of practice. I therefore want to focus on getting the employees more connected and share responsibility and work tasks. This will hopefully make it easier for them to communicate and relate to each other. The employees will be able to update in the system if something is missing which needs to be ordered, and they should be able to order through their suppliers. This reason is among other why I call it a future feature, since it will require further cooperation with other organization. In the literature review I

mentioned the example of employees who only interact electronically, which for them works really well even though they are also a multicultural organization. To work fully electronically together is not possible in this case, however, I do take inspiration from their example and believe that working more together in an ICT-system can help the employees to better interact and manage knowledge. The box I have placed there as a suggestion to how it could be organized compared to the remaining content. This is where the employees should be able to choose among an internal 'library' of usual products they are ordering. The purpose with this in regards to IA, is definitely to support findability and usability. They will have the list on the left side of what must be ordered, and then be able to choose and actually order those things through the system which should be placed right besides it. In addition, the text such as 'things we need' is supposed to strengthen the feeling of being part of a community. It is something all of the employees need in order to work more efficiently together and function as a group.

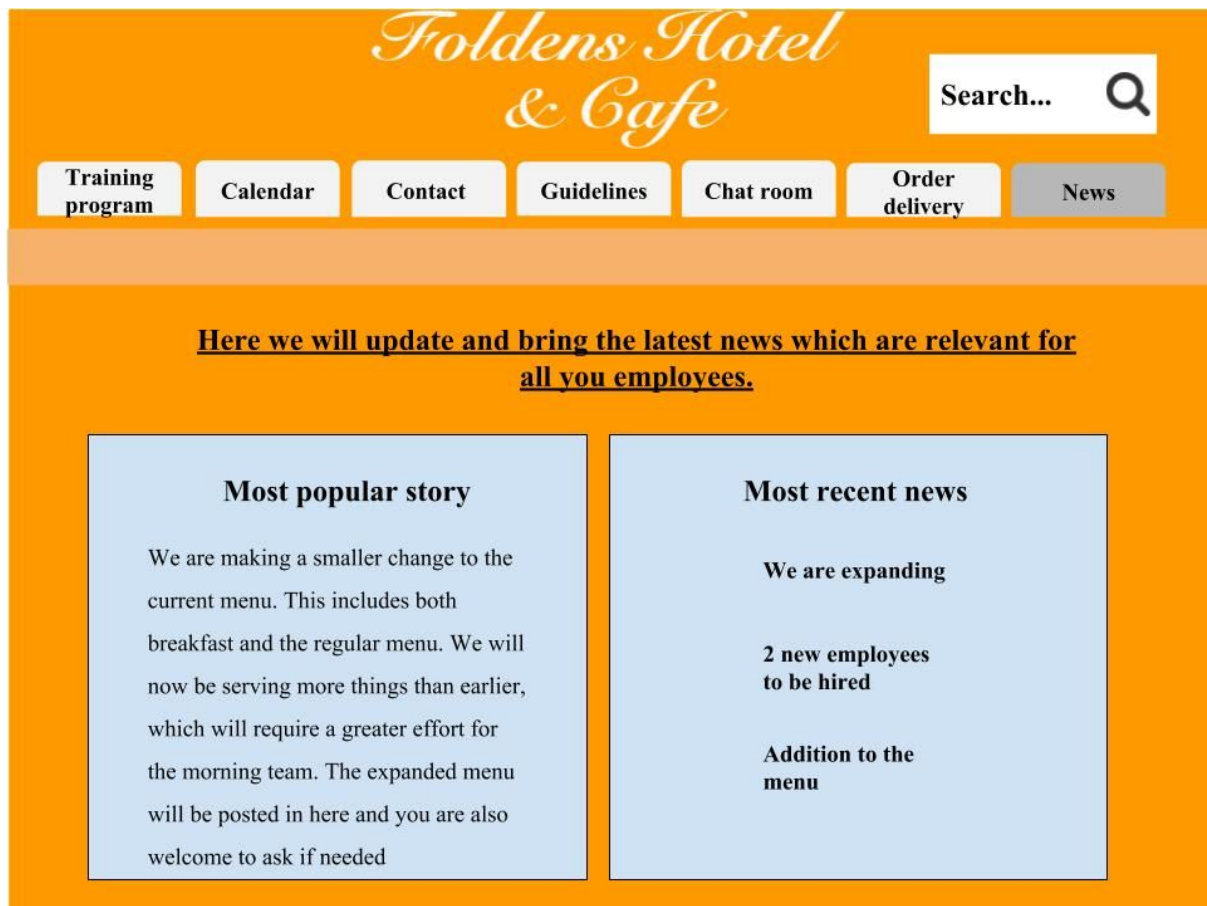The last wireframe I will show gives an example of the 'news' subpage'.

Figure 18, News

This function is not included to improve interaction or management of knowledge. Rather, the purpose was to create an option for especially foreign employees to get access to news about both the hotel as well as general Danish and international news. I do not propose that the employees should fully adapt to Danish culture. I mentioned in the literature review how acculturation is about adapting to a new culture and unlearning previous values and beliefs (Amason et al., 1999) I do not see this as the best solution for this case, instead I suggest that they should work as a multicultural team and focus more about learning about each other. The news page can thus supply the employees with news which can be interesting for all the employees regardless of nationality.

Employee 7, Mariam mentioned Denmark as a very different culture. She explains that Eritrea is a very religious country where they pray on a daily basis. That is very different from the Danish culture where they talk openly about almost everything and even laugh at

religion. This is also a suggestion to what the employees can learn about each other either in here behind a label called 'who are we'.

Mariam furthermore quoted following:

"I also have problems understanding the menu, since it sometimes changes and the names can be difficult to understand. And I will never know right before we have to make it. " (Eritrea - Mariam, employee 7)

This is also an example of what could be uploaded in the news section, with the purpose of preparing the employees for the work activities they need to do, and thus avoid misunderstandings. The design of this page should be very simple and consist of two square boxes. The one on the left should highlight either the most recent or the most popular news story, and the box on the right side should provide an overview of what else to find. Again in this wireframe I have focused on vocabulary semantics which are supposed to bring the employees closer together. I do this by saying 'We are expanding' and 'we will update', which refers to that it is something the employees in the organization will do together.

In regards to the theme "motivation/purpose for working in Denmark" I concluded that the employees have different reasons for wanting to work in Denmark. These reasons cannot be changed, but the system can still support their willingness to learn while they are working here.

