

Facilitating Intercultural Communicative Competence during Study Abroad

The phenomenon of “globalization” has been one of the mostly debated concepts especially in the last twenty years. In recent years, in line with an intensive increase throughout the world in political, economic, social, cultural and academic relations and collaboration opportunities, the concept of globalization has emerged. New cooperative fields, partnerships and solidarities make education necessary to be analyzed from the perspective of various approaches. In the process of globalization, new values have also emerged with their different dimensions and contents (Budak, Çakmak & Gündüz, 2015). Relating one’s culture to the host culture demands a readiness to reflect, confront oneself and above all, to play a mediating role (Risager, 1998) between both cultures, and indeed to change (cited in Martinez *et al.* 2016, p.340). Nevertheless, this change or intercultural learning “can only be grasped by inferring it from changes in people’s behaviors” (cited in Borghetti, Beaven, & Pugliese 2015, p. 44). Becoming more aware of their own identity and the way they are perceived by members of the host culture will help students to explain and

accept differences. With the progressive acceleration of globalization in the world, the study of cultural studies is accordingly developing on especially international level. It seems that globalization has affected education at all level as well as higher education (Budak, Çakmak and Gündüz, 2015) and in recent years more research studies have focused on intercultural competency and intercultural communicative competence.

The present study aims to investigate university students’ perception of culture during their study abroad experience. In this study, main data is collected by using a questionnaire and it was directed at study abroad students (n=350). The data is analysed in order to provide insights into interpretation and understanding of “other” people’s perception of reality, identities and cultures.

It is hoped that the findings of this piece of research study will provide some food for thought and encourage other studies on ICC.

Keywords: *Intercultural communicative competence, Study abroad, University students*

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Martínez, D., Gutiérrez, G., Llavador, F.B. and Abad, F.M. (2016). The Impact of an Erasmus Placement in Students' Perception of their Intercultural Communicative Competence *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 45(4), 338-354.

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