

# Book of abstracts

Friday, 16th June, 2017 University College Cork





#### **Organising Committee**

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9.00 9.30	Registration: Social Area, Ground Floor, Block B, O'Rahilly Building							
9.30 10.30	Welcome Mary Ryan Seminar Room Plenary 1: Dr Martin Howard, School of Languages Literatures and Cultures, University College Cork Title: Study Abroad Research and Practice: An 'Embarrassment of Riches' in the context of Erasmus at 30?							
10.30 11.00	Coffee + Poster Session: Social area, First Floor, Block B, O'Rahilly Building							
	Morning sessions							
11.00	Language teaching and learning Mary Ryan Seminar Room Chair: Anne Marie Devlin	Digital support 1.23 Chair: Sara Lis Ventura	Practice-focussed discussions 1.32 Chair: Siobhan Mortell					
	The development of socio-pragmatic competence: a longitudinal analysis of the use of L2 pragmatic markers by Erasmus students in a study abroad context Annarita Magliacane (University College Cork/University of Naples Federico II)	The Moveme project: language MOOCs for academic purposes. Erasmus and third level education abroad made easier Francesca Magnoni & Laura McLoughlin (National University of Ireland, Galway)	Student Withdrawal from Study Abroad Programmes Patricia Casserly & Maeve Sullivan (Mary Immaculate College, Limerick)  Student module selection and learning agreements Melanie Hochstätter					
	Power, Identity, and Culture in Non- Native English Speaking Students' Academic Writing Jessica Garska (Trinity College Dublin)	Enhancing the Erasmus Experience for Irish Students: The CONNECT 2.0 Project Gisela Holfter & Maria Rieder (University of Limerick)						
	Fostering multilingualism in a hegemonic English-speaking bubble: The tight-rope act in English-medium of instruction in Europe Clive Earls (National University of Ireland	Digilanguages and Transitions to Mobility Programmes Silvia Benini, Marta Giralt, Sinead Spain & Liam Murray (University of Limerick)	(Universität Konstanz)					
	Maynooth)		Student support provision during study abroad					
	L2 Use/Interaction, Social Network Development and Speaking Proficiency Development in an ERASMUS Study Abroad Context Kristof Baten (Ghent University)	Preparing students' mobility through telecollaboration: Lessons learnt from the I-Tell project (Intercultural Telecollaborative Learning) Marta Giralt & Catherine Jeanneau (University of Limerick)	Rafaela Argnani (University of Ferrara)					
13.00 14.00	<b>Lunch</b> – Social area, First Floor, Block E	3, O'Rahilly Building						

14.00 15.00							
	Afternoon Sessions						
	Language teaching and learning Mary Ryan Seminar Room Chair: Annarita Magliacane	Preparation and Support 1.23 Chair: TBC	Practice-focussed discussions 1.32 Chair: Emma Riordan	1.24 Chair: Siobhan Mortell			
15.00- 16.30	Internationalisation at home: Facilitating a face-to-face tandem language exchange on a university campus Marie-Thérèse Batardière & Catherine Jeanneau (University of Limerick)	Factors that influence nursing and midwifery students' intentions to study abroad: a qualitative study using the theory of planned behaviour Sean Kelleher, Serena Fitzgerald & Josephine Hegarty (University College Cork)	Microcosm of professional OT practice and Study Abroad Linda Horgan (University College Cork)	The Business German in Ireland Group will hold its AGM during this slot (15.00-16.00).			
	Erasmus mobility and engagement within the host institution: report on a peer-facilitated discussion group project Catherine Jeanneau & Stéphanie O'Riordan (University of Limerick)	International students: a minority group at risk in need of psychological support Sonia Gallucci (Regent's University London)	The Changing Landscape of Student Support Provision for				
	Confucius Meets Erasmus: The Interaction Between Language Learning Environment and L2 Development Xiaoru Yu (Radboud University, Nijmegen)	Intercomprehension and inter-cultural training for mobility Kristin Brogan (Institute of Technology Tralee)	Visiting Study Abroad Students Louise Staunton & Colum Cronin (Trinity College Dublin)				
16.30	Coffee + Poster Session: Social area, First Floor, Block B, O'Rahilly Building						
17.00 17.00 18.00	Mary Ryan Seminar Room Panel discussion: The impact of study abroad in Ireland Closing						
19.00	Conference dinner Café Fresco, Glucksman Gallery, University College Cork						

### **Keynote Talks**

#### **Martin Howard**

University College Cork, Ireland

## Study abroad research and practice: An embarrassment of riches in the context of Erasmus at 30?

As the ERASMUS programme celebrates 30 years of international student exchange in Europe, along with many other international exchange programmes around the world which offer various exchange opportunities such as short-term study abroad, professional stays abroad, and holiday homestays, Study Abroad research has emerged relatively contemporaneously as a burgeoning independent sub-field of Applied Linguistics exploring various facets of the learner's language learning while abroad. This paper considers the mutual insights to be gained between study abroad researchers and practitioners in both realms through enhanced dialogue between the two.