6. Discussion

The intention of this section is to discuss how the process of designing and making an ICT-system for a multicultural has been. I want to discuss what has been important to consider when designing for this specific group of people and how I was able to do so. Furthermore, I also want to discuss how the theories have corresponded and complemented each other.

I set out to investigate how ICT and IA could benefit multicultural employees to become a community of practice. Therefore, I first of all had to clarify which problems each of the employees were experiencing. To help with this, I decided to include theory focusing on

communities of practice, but also organizational learning and culture. These were all used in the first phase of the analysis to verify and compare the data I gathered from both interviews and data collection in the literature review.

These theories complemented each other quite well, since I first of all focused on creating themes of the most typical and relevant problems and afterwards was able to verify some of these problems according to the theory. I included activities which must occur in a community for them to be a community of practice. This was among other activities such as 'problem solving', 'request for information' and 'discussing developments'. Comparing my knowledge from the interviews with this theory contributed in understanding where the problems are developed, and this way be able to conclude what had to be improved and propose a solution. The theory of organizational learning and culture furthermore gave me insight in Foldens Hotel & Café's internal culture and the problems they have in regards to learning and adapting. With these specific theories I learned that it was important to not only listen to what the employees believed to be problems, but also to interpret why it is so and if something they said did not correspond with their attitude or other employees opinions.

The process of designing for a multicultural organization required a simple language and vocabulary, since all employees do not speak English as a first language. It can also be discussed that more design options had to be taken into consideration when designing for a heterogeneous group of people where there are different values and beliefs. The reason for this is that all the different values had to be accounted for, yet the future purpose of this ICT-system is that the people should be more homogeneous, and interact together to solve common problems. This is where the theory of IA became a supportive tool. After having analysed all the problems which the employees are experiencing I benefited from using theory of IA. This contributed in a greater understanding of how organization, labeling, navigation etc. should be designed to support usability within the system. The wireframes are thus based on overall IA design criteria, however they are also created with the purpose of creating a community of practice which can better handle these aforementioned problems which occur in a multicultural work environment. It was therefore crucial to include things in the system, which would attract the employees and make them feel part of a community. This included e.g. a chat room where they can talk freely with each other, but also discuss important work topics. It also included a news section, where the employees among other can

learn about each other. This was important to include since many problems seems to occur due to lack of knowledge about each other. Even religion seems to be a factor, where the employees have different opinions and can misunderstand each other. A training program was also an essential part to include to support the community. It should help create a better division between Danish employee and foreign employees. This means that there should be less differences whether you are Danish or foreign, and that everybody should help each other.

Another aspect to discuss is where and how the employees should access the system. In regards to design, using the system on a PC would might allow for a more user friendly interface and greater overview of the content. However, this system should also be a tangible solution, allowing the employees to have access to it at all times. Therefore, a solution could be to offer all the employees smartphones or tablets which can be carried at work making it easier to always have access to the system throughout the day. This could especially be beneficial for much of the included content such as contact information, rules and order delivery. Also, since I learned from my focus group interview that the employees are capable of using these, this could be a viable solution.

7. Reflection

As I indicated in the very introduction of this Master's thesis, technology and globalization is bringing people closer together, resulting in more multicultural organizations (Oerlemans & Peeters, 2010). Therefore, I saw this as both an interesting but also a necessary topic to investigate further. I want to use this section to reflect on my findings. To be more specific I want to talk about how the process of writing the thesis has been, what limitations there have been and what ideas for further work I have gotten.

It has been a continually learning process researching this problem area and working with this specific case. Investigating the focus area and writing the literature review contributed in a greater interest in understanding what problems typically occur in these environments. When conducting the first semi-structured interviews, I quickly realized that an additional focus group interview would be beneficial, and allow me to ask follow-up questions. A limitation, however, was that I was not able to include all of the employees who had participated earlier.

This would allow me to get a much greater overview and it would most likely also create a longer and deeper conversations between the employees. My solution to this was to use one employee from each of the involved nationalities, so I had a focus group of 5 five people. Even though I did not got all the employees involved in this meeting, I still managed to have all the nationalities represented. Also, the focus group was also shaped by a certain time pressure, where some of the employees only were available for a short period of time.

I also want to mention a few points, which are supposed to serve as ideas for future work, if I were to work further with this case. First of all, I intentionally wanted to focus on only one case in order to properly investigate the employees within the organization. This is also why my methodological choices are focusing on a qualitative research approach, which allowed for deeper understanding and perspectives from the people involved. However, an idea for further work could definitely be to investigate other multicultural organizations as well, and preferably hotels. This way I would be able to see if many of the problems also are happening in other hotels with multicultural employees. This would also allow me to mix qualitative approach with a quantitative approach, since the quantitative approach would be useful for investigating a higher number of employees and organizations. This could among other be accomplished by sending out questionnaires and this way receive quantitative data.

Another thing I would consider as further work is an additional meeting with some of the employees in order to discuss and test the current design ideas. The purpose of this would be to test if content is useful for them. Also if the labels and organising of the whole system is appropriate. To do this, card sorting would be an option. This would allow me as a researcher to better analyse if the employees understand the names of the labels which I have created and determined.

In the interviews, I only talked to employees, which indeed did provide me with in-depth answers. However, as I have mentioned several times, an important thing for a multicultural organization to function, is that the manager/managers are aware of the problems. For future work, it would be relevant to gather data from the manager's point of view.

8. Conclusion

The focus of this Master's thesis has been to answer following questions:

1. What type of communication problems can be identified in an organization with multicultural employees, and how can Information and Communication Technology (ICT) support them in becoming a Community of Practice (CoP)?

2. How should the Information Architecture (IA) within the system be designed to contribute the feeling of being a community of practice?

Based on my case work and research, I have discovered that there are many different types of problems to identify within a multicultural work environment. Many are obviously related to the language differences there are. Speaking up to five-six different languages in an employee staff of no more than 30 people will result in communication problems regardless of how well the community functions. However, I also discovered that there were many other culture related problems to be found. Employees have different reasons for working in Denmark which affect their willingness to learn and adapt to the new culture and rules. Employees are purposely not talking to each other and often avoiding communication to avoid misunderstandings. This makes it harder for the employees to connect and be this community of practice, which I want them to be. The employees also experience problems with understanding rules and guidelines for e.g. cleaning products, as well as meeting times and delegation of work tasks gets confusing. Nonetheless, the majority of these problems are caused, since the whole organization does not work as a community. They barely interact with each other and when they do it is most often through the Danish employees, who are being given more responsibility than the foreign employees. This partly contributes in creating a hierarchy between the employees, even though none of the Danish employees are interested in having more responsibility.

