

OSLO AND AKERSHUS
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Dealing with diversity in an educational institution - changing the culture of the institution

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Equity and success of all students

- a learning environment without standardized and cultural homogeneous premisses
- a wide range of ways to teach, learn and evaluate
- willingness and patience to communicate across differences

from

blame ...

- Be like us – think like we do!
- Be like us – speak Norwegian in our way!

and

- Defy the obstacles!
- Learn the smart strategies

to

- Come as you are, we need your competence!
- Speak Norwegian the way you like, let us try to understand each other!
- Create multicultural understanding, crosscultural communication and a diverse learning environment for the benefit of **... all of us!**

Creating a multicultural university college implies:

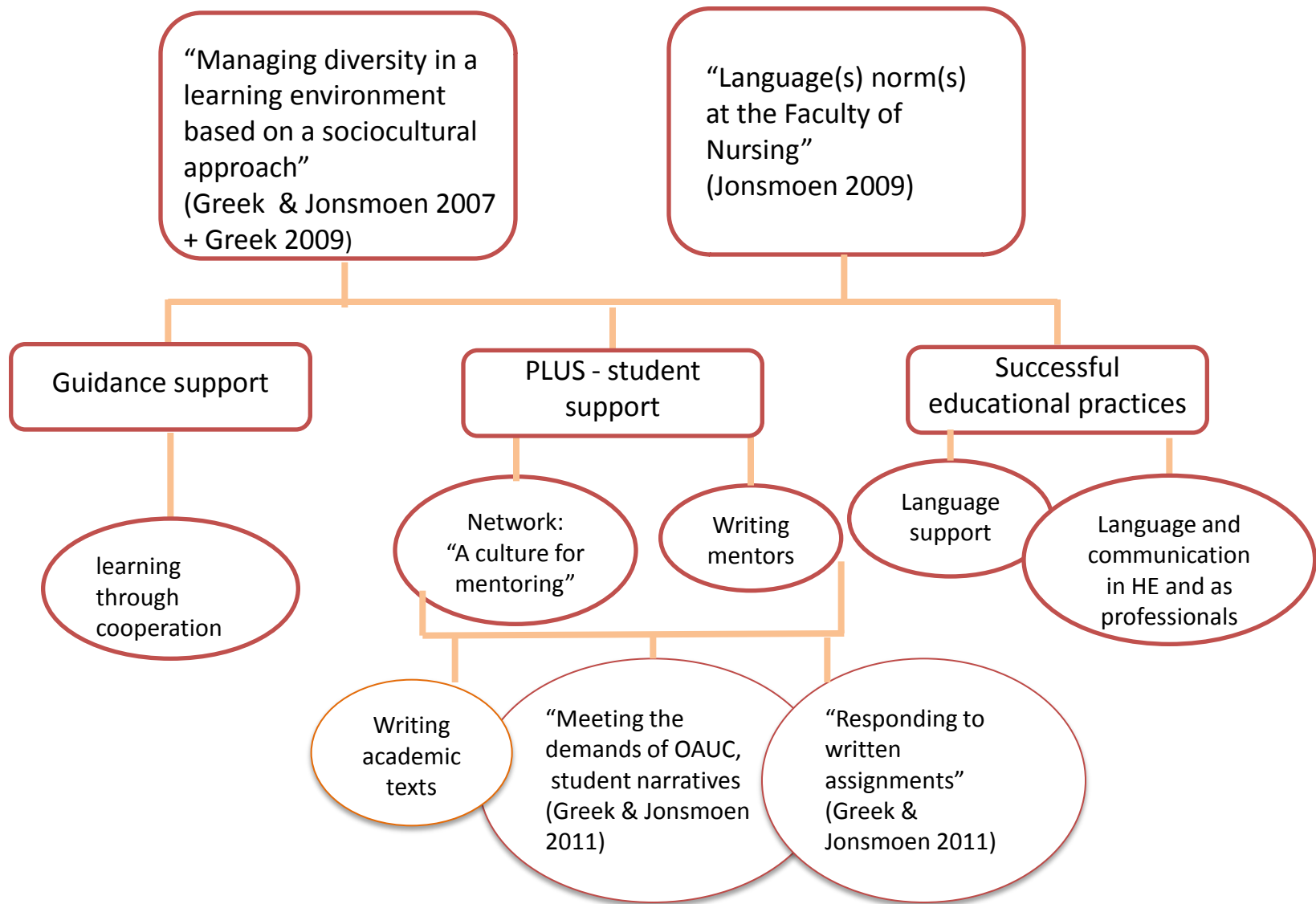
- managing linguistic variety
- interaction between the participants, characterized by willingness to listen actively to each other in spite of the differences
- time to explore how diversity makes a positive contribution to learning
- positive experiences amongst both the students and the staff