We firstly explore through a threefold prism the insights offered by the extensive body of Study Abroad research into Second Language Acquisition processes and outcomes, by focusing on issues relating to the learner's linguistic development during study abroad, input exposure and interaction, and the role of individual factors at play. We then consider the potential lessons to be gained from such findings in relation to study abroad practices and learner expectations. Issues concern for example the timing of study abroad, duration of stay abroad, learner status, residence type, the inter-learner variation reflected in individual learner experiences as well as the relatively unexplored but crucial issue of learner reintegration in the foreign language classroom following study abroad. We conclude with a critique of the insights available from existing work and offer a roadmap to highlight potential directions for future research in the area.

#### **Biography:**

Martin Howard is Head of the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures at University College Cork. His research interests lie in Second Language Acquisition with particular reference to French, the acquisition of temporality and (socio)linguistic variation; Sociolinguistics; and the French language in Canada. He is founding Editor of the journal *Study Abroad Research in Second Language Acquisition and International Education*, and Chair of the COST Action, 'Study Abroad Research in European Perspective' (2016-2020). He has previously served as Vice-President of the European Second Language Association (EuroSLA), and Secretary and Treasurer of the International Council for Canadian Studies, as well as Associate Editor of the *International Journal of Canadian Studies*. Recent publications include *Tense-Aspect-Modality in a Second Language* (with Pascale Leclercq, Benjamins 2017).

#### Fred Dervin

University of Helsinki, Finland

#### Is intercultural competence in study abroad an actual true myth?

#### Biography:

Dr Fred Dervin is Professor of Multicultural Education at the University of Helsinki (Finland). Dervin also holds several professorships in Australia, Canada, China, Luxembourg, Malaysia and Sweden. In May 2014 he was appointed Distinguished Professor at Baoji University of Arts and Sciences (China). Prof. Dervin specializes in intercultural education, the sociology of multiculturalism and student and academic mobility. Dervin has widely published in international journals on identity, the 'intercultural' and mobility/migration. He has published over 40 books: Politics of Interculturality (co-edited with Anne Lavanchy and AnahyGajardo, Newcastle: CSP, 2011), Impostures Interculturelles (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2012), Linguistics for Intercultural Education (co-edited with Tony Liddicoat, New York: Benjamins, 2013) and Chinese Educational Migration and Student-Teacher Mobilities (Ed, Palgrave, 2015). He is the series editor of Education beyond borders (Peter Lang), Nordic Studies on Diversity in Education (with Kulbrandstad and Ragnarsdóttir; CSP) and Post-intercultural communication and education (CSP). He is the editor-in-chief with Machart and Byrd-Clark of the International Journal of Bias, Identity and Diversities in Education.

## Panel Discussion

#### The impact of study abroad in Ireland

#### **Presenters:**

Marie-Thérèse Batadière

Lecturer in French, Erasmus exchange programme co-founder, University of Limerick

Charis Hughes

Communications – Impact research at Léargas, Dublin

Mairéad Jones

Former Erasmus student and current postgraduate student at University College Cork

Clare Murphy

Erasmus Coordinator, International Office, University College Cork

Gerry O'Sullivan

Head of International Programmes, Higher Education Authority, Dublin

### Paper presentations

in alphabetical order

Internationalisation at home: Facilitating a face-to-face tandem language exchange on a university campus

Marie-Thérèse Batardière & Catherine Jeanneau University of Limerick, Ireland

As the 21st century progresses and the internationalisation of higher education is gaining momentum, encouraging students' intercultural communication has become of paramount significance. A Tandem Language Exchange (TLE) is among a number of effective initiatives taken by the Language Learning Hub (LLH) at the University of Limerick (UL) to bring together home students and foreign students (i.e., Erasmus and International students). The TLE takes place in both semesters of the academic year, attracting over three hundred students including UL undergraduates and some postgraduates as well as foreign students of many nationalities. It is offered across faculties (Humanities, Business, Education, and Engineering) to students with levels of second language competence ranging from elementary to advanced.

Drawing on the empirical data collected at various stages of the TLE, this study begins by looking at some of the organisational and pedagogical challenges encountered during a 20-year experience of pairing foreign and home students. It then presents the various means of support that the LLH has put into place to encompass greater diversity and allow for moreflexibility. Finally, it puts forward some recommendations for implementing this type of peer-to-peer language exchange in university settings.

L2 Use/Interaction, Social Network Development and Speaking Proficiency Development in an Erasmus Study Abroad Context

Kristof Baten, Ghent University, Belgium

SA research has revealed that many American learners do not have the intense and frequent L2 contact that one could naively suspect (Collentine, 2009), and as a consequence, they do not receive the amount of language practice that is needed to result in language gains (DeKeyser, 2007). However, it is unwarranted to draw generalizations based on L1 American speakers (Sanz, 2014; DeKeyser, 2014). European learners (except perhaps British students; McManus *et al.*, 2014) are generally more advanced learners with more foreign language experience (Collentine, 2009; Llanes, 2011; DeKeyser, 2014). Consequently, their L2 use/interaction as well as their social network formation might differ from US students, and as such, it might yield a

different picture than what we have observed so far. Therefore, this paper presents the findings of a study that examines the connections between self-reported L2 use/interaction, social network development and self-perceived speaking proficiency development of a group of Belgian students (L1 Dutch), who studied abroad in different European countries. To measure self-perceived speaking proficiency, a *then-now* self-assessment was used (Dewey *et al.*, 2012). Language use and social network formation was measured by a specially designed questionnaire, that took the Language Contact Profile (Freed *et al.*, 2004) and the Study Abroad Social Interaction Questionnaire (Dewey *et al.*, 2013) as its starting point.