I therefore wanted to investigate how an ICT-system should be of advantage and support them in becoming a community of practice. It quickly became clear that the system could help the employees interact with each other, find and distribute knowledge, but it should also be a safe place where they can learn about each other and their cultures. This will allow them

to feel more secure about each other, and not be afraid of whatever misunderstandings they are used to experience in their work life. Some employees preferred searching for knowledge by themselves and some preferred to ask colleagues. Regardless of which method they currently use, the ICT will be a support to search for knowledge, bonding with colleagues and simply be a support for the daily activities such as finding meeting times, seeing work tasks and ordering of products.

As a second research question I wanted to focus on how the Information Architecture within the system should be designed to support usability and findability, but also to support the feeling of being part of a community. It was first of all important to focus on vocabulary. This means not only a simple language, but also a language which indicates that the employees are all equal and part of a greater community. To do this I focused on using pronouns such as 'we' and 'us'. I also focused on creating clear and visible labels which are easy to see. It should thus be easy to see what is clickable and what is functioning as describing text.

I also concluded that including pictures should be a crucial part of the IA. These pictures intend to create an overall better understanding as it was concluded that the employees all are novice English speakers. Furthermore, IA also contributed in designing a navigation and organization system of the content which was fitting for the employees. The menu bar is therefore also set according to the most important content, so it is arranged in a hierarchical order.

To conclude this Master's thesis, I want to highlight the need for multicultural organizations to focus on the fact that employees have different values and beliefs. There already seems to be an increasingly focus on this topic, which I among other discovered when writing the literature review and thus investigating multiculturalism. I found that there will always be certain advantages and disadvantages in organizations with multicultural employees, however, it is the organization's responsibility to prepare the employees to work in this environment,

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10. Appendix

Appendix 1- Semi-structured interviews

Denmark - Jette, employee 1

Can you mention some of the typical work tasks you do?

- I do a bit of everything. Cleaning of rooms, kitchen work such as cooking and serving food, customer service.

Do you believe you have any problems, due to the language differences. If yes, can you mention a specific example where it has been an issue?

- Yes. If we for example ask a foreign employee to put an extra bed in room 2, it can end up in room 22. Also we have certain cleaning products, which we need to be careful about. Some of it is too strong and can only be used in specific places, but since they cannot Danish, some foreign employees just guess and use what they think is the best.

How do you recognize that people are from different cultures, e.g. different mentalities and behavior?

- Well, the romanians seem to hate each other, because they always want to be the best. They are afraid of competition and can sometimes talk badly about each other to us Danes. They want to prove they are better. The lithuanians are very confident and speak better English. They are also better educated from their own country. It seems like the lithuanians are from a culture more like ours compared to the romanians.
  In general, there is a sort of ranking order, where the one who has been here longest, want to decide more.

Which nationality is the most different from you, and why?

- Eritrea. They are refugees from some sort of internal war in their country. They are forced to work 37 hours a week and seem to be eager to work and learn the language. Unlike the other foreigners they are forced to attend Danish courses. They also pray before eating, which is a lot different from us.

Which nationality is the most equal to you, and why?

- Czech republic. They are highly educated and seem to live like we do. They are here to work before going back home to study and travel. They can handle everything themselves and actually are a lot better than us a speaking English, which sometimes is a problem for us Danes, because they suddenly do not understand us.

Does your manager express reservations that you are all from different cultures?

- No, we are told that three or four new employees will come and maybe they speak English, maybe they do not. Then it is our job to train and teach them.

For what tasks do you use technology?

- We print our cleaning notes, which foreigners unfortunately can't read because it is in Danish. Then there is the cash register.

- *(Interviewer) From where do you print those?*

  - From our computer. The receptionist has a computer and the receptionist will print it.

If in doubt, how do you typically find information/gain knowledge?

- I ask the manager.

- *(Interviewer) You don't have any digital place where you can find information?*

  - No.

Besides work, do you have a good relationship with your colleagues?

- I do not have any contact with them outside of work.

- *(Interviewer) Would you be interested in having a better relationship?*

  - Yes, it would make work a lot easier, and I think we would have easier with teaching each other.

Overall, how do you like working in a multicultural environment?

- Stressful. Neither of us Danes are good at English and many foreign employees are even worse.

Denmark - Birgit, employee 2:

Can you mention some of the typical work tasks you do?

- Yes I am mostly in the kitchen and behind the counter. But everyone is trained in how to clean rooms, because that it hard work and we all have to know how.

Do you believe there are any problems, due to the language differences? If yes, can you mention a specific example where it has been an issue?

- Yes, because I am bad at English, and many foreigners are not very good either. When I say something, they say that they understand me, but clearly they don't, since they often do something completely different. A typical problem is the confusion that can occur when you ask a foreign employee to meet an hour earlier the next day, because this is often misunderstood. It seems like they are nervous and too afraid to admit that they sometimes don't understand.

How do you recognize that people are from different cultures, e.g. different mentalities and behavior?

- The romanians actually seem more poor than the other foreign employees we have. They are very eager to work, and sometimes it seems like this is the only reason they are here. All the others are more like us Danes and also want time off.

Which nationality is the most different from you, and why?

- Eritrea, since they are from a country in war. They are so humble and nice, but it can be difficult for me to start a conversation, because they are so different from me and come from these extreme conditions.

Which nationality is the most equal to you, and why?

- I would say Czech republic. I say that since their humour is the most resembling to ours in Denmark. They are also the ones I have easiest to talk to, because they speak good English and are just very forthcoming.

Does your manager express reservations that you are all from different cultures?

- No, not really. She hires people, mostly foreign, and gives me the job to train them. We never have any meetings and we are never told how we should train them.

For what tasks do you use technology?

- I can't really think of any. I don't think we have any technical systems. Well, I use my phone to contact my colleagues. I also use my phone to order things such as beddings, towels and cleaning products.

- *(Interviewer) Is it only the Danish employees who do that and where do you keep the numbers?*

    - Yes only the Danish employees, I just have the number on my phone and simply call the company to order.

If in doubt, how do you typically find information/gain knowledge?

- I ask the manager or my colleagues.

Besides work, do you have a good relationship with your colleagues?

- We don't really talk after work, but I would like if it was better, so we could get to know each other on a different level.

Overall, how do you like working in a multicultural environment?