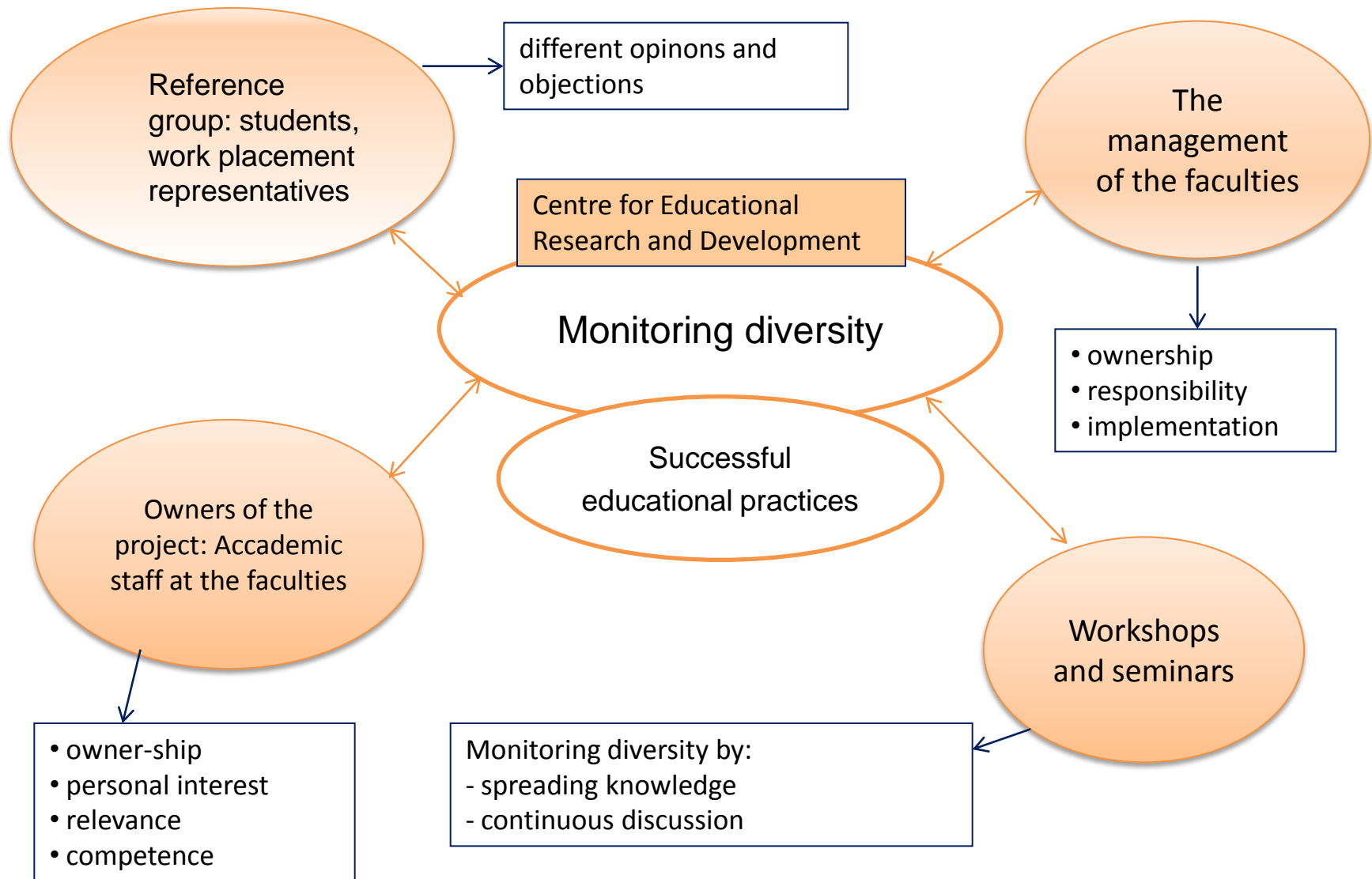
“Managing diversity in a learning environment based on a sociocultural approach”
Greek & Jonsmoen 2007 + Greek 2009)

“Language(s) norm(s) at the Faculty of Nursing”
(Jonsmoen 2009)

The research has revealed:

- non-native speakers are disadvantaged in the learning context
- There is a lack of interest in the experiences and knowledge represented by diversity
- the academic staff and the students neither have sufficient knowledge, experience nor the tools that are necessary to cope with diversity and linguistic variety
- advanced communication skills are required in order to manage the variety of situations the students will meet while studying
- after completed their studies several second language users lack sufficient communication skills to participate in professional life





Pedagogical innovation – an appropriate method to monitor diversity and to facilitate the institution's ability to deal with it?

To succeed working in this way requires:

- a flexible organization
- space enough to respond immediately to challenges experienced in the different faculties
- cooperating with the academic staff across faculty borders
- research and educational development
- networking