#### **Digilanguages and Transitions to Mobility Programmes**

Silvia Benini, Marta Giralt, Sinead Spain & Liam Murray University of Limerick, Ireland

The period abroad and mobility programmes' experience have become significant in Higher Education student life in the last 30 years. During this period, many research studies related to the period abroad programmes and their inherent benefits touch upon linguistic development (Coleman, 1998; Cubillos *et al.*, 2007; DeKeyser, 2014) and socio-pragmatic (Cohen & Shively, 2007; Reynolds-Case, 2013) abilities of students, as well as the development of intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006; Bennett, 2009) and the importance of preparing students before their sojourn (Coleman & Parker, 2001; Gutiérrez *et al.*, 2015; Giralt & Jeanneau, 2016).

As Savicki and Selby (2008: 349) point out, as educators we have a responsibility to ensure that students benefit as much as possible from their experience abroad. In this respect, *Digilanguages.ie* is a multilingual curated portal for language students and teachers; one of the domains *Transitions and Contexts* deals with mobility programme issues and activities.

In this paper we will present some of the activities that the portal offers to students and teachers to carry out before, during and after the mobility programme. Data gathered during the implementation of these activities will be shown and some recommendations on the use of relevant portal activities will be discussed.

#### **Intercomprehension and Inter-cultural Training for Mobility**

Kristin Brogan Institute of Technology Tralee, Ireland

This paper would like to introduce the INTERMOVE project, funded within the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme, is a Strategic Partnership project within the VET section. It aims to prepare participants for EU mobility projects by the development and implementation of a new training pathway that will tackle two of the barriers to mobility: Intercultural issues and communication in foreign languages. The coordinator is based in Spain and partners are from Ireland, Italy, Portugal and France.

What makes the INTERMOVE Training so innovative?

INTERMOVE combines the intercultural preparation with the use of intercomprehension in a blended training pathway that will include French, English, Portuguese, Italian and Spanish as target languages.Intercomprehension is a form of communicating in which a person uses his/her own language to understand the language used by the other person(s). This method gets immediately linked to Interculture (interaction between one or more cultures) as soon as concepts such as diversity, empathy and non-oral communication skills occur: understand a language, understand a culture. This approach gives special importance to the comprehension (reading, listening) rather than the production (writing, speaking).

#### **Expected Impact:**

The target group of this project is anyone who deals with the preparation of learners for the stay abroad. It is with pre-departure and upon-arrival preparation of trainees and students, providing them with resources for blended learning, e-learning and face to face training sessions.

Thanks to INTERMOVE, trainers will have access to innovative tools that will allow them to incorporate a methodology based on an Intercomprehension and Intercultural approach. Trainers will acquire the expertise needed to prepare participants on mobility experiences, helping learners to better understand multicultural contexts and to interact in five different languages. This will become a reality by the implementation of:

- INTERMOVE Learning Pathway to be used by trainers willing to teach the Intercomprehension and Intercultural blended contents;
- Open Educational Resource Platform for mentors to create customized pathways, exchange resources and good practices as well as to support the contact between different organisations;
- Tutor Handbook with guidelines and tips on how to make use of the INTERMOVE products;
- INTERMOVE label awarded to those organizations implementing the system.

## Fostering multilingualism in a hegemonic English-speaking bubble: The tight-rope act in English medium-of-instruction in Europe

Clive Earls National University of Ireland Maynooth, Ireland

We live in an era of unparalleled interconnectivity with global migration creating widespread complex intercultural and multilingual realities. While multilingualism may be viewed as a natural outcome of globalisation, in reality global multilingual arrangements frequently result in a hegemonic MT + English form of individual and societal multilingualism. In an attempt to profit from English's high value as cultural and symbolic capital, higher education institutions across national contexts in Europe are increasingly harnessing the internationalisation potential inherent in introducing English medium-of-instruction (EMI). Creating artificial English-speaking microcosmic bubbles within a non-English-speaking university is fraught with challenges of a economic, political, pedagogical and linguistic nature. While universities are impelled to follow such a form of Anglisation aggressively as a survival strategy in the global student marketplace, questions remain about de facto multilingual practices within the EMI environment in Europe. Based on a significant volume of qualitative and quantitative data collected within a comparative case study conducted in the German EMI context, this paper uncovers implicit and explicit ideologies, practices and planning dimensions derived from emic and etic perspectives which foster multilingualism within a hegemonic English-speaking bubble.