- I would love if we were more Danes, so we could talk more together. I really miss that type of communication, where it does not have to be work-related and this is really missing right now.

Denmark - Lis, employee 3:

Can you mention some of the typical work tasks you do?

- Cleaning, cooking, order of different products, working as cashier.

- *(Interviewer) It seems like you Danish employees are involved in all of the activities, is that true?*

    - Yes, that is how it works. Because there usually needs to be at least one Danish speaking employee among the foreign employees.

Do you believe you have any problems due to the language differences. If yes, can you mention a specific example where it has been an issue?

- Yes, there are many general misunderstandings. If I ask for the stove to be turned off, they sometimes turn it on instead. Many smaller misunderstanding like that occur all the time. It might not sound like some huge problem, but on a busy day it can be very time consuming and stressful.

How do you recognize that people are from different cultures, e.g. different mentalities and behavior?

- Well, I think we are all so different in many ways. The employees from Eritrea are very laid back. They want to do their job in silence, where for example the Romanians want to show of and want to be in focus. I think us Danes are somewhere in between, but we are definitely all very different from each other.

Which nationality is the most different from you, and why?

- Eritrea. Mostly because I am afraid to ask them about stuff, since I know they have been through a lot of hard stuff in their home country.

Which nationality is the most equal to you, and why?

- Lithuania. Basically because they are the ones who best understand me when for example delegating work tasks.

Does your manager express reservations that you are all from different cultures?

- No, I think she focuses too much on hiring a lot of people instead of the right people. E.g. when she hires one Dane, she also hires five foreign employees. This is hard for me because all responsibility lies on me, and the manager does not take this into consideration at all. But on the other, there are very few Danish who apply for the job, so we are basically forced to work this way.

For what tasks do you use technology?

- Our receptionist uses the computer to print out things when needed. But we do not use a computer for anything our self.

If in doubt, how do you typically find information/gain knowledge?

- I try to contact the manager, or else I just try to find out myself.

Besides work, do you have a good relationship with your colleagues?

- Unfortunately not, I think that most foreign employees believes that I don't like them, when in reality I am just very stressed out. I would wish if it was better but currently, this is the way it is. However, us Danish employees have better communication and we can sometimes drink a cup of coffee a different place, but to be honest I think that the main reason is because we are so busy at work all the time and have very little energy at the end of the day.

Overall, how do you like working in a multicultural environment?

- It can be fun and very exciting to learn about other cultures than your own. However, in the breaks, the Danes sit together, and the Romanians sit together and so on. This means that we never really learn about each other. But I also think if we worked in a less stressful environment we would have more time to do this.

Romania - Elisabeta, employee 4:

Why did you choose to work in Denmark?

- To earn a lot of money. I only wanted to stay a few years and then go home, but now I have decided to stay, because I like it here.

What is different from working in your home country?

- We do not earn much money in Romania, even though we work twice as hard. Also I would not do this cleaning job in Romania, because many people see it as the 'lowest' type of work you can do. Here in Denmark it is no problem, because we get better paid and many different types of people do it.

Can you mention some of the typical work tasks you do?

- Cleaning and breakfast servings.

Do you believe you have any problems due to the language differences. If yes, can you mention a specific example where it has been an issue?

- I think there were many mistakes in the beginning especially. I have tried going to the wrong rooms because i misunderstood what was told. Now I have started on Danish course, and I think it will be a lot easier to be able to speak just a little Danish, because the Danish employees are difficult to understand in English.

How do you recognize that people are from different cultures, e.g. different mentalities and behavior?

- We romanians want to work harder than the others I think. Maybe it's just my opinion, but that is also how we do back home. The Danish guys can sometime seem a little angry, but i mostly think thats because of stress. I don't really know about the others.

Which nationality is the most different from you, and why?

- Eritrea. I think it is because we are here voluntarily to make money. As far as I have learned it is completely opposite for them, since they fled here. Also it seems like there way of living is very different than our. Not in bad way, just different.

Which nationality is the most equal to you, and why?

- Lithuania. I think we are here for the same reason. To work a lot, and make money.

Does your manager express reservations that you are all from different cultures?

- I don't think so. I never really talk to her. It is the Danish employees who taught me what I know.

For what tasks do you use technology?

- I don't. I work with cleaning rooms and I serve breakfast so it is not necessary.

If in doubt, how do you typically find information/gain knowledge?

- Well, if I have a question I will ask one of the Danish employees. Maybe they ask the manager if they don't know.

Besides work, do you have a good relationship to your colleagues?

- Yes they are nice. But honestly, it is hard to make time because we are so busy all the time.

Overall, how do you like working in a multicultural environment?

- I don't really think about it. Everybody is working so hard, so we don't really have time to get to know each other.

Romania - Mirina, employee 5:

Why did you choose to work in Denmark?

- Because my boyfriend got work in Denmark. Then I followed and got this job.

What is different from working in your home country?

- We can earn more money here. My plan is to earn as much money as possible and then go home in a couple of years maybe.

Can you mention some of the typical work tasks you do?

- Cleaning and breakfast serving.

Do you believe you have any problems due to the language differences. If yes, can you mention a specific example where it has been an issue?

- I think neither of us employees are good at English, which causes many misunderstandings. I feel everything has to go so quick which is a huge problem. It would be easier if we all talked the same language. All the guests talk to me in Danish but I cannot answer, so I have to ask a colleague. And it obviously has to be a Danish speaking colleague.

How do you recognize that people are from different cultures, e.g. different mentalities and behavior?

- That is something I notice almost everyday. We are all so different. I must admit that I do not understand the humour of the Danes. They say many ironic things which I took serious in the beginning, so they often have to explain what they mean. Also I think because we are so different from each other, it makes it harder for us to talk about things.

Which nationality is the most different from you, and why?

- I think I have to say Denmark. They talk so fast, and they are just different. I feel like many of us foreign employees are more equal. The Danes decides more, but that is obviously because they can talk better with customers and so on.

Which nationality is the most equal to you, and why?

- Lithuania. Somehow it's easier for me to become friends with them. I don't have a specific reason to why.

Does your manager express reservations that you are all from different cultures?

- Well I don't think so. Most information is in Danish, which I don't understand.

For what tasks do you use technology?

- I don't use any technology.

If in doubt, how do you typically find information/gain knowledge?

- I always ask one of the Danish employees. They are in better contact with the manager, and they have worked here longer than me, so they usually know.

Besides work, do you have a good relationship to your colleagues?