#### International students: a minority group at risk in need of psychological support

Sonia Gallucci Regent's University, London

This paper aims to provide an insider and outsider account of psychological vulnerability of international students when encountering cultural diversity. The term *international students* is used to indicate the specific population of young adults who spend a part of their undergraduate studies abroad. Despite the rising number of students moving between countries and an increased research interest in international mobility, few studies focus on the particular state of physical and emotional transition that this population can experience while abroad. This state of transition can cause unforeseen psychological difficulties and as a result it may affect their experience abroad and indeed their life thereafter. The paper explores possible causes and consequences of psychological discomfort experienced by individuals during a period of study abroad; it highlights some of the current therapeutic approaches available for culturally diverse minority groups, such as international students, and calls for more consideration of this particular group of vulnerable students that are still largely neglected from research and practices which take account of cultural dimensions in therapeutic and educational settings. Indeed, it argues that the transitory experience of international students who live in new social and cultural surroundings can be fostered by appropriate emotional support.

#### Power, Identity, and Culture in Non-Native English Speaking Students' Academic Writing

Jessica Garska, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

Issues surrounding English for Academic Purposes in regards to non-native English speakers at tertiary schools have become increasingly important in recent years. While academic literacies research has identified that power, identity, and culture play a role in academic writing, the presence of and attitudes towards these aspects in academic writing has not been studied thoroughly. Therefore, this study analyzed the attitudes towards and presence of power, identity, and culture in academic writing of non-native students at a tertiary institution in Ireland. The research methods were a questionnaire analysis followed by in-depth case studies, analyzed through discourse analysis. The findings suggest that, while participants generally have positive attitudes towards these aspects, there is a high level of negotiation and conflict between dominant norms and the expression of power, identity, and culture of the individual. Significantly, the analysis of writing samples did find a presence of power and identity within their academic writing to some extent. Possible implications of these findings for the English language teaching field could be to increase the focus on academic literacies in tertiary institutions to aid in the negotiation of these aspects and increase the academic success of non-native English speakers.

## Preparing students' mobility through telecollaboration: Lessons learnt from the I-Tell project (Intercultural Telecollaborative Learning)

Marta Giralt & Catherine Jeanneau University of Limerick, Ireland

For the past 30 years, the Erasmus programme has given the chance to millions of higher education students throughout Europe to live and study abroad. While for many, this sojourn in a foreign country is an extraordinary learning experience, for others, this opportunity is tarnished by cultural shock or lack of preparation.

This presentation will focus on a pre-mobility preparation programme - the I-Tell project (Intercultural Telecollaborative Learning) - which aims at tackling this issue. It posits that the better prepared students are before their placement, the better their experience will be.

As part of the project work, pre-mobility students are paired with students in their future host country who are also about to go abroad and together, they engage in virtual exchanges. They have to conduct a series of telecollaborative tasks covering a range of cultural and intercultural topics over a six to eight-week period. We will see how this initiative has evolved over the past three years and also present what students gained from partaking in this project. Some conclusions and recommendations based on the findings will be drawn and the potential role of telecollaboration in preparation for the period abroad will be discussed.

#### Enhancing the Erasmus Experience for Irish Students: The CONNECT 2.0 Project

Gisela Holfter & Maria Rieder University of Limerick, Ireland

In our paper we want to focus especially on the following three aspects: 1) Intercultural competences, 2) reflective learning and the student experience and 3) Digital learning and study abroad. In order to do so we will introduce the CONNECT 2.0 Intercultural Learning Network for Europe project which we are currently developing with partners in eight European countries and which is funded by the EU under their scheme Erasmus+. CONNECT 2.0 is a cross-sectoral project, bringing together practitioners and experts from the university and youth sector. It was initiated to create an innovative intercultural learning scenario, consisting of an e-learning platform and curricula for pre-departure and re-entry orientation, to support Erasmus participants (students and interns) in the higher education sector before, during and after their exchange by integrating methods and concepts from non-formal youth education to formal education. We will present the intercultural e-learning platform with the Experience Map and online pre-departure, during and re-entry modules. We will also report on initial findings and feedback regarding the face-to-face curricula for pre-departure orientation at Limerick University and give a short overview of perceived student needs and ideas for sustainable mentoring programmes.

### Erasmus mobility and engagement within the host institution: report on a peerfacilitated discussion group project

Catherine Jeanneau & Stéphanie O'Riordan University of Limerick, Ireland

Since its inception in 1987, the Erasmus exchange programme has enabled millions of students to travel and experience study abroad. This experience generally represents a significant opportunity to develop intercultural competence, new approaches to learning as well as a sense of what it means to be viewed as a European and/or a foreigner.

This paper presents an initiative which aims at actively integrating Erasmus students through their recruitment, training and coordination as peer-facilitators of discussion sessions (in their L1) at the University of Limerick.

After several years of implementation and over one hundred trained facilitators, it is timely to report on the impact of this project on Erasmus student facilitators. In this study, we will first present a brief overview of the initiative (rationale, implementation and outcomes). We will then analyse post-semester feedback questionnaires and facilitators' portfolios to determine the benefits of this project in developing students' confidence, transferable skills and ultimately in helping their integration within the student population during their stay.

## Factors that influence nursing and midwifery students' intentions to study abroad: a qualitative study using the theory of planned behaviour

Sean Kelleher, Serena Fitzgerald & Josephine Hegarty
University College Cork, Ireland

**Background:** Future health care professionals need to be broadly-educated, adaptable individuals who have significant experience in the world beyond the classroom. Study abroad is an ideal means of developing some of the skills and attitudes that are not only valued among health professionals, but also have global applicability. Although internationalisation through study abroad is widely publicised as a preferred means of developing globally competent third level graduates very little is known about the factors that influence students' predisposition to study abroad, students decision making process and how various factors influence that process.

**Objectives**: To explore the motivating factors that influence nursing and midwifery student's intentions to study abroad.

**Design**: Qualitative descriptive.

**Setting**: A third level institution in Ireland.

**Participants**: A purposive sample (n= 25) of undergraduate nursing and midwifery students.

**Methods**: Data were obtained individually and in a free response format by means of an open ended belief elicitation question naire. The theory of planned behaviour was used a theoretical framework to guide both the structure of the question naire and the content analysis.

**Results**: The study's findings support earlier works in identifying the main behavioural, normative and control factors that influence a student's decision to study abroad and is the first study to recognise enhanced professional identity as a potential benefit of study abroad. Factors such as cultural sensitivity, employability, language and cost emerged as important issues in need of further investigation.

The development of socio-pragmatic competence: a longitudinal analysis of the use of L2 pragmatic markers by Erasmus students in a study abroad context

Annarita Magliacane University College Cork, Ireland University of Naples Federico II, Italy

While Second Language (L2) Pragmatics research to date has been mainly devoted to investigate speech acts (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969) in the L2, very little attention has been given to the study of pragmatic markers (PMs) in the L2 by language learners (Müller, 2005), despite their pivotal role at pragmatic and conversational level. Previous research has demonstrated that the production of PMs in the L2 can be aided by native speaker contact (Sankoffet al., 1997), and, therefore, by extension, the degree of usage of such markers can be considered as an index of target language exposure (Giuliano& Russo, 2014; Migge, 2015).

Against this background, this paper investigates the use of PMs within a Study Abroad (SA) perspective. The learners were Italian Erasmus students (n=15), during a six-month SA

experience in Ireland. Spoken data were elicited in the form of a sociolinguistic interview, complemented by a questionnaire, aimed at investigating learners' social networks and L2 use during the SA experience. The learners' socio-pragmatic development was tracked longitudinally during the duration of their stay in order to relate potential differences in their use of a number of markers with their L2 input, exposure and interaction during the SAexperience. The markers concerned the use of 'like', 'you know', 'I mean', and 'well', and the findings were compared with a native speaker corpus.

The Moveme project: language MOOCs for academic purposes. Erasmus and third level education abroad made easier.

Francesca Magnoni & Laura McLoughlin National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland

The paper will present the Move-Me project, financed by the European Commission under the Erasmus+ programme.

The project aims to support Erasmus and international university students who undertake mobility programmes in Europe. Usually university students going abroad face the challenge of academic discourse. Many students have already acquired a B1-B2 level before their year abroad but this is often confined to standard vocabulary, syntax and discourse, which can hamper their ability to interact fully in academic contexts and discourse; this might ultimately undermine the long-term goal of training highly qualified workers and researchers able to function at inter-European level.

Move-me therefore proposes the creation of resources aimed at reflection on and acquisition of academic language in various disciplines, and the delivery of two MOOCs, for Academic Italian and Academic English, which focus on the development of learning to learn skills.

This presentation will outline the methodological framework for the development of our MOOCs, with a particular focus on pedagogical and structural choices and the inclusion of metacognitive activities aimed at triggering and enhancing participants' awareness of their learning process specifically related to the academic discourse and suggest further developments.

## **Confucius Meets Erasmus: The Interaction Between Language Learning Environment and L2 Development**

Xiaoru Yu Radboud University, Nijmegen, the Netherlands

This project focuses on the development of second language automaticity in three English learning environments: English as a native language (ENL) environment, English as a second language (ESL) environment and English as a foreign language (EFL) environment. Nowadays, with increasing global mobility, more and more people, especially students in higher education system, go abroad and confront themselves with a new language environment. This highlights the need to investigate the impact of the language environment shift on their language processing ability and learner outcome. A hypothesis is proposed that for advanced EFL learners, it is possible to accumulate declarative knowledge in domestic study settings, but only those studying abroad can enhance L2 automaticity.

To examine this hypothesis, 50 Chinese international postgraduates in the UK, 50 Chinese domestic postgraduates and 50 English native speakers will participate in an automaticity test and a declarative knowledge test before their Master program and after studying for one year. Such techniques as reaction time recording and eye movement tracking, will be used to capture both general trends and individual variability in the development of automaticity in second language comprehension in different language learning environments.