- In my spare time I talk mostly to other Romanians. We just have more to talk about I guess.

Overall, how do you like working in a multicultural environment?

- It is difficult. However, it was my choice to come work in another country. I did not expect that there were so many foreign workers from different countries. I do like that I am not alone, but honestly, I don't think it makes it easier.

Romania - Zelma, employee 6:

Why did you choose to work in Denmark?

- Because my husband got work here in Denmark. Then I also came later and got a job here. We can earn way more money here than back home.

What is different from working in your home country?

- Well as I said. You can earn more money here, but I also think everything goes a lot faster here in Denmark. I was also surprised how easy it was for me to get a job, which can be very difficult back home.

Can you mention some of the typical work tasks you do?

- Cleaning and breakfast serving.

Do you believe you have any problems due to the language differences. If yes, can you mention a specific example where it has been an issue?

- Well I think the Danish employees speak very fast. I often don't understand what they say and I have to ask several times. Somehow, it is easier for me to talk to for example Lithuanians and the Czech employees. We talk slower and more simple English.

How do you recognize that people are from different cultures, e.g. different mentalities and behavior?

- Because I learn a lot of things about cultures and languages which I would never have learned elsewhere. That is exciting. We are all employees here with the same purpose so I don't really think it is a problem.

Which nationality is the most different from you, and why?

- Eritrea. They are very nice, but I can't talk to them. They do speak Danish, but not a word of English.

Which nationality is the most equal to you, and why?

- Lithuania. As I said earlier it is just easy for me to talk to them. We laugh a lot.

Does your manager express reservations that you are all from different cultures?

- Well, I don't talk to her, but I would not say so. We have never discussed it here before.

For what tasks do you use technology?

- I use my mobile to write down if I have to remember something. But else I don't really use anything.

If in doubt, how do you typically find information/gain knowledge?

- I ask my colleagues.

- *(Interviewer) Is that mainly Danish colleagues or is that irrelevant?*

  - Yes they know more since they speak the language.

Besides work, do you have a good relationship to your colleagues?

- I talk to a few in my spare time. Mostly the other romanians and lithuanians. I also have facebook where I can follow some of the other guys.

Overall, how do you like working in a multicultural environment?

- I think it is very fun. There is obviously a language problem, but because we are so many from different countries I think we are all equal in some way.

Eritrea - Mariam, employee 7:

Why did you choose to work in Denmark?

- The situation is not good in Eritrea. It has not been for many years. Many people are leaving the country, because of political reasons. I did not decide that it should be Denmark, but this is where we were sent. It was scary, but I really like it here.

What is different from working in your home country?

- In Denmark we have to work a lot and many hours. It feels like there are more rules here. Back home I worked on our own family farm, so I was more flexible but then again, I did not really have any other choices. You have more chances and opportunities here.

Can you mention some of the typical work tasks you do?

- I clean rooms and prepare breakfast. Or else I help where it is needed.

Do you believe you have any problems due to the language differences. If yes, can you mention a specific example where it has been an issue?

- I went to Danish courses before I started working here, which helped me a lot. It helped me in order to talk to the Danish employees, but when I met the other employees from e.g. Lithuania and Romania it was hard to communicate because they have not learned Danish and I don't think they are going to. I sometimes avoid talking to them and only talk to the Danish guys since i am more comfortable with this. I also have problems understanding the menu, since it sometimes changes and the names can be difficult to understand. And I will never know before right before we have to make it.

How do you recognize that people are from different cultures, e.g. different mentalities and behavior?

- To be honest, I think that the Romanians are a little too intrusive and don't want to give me space. They are really nice and friendly, but I think they try too much and are

afraid of competition. I was also very surprised how direct the Danish are. They are joking and yelling a lot, which is very different from my country.

Which nationality is the most different from you, and why?

- It's either Romania or Denmark. I think I would say Denmark, because how open and direct they are. They can talk openly about everything from sex to other private matters. I had to get used to that in the beginning because that is very private and something we would never do. In our culture we pray a lot and sometimes they even laugh at that, which was very weird in the beginning. Now we can laugh at it too, because I understand it is not personal.

Which nationality is the most equal to you, and why?

- Even though I think Denmark is different, they are also the one I am more comfortable with. They are easier to talk to. And that is not because of language, but becomes I am never afraid to ask them and then we can laugh at so many things.

Does your manager express reservations that you are all from different cultures?

- I have learned everything from my colleagues. I don't think there is much focus on that. I think there should be, because all information is in Danish, which is fine for me, but many of the other guys do not care about learning the language even though they live here.

For what tasks do you use technology?

- I don't. The Danish employees use a computer sometimes and the cash register if that counts.

If in doubt, how do you typically find information/gain knowledge?

- I ask my Danish colleagues.

Besides work, do you have a good relationship to your colleagues?

- Yes but I live in Frederikshavn which makes it more difficult. But I would love to talk more to them. It would be fun.

Overall, how do you like working in a multicultural environment?

- It is very confusing, but again, it makes me feel less like a stranger and that I am not different.

Eritrea - Liah, employee 8:

Why did you choose to work in Denmark?

- Because my country has many problems. People don't want to live there because we are not allowed to do anything. It is a very poor country almost like a dictatorship if you understand. You have very few opportunities whether you are man or woman.

What is different from working in your home country?

- We are definitely working harder in Denmark. Also I did not work at home, I lived with my parents. I am really glad for this chance, but it is very different, almost another world.

Can you mention some of the typical work tasks you do?

- I work in the kitchen where I mostly due the dishwashing. I also help with making breakfast and serving it for the guests.

Do you believe you have any problems due to the language differences. If yes, can you mention a specific example where it has been an issue?

- I have had a hard time learning Danish. So there were many weird words to learn in the beginning. But yes, I would have thought that everybody working here should learn Danish. Me and the other guys from Eritrea have learnt a lot and will rather speak Danish than English. We are also many small groups from different countries. Many of them speak their own language even though we are also there. That is annoying and confusing.

How do you recognize that people are from different cultures, e.g. different mentalities and behavior?

- Danes make fun of religion, which is something we would never do. My religion is important, but the Danish guys do not understand it. I don't talk much to other guys than the Danes because they don't speak Danish.

Which nationality is the most different from you, and why?

- The Romanians i think. They are very stressful and I think they often want to decide how things have to be.

Which nationality is the most equal to you, and why?

- I like the guys from Czech Republic. They don't speak Danish but they are very good at English and they teach me a lot, and I think that I can help them learn Danish. We have good communication.