## Practice-focussed discussion groups

in alphabetical order

#### Student support provision during study abroad

Rafaela Argnani University of Ferrara, Italy

International offices mainly deal with exchange students BEFORE STARTING their mobility period, at their ARRIVAL, just BEFORE LEAVING and AFTER the mobility has been completed, this policy shows there is time gap as almost no services are offered DURING the mobility of outgoing and incoming students except for specific support on demand. What about support structures for international students not only on demand?

It would be good to help the students in adjusting during their initial transition into the host university. As long as relocation to a new environment could be stressful and challenging, even though students experience increasing adjustment over time, social support and cultural novelty introduction could help the process of integration.

Which activities could be attractive for incoming students? Most universities offer language courses for incoming students, sports, psychological support and some other extra activities always connected to the university but is this really enough?

What else can be done to constantly monitor students while they are abroad? It is quite often that students show up at the end of their stay abroad with critical issues or problems that could be solved much earlier, do really universities do their best to optimize students' mobility?

Considering that relocation to a new environment could be stressful and challenging, it would be nice to help them getting integrated in a new city with courses and/or guided tours explaining local habits, and availability for other needs they could encounter.

#### **Student Withdrawal from Study Abroad Programmes**

Patricia Casserly & Maeve Sullivan Mary Immaculate College, Limerick,Ireland

Why do students withdraw from study abroad programmes at third level?

Mary Immaculate College has participated in the Erasmus programme since 1998 and an average of 60 students undertake Erasmus study annually. The opportunity to study abroad is available to all undergraduate students and is compulsory for those pursuing modern languages to degree level.

In terms of student withdrawal from study abroad programmes, there are three distinct categories:

- 1. Those students who do not engage with study abroad opportunities offered by the institution and 'withdraw' before the application process begins.
- 2. Those students who apply for and commit to study abroad and withdraw before commencement.
- 3. Those students who apply for, commit to and commence study abroad and withdraw following commencement.

In our experience, the reasons for withdrawal from study abroad can be divided into three broad categories:

- 1. Practical reasons;
- 2. Academic / Linguistic reasons.
- 3. Psychological reasons;

Practical reasons for withdrawal from study abroad include: financial constraints and lack of advance budgetary planning, lack of engagement with third level studies / home institution, lack of parental, familial and peer support as well as personal reasons such as a part-time job, relationship or family commitments. Perceived bureaucratic barriers associated with study abroad, challenges in securing accommodation, coupled with lack of advance preparation and research on the study abroad programme, destination and cultural transition may also lead to withdrawal from study abroad. Students who commit and then withdraw from study abroad may perhaps get 'cold feet' immediately prior to departure once the reality of their commitment becomes manifest. Academic / linguistic barriers such as perceived lack of compatible module offering, lack of transfer for credit at the home institution, modules being more difficult than anticipated, lack of compatibility between semester dates at the home and host institutions as well as perceived linguistic barriers may also lead to withdrawal from study abroad. Psychological reasons may include lack of self-confidence coupled with a lack of travel, international and/or independent living experience - which manifests itself as a fear and/or avoidance of the unknown. For those students for whom study abroad is optional, they may instead opt to follow the path of least resistance via an alternative placement in their home country, rather than challenge themselves to embrace a new language, culture and country. Those students who withdraw following commencement of study abroad may experience a discrepancy between their expectations and the reality - this may manifest itself in courses being more difficult than anticipated, difficulty in transitioning to a less personal, more

bureaucratic environment as well as the initial euphoria being replaced by day-to-day reality of life abroad.

Participants also often under-estimate the level of homesickness they will experience; many do not recognise this as a normal part of the transition and instead view it as a 'crisis' which may lead to curtailment of study abroad. Many students lack coping mechanisms, are unable to avail of appropriate supports and also lack the skills to form and maintain social networks which would help make their experience abroad a success. Many participants, especially those for whom study abroad is compulsory and who were reluctant to travel in the first instance, may not wish to avail of the range of solutions and supports offered by the home and host institutions and instead remain focused on withdrawal from study abroad.

There are a range of solutions which may be helpful in minimising student withdrawal from study abroad. In the first instance, promotion of the range of available study abroad opportunities and the merits of undertaking same by both administrative and academic staff is vital. An institution's study abroad alumni and incoming exchange students also act as invaluable ambassadors for study abroad and their involvement in study abroad promotion should be maximised at all available opportunities. It is also important for the institution to be transparent about the level of financial commitment required and support available to study abroad participants, including those categorised as special needs and/or disadvantaged. Aside from promotion, it is also important for the institution to provide a realistic picture of not only the benefits, but also the challenges of participation in study abroad and prepare students to successfully manage the transition to a new country, culture and language. Pre-college events such as open days, student and parent orientation days also provide an invaluable opportunity for the institution to gain 'buy-in' from potential participants and their wider networks well in advance of the commencement of the study abroad programme. The provision of ongoing support from the home institution as well as the development of collaborative working relationships with host institutions enables the student transition to be effectively supported as well as 'crises', both real and perceived, small and large, to be managed without leading to student withdrawal from study abroad.

#### The Changing Landscape of Student Support Provision for Visiting Study Abroad Students

Colum Cronin & Louise Staunton Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

- Expectations
  - What Irish HEIs can realistically offer vs. expectations of students' home HEIs
- Forms of Student Support
  - Orientation, student learning and development, English language training, disability services, chaplaincy, health and mental services, etc.
- Crisis Management
  - Considering the huge growth in IS numbers at HEIs, and the projected growth to come (the IES for Ireland 2016-20 projects a growth of almost 40,000 students over a four-year period), it is crucial that HEIs have a clear protocols and emergency

action plans (EAP) in place for risk management, to protect HEIs from legal action, reputational liability and ensure staff clarity and therefore efficient response time to students and families.

- o Discussion: Protocols at different HEIs, steps taken toward risk mitigation
- o Discussion: Irish/European EAPs and developments at Trinity College Dublin
- Resources in the US to keep in mind:
  - University H&S models:
    - E.g. Bespoke Offices within HEIs completely dedicated to International Safety and Risk Management, e.g. Global Support Services, Harvard University: https://www.globalsupport.harvard.edu/
    - E.g. Applicable to Trinity: Columbia's Integrative Model: http://evpr.columbia.edu/content/global-support
  - NAFSA task force, Forum critical incident database
- Closing discussion and conclusion

#### Student module selection and learning agreements

Melanie Hochstätter Universität Konstanz, Germany

"The purpose of the Learning Agreement is to provide a transparent and efficient preparation of the study period abroad and to ensure that the student will receive recognition in his/her degree for the educational component successfully completed abroad. (...) Changes to the study programme should be exceptional, as the three parties have already agreed on a group of educational components that will be taken abroad (...)."

Higher Education Guidelines for Learning Agreement for Studies, pages 1 and 3, see: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\_culture/repository/education/opportunities/higher-education/doc/learning-studies-guidelines\_en.pdf.

Although, as the guidelines for the Learning Agreement (LA) state, changes to the LA should be exceptional, practice shows that at least 90% of our outgoing student's LAs need to be modified within the first weeks of their study abroad phase. For our incoming students this percentage would be just as high. In most cases, the initial LA is a mere statement of commitment to the workload students will be completing abroad, not in fact a commitment to a fixed list of courses. Hence the LA (before the mobility) cannot be a commitment to the transfer of courses and ECTS into the structure of the degree pursued at the home institution (HI). Why are we/our students not conforming to the recommendations of the guidelines?

In this discussion group, we will look at the differences between the German and the Irish academic systems (such as the academic calendar, degree structures, the availability of course catalogues etc.) making it difficult to fulfil the administrative standards postulated by the Erasmus+ programme. Given the efforts necessary to maintain the paperwork of the programme raises the question whether students and higher education institutions have

actually gained a higher degree of reliability with respect to credit transfer or whether the "+" in the Erasmus+ programme is not simply a plus in administrational efforts.

On the other hand, if we did away with all administrative obstacles and saw systems and degree structures more and more assimilating, what would be the attraction of a study abroad phase in another country anymore? In other words: Are we focusing too much on gathering ECTS points and correct dates of signatures and not enough on the invaluable "+" of a study abroad experience?

Occupational Therapy is a relatively new discipline internationally, 100 years old in 2017, and in its infancy in UCC (2003)

Linda Horgan University College Cork, Ireland

A fledgling Erasmus programme based on gaining practice experience abroad was first established in 2007. This discussion looks at the journey of how to select and how to support students where an international language is not a core module of their undergraduate degree and the cross between academic and practice education staff. Students and staff experiences of the Erasmus Clinical Practice Experience have been positive and negative with issue such as how we chose our partners initially, how we now choose our partners, differing programmes, assessment and the failing student. Interaction with HSE and other services which provide opportunities for practice education under our own programme and the Erasmus programme. Brexit is a concern as work opportunities for Erasmus experiences narrows along with the implications Brexit has for many of our graduates who work in the NHS post qualification.

### Poster presentations

in alphabetical order

#### Second Language Acquisition and Cultural Learning during the Stay Abroad

Kristin Brogan Institute of Technology Tralee, Ireland

This paper investigates the possible benefits of the Study Abroad programme in relation to language proficiency development and cultural learning. In total, 143 students participated in this research from seven third level Irish universities (DCU, NUIM, NUIG, TCD, UCC, UCD and UL) who all studied German as part of their degree. The majority of participants availed of the opportunity to study or work abroad in Germany or Austria, while 13 students stayed at home and formed the control group.

A combination/inter-relationship of factors (linguistic, inter-cultural, personal and socio-cultural) is considered significant to acquisition of receptive and productive language and is exploited in the elicitation and analysis of data. The author has enquired systematically into the factors that may positively advance language acquisition and cultural learning. Data from students who went abroad is compared with a control group to analyse the possible combination/inter-relationship of factors that may positively enhance language proficiency development and make cultural learning possible.