Does your manager express reservations that you are all from different cultures?

- She is always busy, and if I contact her, she ask if I can come the next day. Many of us employees can't even talk to each other so I don't think she worries much about it.

For what tasks do you use technology?

- I don't use any technology for my job.

If in doubt, how do you typically find information/gain knowledge?

- First of all I ask my friends from Eritrea, because I am most comfortable with them. Then I ask the Danish employees. It depends a lot on what I need to know.

Besides work, do you have a good relationship to your colleagues?

- Yes it is good.

Overall, how do you like working in a multicultural environment?

- I was scared at first, but also very surprised of how good it has been for me.
- *(Interviewer) How has it been good for you?*
    - I have developed a lot. A learn about different perspectives to work and general things in life.

Eritrea - Aster, employee 9:

Why did you choose to work in Denmark?

- I did not really choose it. I came with two others from Eritrea. We got a contact person in Denmark who helped us get this job.

What is different from working in your home country?

- My country is very different than Denmark. We have no work opportunities and everything is going a lot slower.

Can you mention some of the typical work tasks you do?

- I make and prepare breakfast for the guest, and I work in the kitchen doing the dishes and helping out where I can.

Do you believe you have any problems due to the language differences. If yes, can you mention a specific example where it has been an issue?

- I mix Danish and English.
- *(Interviewer) Which language do you prefer to speak?*
    - Danish, that is the language they speak here.

How do you recognize that people are from different cultures, e.g. different mentalities and behavior?

- Some of the other foreign employees do not want to learn Danish and speak it. I think that is very weird coming here and then keep speaking their own language.

Which nationality is the most different from you, and why?

- Romania. They often only speak romanian and go in small groups, so I can't talk to them.

Which nationality is the most equal to you, and why?

- I don't know. The Danish have taken good care of me and always take time to teach me things.

Does your manager express reservations that you are all from different cultures?

- I can't answer that, because I rarely talk to her.

For what tasks do you use technology?

- I don't use technology.

If in doubt, how do you typically find information/gain knowledge?

- I ask my Danish colleagues.

Besides work, do you have a good relationship to your colleagues?

- Yes. It is fine.

Overall, how do you like working in a multicultural environment?

- It is very difficult. There are so many things to learn about everyone. I think it would be easier if everyone followed one plan and one language.

Czech Republic - Milana, employee 10:

Why did you choose to work in Denmark?

- I heard it was a nice country where you earn good money. Also I like to travel and Denmark was on my list. I had a friend who was also going to work in Denmark, but then she cancelled. I decided to take the chance anyway and I am really satisfied so far. I was the only one from my country when I came and around half a year ago two other young girls came which was nice.

What is different from working in your home country?

- I recognized that there are many foreigners who work in Denmark, especially in hotels. At home we have no foreigners, and we do not earn nearly as much working at a hotel.

Can you mention some of the typical work tasks you do?

- I clean rooms.

Do you believe you have any problems due to the language differences. If yes, can you mention a specific example where it has been an issue?

- In the beginning I did not think it would be a problem because I think i am quite good at English. I was surprised how bad many of the others were. I had to work with a woman from Lithuania, where everything should be shown because communication was so hard.

How do you recognize that people are from different cultures, e.g. different mentalities and behavior?

- Both the Romanians and Lithuanians seem very busy. I laugh the most with the Danes. It is very obvious that the women from Eritrea is here to stay. They really try to learn Danish and adapt to this culture.

Which nationality is the most different from you, and why?

- Definitely Eritrea. They never approach me. I think they will only talk to the Danish guys.

Which nationality is the most equal to you, and why?

- Then I would say the Danish, because they are easier to hang around with. Even though we do have language barriers, we always find a way to figure things out.

Does your manager express reservations that you are all from different cultures?

- In the beginning she showed us around and talked about our tasks, but that is the only contact I have had with her.

For what tasks do you use technology?

- I use my mobile to translate things and google is always good. But for my actual work i don't use it.

If in doubt, how do you typically find information/gain knowledge?

- First of foremost, I will try to google. But if it is more specific information, I have to ask a danish' speaking colleague.

Besides work, do you have a good relationship to your colleagues?

- Yes, I am friends on facebook with the guys from Romania and Lithuania. I also have a really nice relationship to the Danish, but we mostly talk about work.

Overall, how do you like working in a multicultural environment?

- I love it. I like to learn about other people and cultures. It is a difficult process though because many are very insecure due to language difficulties.

Czech Republic - Radomila, employee 11:

Why did you choose to work in Denmark?

- I have worked in Italy and loved to work abroad.

What is different from working in your home country?

- I have mainly been a student at home, but one thing is the many opportunities you have here in Denmark. The fact that so many people can come from outside and easily get a job is nice.

Can you mention some of the typical work tasks you do?

- Cleaning.

Do you believe you have any problems due to the language differences. If yes, can you mention a specific example where it has been an issue?

- Well, I try to be happy and talk to people which really helps. Yes, it requires some extra effort to listen and speak slow, but that is part of working in this environment.

How do you recognize that people are from different cultures, e.g. different mentalities and behavior?

- People have many different stories to tell. Also I have noticed that for example in the breaks, many only hang out with the other guys from their country, which I dislike. I love to socialize and I think you have to when working with so many different people.

Which nationality is the most different from you, and why?

- The guys from Romania are really nice. However, I never know when they are joking or being serious. The guys from Eritrea are also very different, and they often stay by themselves.

Which nationality is the most equal to you, and why?

- That is difficult. Either the Lithuanians or the Danish. I talk a lot with especially one from Lithuania. We can talk about how it is to work abroad and what we miss at home. Also it feels like she is always interested in hearing about things from my country just as I like to hear about things from Lithuania. I don't talk about these

things with the Danish guys, but they like to talk a lot also. They are a little older than us, but we can always laugh and have fun.

Does your manager express reservations that you are all from different cultures?

- I have heard multiple times that we should start including employee meetings. I don't know if that has anything to do with that, but I guess we could talk about some of these issues there. But in my time here we have not had any meetings. I think there is just not enough time for it.

For what tasks do you use technology?

- I don't use any for my work. I work with cleaning rooms, but I don't even think we use it so much. I know we have a website though.

If in doubt, how do you typically find information/gain knowledge?

- That happens a lot to be honest. We have so many cleaning products in my department and you would think they all can be used right. But we have certain rules of what to use in which places and that gets confusing. Then I have to ask one of the more experienced colleagues.