The presentation includes a brief literature summary of language acquisition and intercultural communication during the SA. The methodology of this research is both qualitative and quantitative and the specific assessments instruments are also discussed. This research includes questionnaires, interviews in English, and German and oral tests in order to measure any difference before and after the residence abroad.

The findings clearly show that not all students improve their language proficiency nor are able to move beyond a stereotypical view of the host country. Self-confidence as a language speaker and "outsider" while abroad are important factors for successful learning. The presenter would like to highlight the fact that educators must assist learners to become more aware of how to make the implicit learning of the year abroad more explicit. Despite the fact that not all students improve, there is plenty of evidence about self-discoveries and increased awareness about their own culture and the majority of them evaluated the SA experience in a positive way and would like to return to the host country in the future.

#### **Creating an Inclusive Ethos**

Julie Butters UniversityCollege Cork, Ireland

This research paper looks critically at the type of discourse surrounding international students, in this case 'Chinese' students. The research project was inspired by a three year teaching experience in Beijing, China, where I began to realise that 'Chinese' students were often misrepresented and misunderstood in the UK higher education classroom especially in relation to active participation. Therefore, I wanted to explore how both university lecturers and 'Chinese' students spoke about active participation in the classroom. I adopted qualitative research methods specifically semi-structured interviews to gain a deeper insight into their attitudes and experiences. The sample came from a UK university.

The findings of the study highlight that only one lecturer adopted a more critical view of culture by referring to lack of agency and the socio-cultural positioning of those students due to societal power structures as the main factors affecting active participation. The other eleven of the participants, both lecturers and students, put the onus on cultural attributes; thus, leaning towards a deficit view. This signifies that for this group of participants engaging in collaborative intercultural competence sessions could help students and teachers to adopt a more critical approach to culture and learning leading to a more inclusive ethos and inclusive learning environment.

#### Mobile app for student mobility: incidental language learning with ILOCALAPP

Clara Keating, Olga Solovova, Anabela Fernandes & Joana Cortez-Smyth University of Coimbra, Portugal

While the popularity of mobility programmes like Erasmus+ has grown steadily over recent years, this has not been matched by an improved quality of language preparation, intercultural comprehension and the integration of mobility populations into the new environment. The ILOCALAPP Project is addressing this challenge by developing an app for the incidental learning of four cultures and languages - Finnish, Italian, Polish and Portuguese - by helping to remove cultural barriers and boost communication.

This paper will present some of the principles that orient the ILOCALAPP team in creating a smart tool designed for mobile devices, tailored to the specific needs of mobility students. As implied in the concept of incidental learning, the language and cultural contents of the app rely on the learners' active participation throughout all stages of knowledge creation, and will emerge from informal and daily settings.

ILOCALAPP will offer mobility students the possibility to become acquainted with local language and culture both before and upon the arrival in a smart way, enabling users to fully integrate into their host university environments.

#### Integration in the hosting community: cultural learning and public law

Luca Galli University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy

The complete formation of the individual, not only as a student, to let him perceive the rising of a new international reality is one of the main goals of the Erasmus Programme. The integration in the hosting community plays a fundamental role to satisfy this task.

Does public law facilitate this integration? Of course yes, being the University – a public administration – the first social structure the foreign student gets in contact with. Which are the tools available to the University to reach this goal?

Do other administrations have tools to pursue the same task? Examples could be the recognition of the right to access to the same services the local students can access, or the creation of public facilities as international students residences.

After analyzing all these tools, the goal of this research will be to reflect on their effectiveness. Are they enough for the integration in the local society or do they allow integration only in the "Erasmus community", made by international students and necessarily multicultural? In any case, would it be a failure for the Erasmus or a success able to give birth to a real multiculturalism and to an international university society capable of overcoming national borders?

#### Student withdrawal from study abroad programmes

Theonil De Lourdes Lugo Arrendell University of Ferrara, Italy

Every year, both after the selection process or while organizing their international mobility, lots of students keep withdrawing to their study abroad programme.

Several reasons lead students to take this decision, as for example strict requirements/deadlines of the hosting institution (i.e. early deadlines for application, high requested language level). On another hand also personal reason of the student, hard to evaluate if not known from the sending institutions, may also cause a withdrawal.

Another reason why students often resign is connected to courses offered abroad and the mismatch with theirs home study plan. The fact that the courses catalogue is usually updated late during the year takes necessary the student to give up much later than in other specific cases

What can be done by the sending and hosting institutions to limit the yearly number of withdrawals?

Probably there should be a stronger support from the sending institution but at the same time the hosting university should be much more flexible. Could any else be done?

Rarely now but possible are withdrawals during the mobility. While the programme is in operation students could face circumstances, i.e. due to health or family matters, that lead to the decision of leaving it and return home. This is a serious choice with possible emotional and financial consequences.

How the institutions involved could manage this situation? Are there any "best practices" in order to give the right personal (i.e. aid from a tutor and or psychologist) and academic (see if the student can earn any credit for the work completed to date...) support?