Besides work, do you have a good relationship to your colleagues?

- Yes I do. It is also good at work.

Overall, how do you like working in a multicultural environment?

- As I said earlier I tried it also in Italy, which did not scare me. So here I am in Denmark and I don't think it will be my last foreign country to live in.

Czech Republic - Kristina, employee 12:

Why did you choose to work in Denmark?

- I came with my friend. We were both students at home and needed a break in between our studies. We just heard good things about Denmark.

What is different from working in your home country?

- One thing is that I earn twice as much as my mum who also works at a hotel back home. On the other hand we also more busy here I think. I don't think there are big differences besides that.

Can you mention some of the typical work tasks you do?

- Cleaning of the hotel rooms.

Do you believe you have any problems due to the language differences. If yes, can you mention a specific example where it has been an issue?

- I prepared myself that everybody would speak English, because when they hired us they knew we could not speak Danish. It is often the Danes who have to explain things, and they are not comfortable in English, so we often have some funny situations there.

How do you recognize that people are from different cultures, e.g. different mentalities and behavior?

- Well there is one specific way we have to do things when cleaning rooms, but I think I notice it more in the smaller breaks we have and for smalltalk. Some like to talk about problems and some do not. I feel like the Danes keep their problems for themselves, where the Lithuanians are not afraid to say when there is something they are unhappy with. Maybe that is how people are used to do things in each their country.

Which nationality is the most different from you, and why?

- That is Eritrea. I don't know, I just know very little about them. Maybe they are used from their culture to be very humble and laid back. I think it is a good thing and they are so nice, but I think it is important to be open-minded and not quiet when working in such an environment.

Which nationality is the most equal to you, and why?

- Lithuania. They are also pretty young and I think many of them are in the same situation and are only going to be here for a short period.

Does your manager express reservations that you are all from different cultures?

- I think she knows that we have many language related problems. I mean, she has to. But I really don't know.

For what tasks do you use technology?

- I don't use technology.

If in doubt, how do you typically find information/gain knowledge?

- I find a colleague who knows more and have been here longer than I have.

Besides work, do you have a good relationship to your colleagues?

- Yes. I don't spend any time with them but I consider myself friends with almost everyone of them.

Overall, how do you like working in a multicultural environment?

- It is exciting. But I think it is hard to say, because if it was for example in an office we would maybe have more time to work on problems. We don't really have time here, but I think it is something I can learn a lot from.

Lithuania - Goda, employee 13:

Why did you choose to work in Denmark?

- My husband found a job in Denmark. I stayed at first, but came later and got this job.

What is different from working in your home country?

- In Lithuania we earn very little. That is the biggest difference, and as you can see there are a lot of Lithuanians here. I love my country and I also going back, because it is hard for me to be away for so long.

Can you mention some of the typical work tasks you do?

- Cleaning of the rooms.

Do you believe you have any problems due to the language differences. If yes, can you mention a specific example where it has been an issue?

- I am not good at English and Danish is very hard. The language on cleaning products is often in Danish. That has been a problem since there often only is one Danish speaking employee around who is able to understand it and answer.

How do you recognize that people are from different cultures, e.g. different mentalities and behavior?

- I think Danish employees don't like that there are so many of us foreign employees, since it forces them to speak English, which as far as I understand is also hard for them.

Which nationality is the most different from you, and why?

- I can feel that the guys from Eritrea is not used to work the same way as us. They are also scared to ask if they need anything.

Which nationality is the most equal to you, and why?

- The girls from Czech Republic. I just think they are the ones I have the most fun with.

Does your manager express reservations that you are all from different cultures?

- Actually I don't think so. For example, our work roster is in Danish only, but I wonder why it is that when so few of us speak Danish. Mostly we can understand, but I also have to ask sometimes what it means.
- *(Interviewer) Is your work roster on paper or in a digital system?*
    - It is on a paper in the reception

For what tasks do you use technology?

- I don't use. The receptionist uses the computer but us who work in the cleaning department don't need it.

If in doubt, how do you typically find information/gain knowledge?

- It depends on what I need to know. I prefer finding out myself, but sometimes that is impossible. Also I have tried many times where I have to contact a Danish speaking employee because a customer is asking something I don't know.

Besides work, do you have a good relationship to your colleagues?

- Mostly to the Romanians and Czech. Not because I don't like the others but these are the ones I for example have contact with on facebook. That helps a lot.

Overall, how do you like working in a multicultural environment?

- A combination of hard and fun. I knew I would have trouble because I am the one moving to another country. But it can also be fun because there are so many in the same situation like me.

Lithuania - Monika, employee 14:

Why did you choose to work in Denmark?

- My husband and I have friends who worked there. Therefore we decided to go also.

What is different from working in your home country?

- In Lithuania I worked at a nail clinique for four hours a day. Here it is more stressful, but we also earn more money. There are also many tourist here from all over the world, which I am not used to.

Can you mention some of the typical work tasks you do?

- Room cleaning.

Do you believe you have any problems due to the language differences. If yes, can you mention a specific example where it has been an issue?

- Yes, I like to talk to my Lithuanian friends the most, because when I talk to the other colleagues we often misunderstand each other. I don't think it is something we can solve easy. I know that many of us foreign employees are only going to stay for a while, so it is impossible to even try learn Danish and it is not worth it.

How do you recognize that people are from different cultures, e.g. different mentalities and behavior?

- People stick to the ones they know. Us Lithuanians, and Romanians with Romanians. The guys from Eritrea can be difficult to talk to because they learned Danish, and when we talk English to them they suddenly speak a mix of English and Danish.

Which nationality is the most different from you, and why?

- Eritrea. Simply because our conversations always gets confusing. It can be difficult to even ask a question like "Do you know how if we have to meet early tomorrow?".

Which nationality is the most equal to you, and why?

- Romanians and Czech, because they are also new in Denmark. We can talk more because we have more in common and it seems like we are on the same level, where the Danes are higher in the hierarchy.

- *(Interviewer) Why do you think they are higher in hierarchy?*

  - I think they are given more responsibility. In the end I understand it, because they can talk easier to customers, but we still do many of the same work tasks.

Does your manager express reservations that you are all from different cultures?

- No I think she only speaks to the Danish employees. Then they pass on information to us.

For what tasks do you use technology?

- I clean the rooms, so I don't use any technology.

If in doubt, how do you typically find information/gain knowledge?

- I ask my colleagues.

Besides work, do you have a good relationship to your colleagues?

- I mostly talk to my Lithuanian colleagues. It is just easier for me to speak to them whether it is work-related or not.

Overall, how do you like working in a multicultural environment?

- It is not something I really think about. That was never the reason why we came. I think many of us just want to focus on the work.

Lithuania - Greta, employee 15:

Why did you choose to work in Denmark?

- I came here with four other friends from Lithuania four months ago. They work at the harbour. I finished my education and wanted to try to work in another country. Then I found out how much money I could make here. It is not my dream job but the money is great.

- *(Interviewer) What was your education back home?*

  - It was in economics..

What is different from working in your home country?

- The money definitely. Also Denmark just seems like a more happy place where people talk more about weird things even though they are working. Like they share a lot of private information.

Can you mention some of the typical work tasks you do?

- Room cleaning.

Do you believe you have any problems due to the language differences. If yes, can you mention a specific example where it has been an issue?

- Yes a lot. I have many problems with understanding the guys from Eritrea. I don't like to ask questions, because I often don't understand the answer. Once I have asked a Danish employee how her weekend was just to smalltalk. It ended up with her answering, and me not understanding her answer. The conversation quickly died, so I tend to avoid these conversations even though I like such ones.

How do you recognize that people are from different cultures, e.g. different mentalities and behavior?

- Like I said before. Danes are more loud and talk a lot. I have not really talked to Eritrean guys, but they seem completely opposite and only speak when needed. I really like the girls from Czech Republic a lot. They have so much energy and they are so friendly. Even though there are language problems, I somehow always understand them in the end, because they are not afraid to joke. I have only been here four months, but and I feel these guys have taught me the most even though there are other Lithuanians here as well.

Which nationality is the most different from you, and why?

-   Eritrea or Romania. I have to say those because I don't really talk to them. Like I said the colleagues from Eritrea seem shy and quiet. The Romanians sometimes seem like they don't even want to talk to me.

Which nationality is the most equal to you, and why?

-   That is Czech Republic. I think I have given the explanation already. I somehow always understand them in the end, because they are not afraid to joke. I have only been here four months, but and I feel these guys have taught me the most even though there are other Lithuanians here as well.

Does your manager express reservations that you are all from different cultures?

-   She definitely hires people from many different countries. I don't know if Danish people don't want to work or what the reason is. I like it here and I like working with other foreigners, but so far it has been my own job to fit in.

For what tasks do you use technology?

-   I often use my phone to call. We have a phone number list for our private numbers.

If in doubt, how do you typically find information/gain knowledge?

-   I ask around. I prefer to ask the Czech girls even though they have not been here very long either they seem to know a lot and always have an answer.

Besides work, do you have a good relationship to your colleagues?

-   I think I have yes. I like to socialize and even though I have not been here very long it is going quite good.

Overall, how do you like working in a multicultural environment?

-   It is nice. But I think many other of the employees have different opinions about this.
-   *(Interviewer) How so?*
    -   Many guys like myself try to learn about the others personalities and so on. This way we learn about their background stories as well. But other guys do not want to talk and will only talk about work. So I don't think these guys really enjoy working in this environment.

Appendix 2 - Focus group interview

What did you think of the questions I asked you?

- **Denmark - Jette, employee 1:** I think they were really good, and it made me take a lot of things into consideration. I think it is an important topic which we should be more focused on.
- Czech Republic - Kristina, employee 12: I think the same. It is something that I have not thought about earlier. I think it is an even bigger problem in larger cities and countries.
- Romania - Zelma, employee 4: It is good to focus on, since many of us foreigners are coming here to work. I myself have started Danish courses and I know other have as well. But there are even more who don't care and I think that is what causes problems.

On a scale from 1-10 with 10 being the highest how would you rate your IT skills?

- Denmark - Jette, employee 1: 4. I know the basics, but I don't use it on a daily basis.
- Lithuania - Greta, employee 15: 5 or maybe 4. I am more used to using my phone even though I do have a computer.
- Czech Republic - Kristina, employee 12: Well, I go with 9. I use it everyday and I
- Romania - Zelma, employee 4: 5
- Eritrea - Aster, employee 9: 4

Basically, all of you said that if you needed more information you would ask a colleague or the manager, is that because it is something you have never thought about before or because you are always sure that a colleague can provide you with the answer?

- Denmark - Jette, employee 1: That is just what we do. I have never really thought about having our own system to find this, but I like the idea.
- Romania - Zelma, employee 4: I actually often experience that I am being asked questions by new employees. I try my best to answer, but I also have to pass on the question sometimes. Then it is just easier to ask another colleague.

How often do you use a computer, tablet etc at home?

- Denmark - Jette, employee 1: I use my phone everyday.
- Czech Republic - Kristina, employee 12: Yes, me too. Also my computer.
- Eritrea - Aster, employee 9: I also use my phone everyday especially to communicate with friends but also to search for information

- Romania - Zelma, employee 4: I don't have a computer right now but I do know how to use it. Instead I use my tablet, which can do the same
- Lithuania - Greta, employee 15: The same as the others, I use it everyday.

It seems like Danish have more work tasks and more responsibility, is that true?
- Czech Republic - Kristina, employee 12: Yes, I also think that. And I think it is hard for them, because they still have to do their usual work, while for example teaching us new employees.
- Romania - Zelma, employee 4: I agree. I would love to have more responsibility and be able to help more.

All said your manager does not really think about culture. Do you have any examples to what should be done?
- Lithuania - Greta, employee 15: We should talk more about it I think.
- Czech Republic - Kristina, employee 12: Yes I agree. I think the biggest problem is we do not really take time to learn about each other's culture. I think it is our own responsibility to do this. I think it is really interesting to learn about culture, and I definitely think it will help us getting closer.
- Denmark - Jette, employee 1: I think we should have more meetings with each other. We could share problems with each other so all get an input and get to understand how we feel. It is hard to know if we do not talk.

Do you have any suggestions to what should be included in an ICT-system specifically for you employees?
- Denmark - Jette, employee 1: First of all, I think it is something we have needed for a long time. I would like to be able to follow my colleagues calendar and work tasks as well, because we often need to help each other if we get more guests than expected. This way it will be easier to get an overview of who to ask.

- <u>Lithuania - Greta, employee 15:</u> Yes, also if I am sick I can see who is working and who I can ask to work for me instead.
- <u>Czech Republic - Kristina, employee 12:</u> I would definitely love if we could learn more about each other and use the system in a work and social context.