
The Langsnap Guide 1

The Languages and Social Networks Abroad Project Pedagogical Guides

Dr L. Patricia Romero de Mills
Modern Languages, University of Southampton.



Introduction

Prof. Ros Mitchell

Student mobility is a key feature of current higher education, and has lifechanging consequences for participants, as demonstrated in longstanding research e.g. on the Erasmus programme. Post-mobility, graduates are exceptionally likely to find international partners and to be professionally mobile, and are “clearly more competent to handle international environments” (Teichler, 2014). However, UK students are somewhat reluctant participants in study abroad (King, Findlay, & Ahrens, 2010; British Academy & University Council for Modern Languages, 2012), and to this extent are disadvantaged from ‘global’ employability.

Government concern has led to the setting up of a recent national initiative to promote outward mobility by the HE International Unit, [Go International](#). Past projects have also set out to support British students abroad through e.g. ethnographic training, with some success (Coleman, 2002). However it is clear that global conditions have changed, so that study abroad is no longer a straightforward linguistic and cultural “immersion” experience (Doerr, 2013). As documented in our recent Southampton research (e.g. Mitchell et al. 2014), students abroad must now cope with multilingual environments where English is in widespread use as lingua franca, where travel and communication are cheap, and where virtual and real experiences constantly intermingle (See also Coleman, 2013). They must reflect on and respond to forms of ‘culture’ and ‘community’ which are fast changing and interpenetrating, and to new interrelations between ‘home’ and ‘abroad’. These new conditions have complex consequences for student identity, experience and learning when abroad.

Some new forms of guidance are currently available for British students taking part in study abroad, many of them web based (e.g. www.thirdyearabroad.com; <http://esn.org/>). However there is a need to develop resources to support administrative and teaching staff who are faced with the challenge to make the sojourns’ experiences abroad and the intellectual and cognitive changes they have gone through, valuable opportunities for further linguistic, cultural and personal development.

The key objective of the *Langsnap Guides* is to provide resources and materials for programme administrators and for study abroad participants; they will

- Support participants’ social insertion in both international and local networks abroad;
- Promote participants’ social engagement and social contribution while abroad;
- Develop participants’ intercultural awareness and capacity to reflect in a relativistic way on social conditions at home and abroad, and interrelations among these;
- Develop participants’ capacity for understanding and interpretation of contemporary culture(s) abroad and at home;
- Develop language learning strategies (including internet based practices) appropriate for multilingual conditions.

The rationale behind the Langsnap Guides.

Dr Patricia Romero de Mills

Soon, in just a couple of years' time, the average student who arrives to our universities will belong to the generation whose very first gasp for oxygen in this world, would have been made visible to the online world to see and have an opinion about. Social media has completely revolutionized the way its regular users perceive and make sense of their surrounding and of themselves; it is common now to see individuals who are more concerned with life as it happens on the screen of their mobile phones than what is going on in the place where they are physically sitting, walking or standing. But although for us, the generation who was not born with an electronic device stuck in the palm of our hand, all this may sometimes appear like the end of the humanity as we know it, for them, the new generation, born in the area of endless communication, is a simple and normal way of life. And as we observe them taking over our place, these technological advances we now regard as "revolutions", will become just what they are for our younger generations: taken-for-granted, everyday life.

In this scenario, we, educators, are faced with exhilarating, but challenging paradigms. The excitement many of us experience thinking about the numberless pedagogic possibilities opened by the abundance of resources and information available on the internet can, at the same time, stimulate our teaching creativity, and make us seriously question whether or not we have a role to play in the field of education at all: When we witness the speed and ease with which our students make use of the resources they have to find out facts such as who Erasmus of Rotterdam was or practical solutions such as sorting out temporary accommodation in Madrid, it is easy for us to conclude that these people are born knowing how the world operates from day one. Some have gone as far as predicting that universities (and all forms of schooling) will one day disappear altogether and be replaced by virtual learning. And it may. In this respect, we may be led to believe that the student survival guides available from YouTube, the plethora of websites devoted to different aspects of study abroad and the ever-growing number of blogs and Facebook groups dedicated to share experiences, hints and tips for those embarking on schemes of this nature means students do not require any more help. But ironically, *communication*, the same system that is empowering our young people to that extent, is also allowing us to assess their changing needs and to learn the new roles educators can play in all this. Anyone who has taken the time to have a long conversation with their students, whether it is by email, discussion forums, or my preferred one, a face-to-face chat at the good old university café will soon be reminded of the reason why the human species undergoes one of the longest childhoods in the natural world: because minds take time to develop, time and experience, and confusion, and attainment, and fear, and joy, and error... Our university students, bright and resourceful as they can be, are *minds in development* who do not hesitate to reply that it is "structure", "motivation" and "some guidance" to learn how to make sense of what they often regard as "too much information", what they regard as the most welcomed and valuable contribution from us, their tutors or better said, facilitators, to their university life.

The *Langsnap Guides* have emerged precisely from prolonged conversations with students; the themes the guides cover, their structure and learning outcomes have all emerged from qualitative data collected from 2011 to 2013 for the LANGSNAP project, aimed at improving our understanding of the challenges our students face when they opt to study in another country. The pedagogical

guides are a series of interactive workshops focused on aspects of study abroad such as "Being an International Student", "Dealing with expectations and cultural differences", "Developing a foreign language abroad", amongst others. The workshops can be delivered as a one-off event or be part of a larger course. Each workshop is supported by its own set of downloadable materials which consists of a ready-to-use Power Point presentation, with instructions and suggestions for the facilitator; printable hand-outs (when relevant) and suggestions for follow-up activities or autonomous learning mini-projects. Multimedia has been integrated in some sessions, and students are introduced to useful websites, groups in the social media or applications they may find helpful, but the workshops themselves are rather low-tech, so any tutor who is not particularly keen on technology, can still benefit from the materials. On the other hand, tutors who strongly believe that our guidance as facilitators is unnecessary in this world of endless resources, may still want to explore the various independent projects which range from organising a tea party to more technological possibilities such as creating blogs, infographics or videos.

The highly visual nature of the presentation is intended to appeal to a variety of learning styles, and to grab and maintain the attention of the participants, but we understand teaching styles vary enormously and that learning differences, such as dyslexia for example, require specific alterations such as having dark blue font on a light yellow background. But for this reason, we have given our full licence for facilitators to download the original Power Point and adapt, use or recycle the slides to make them fulfil their own students' needs (as long as none of the modified version is shared. For more details on authorship and creative licences, please refer to p.5 in this booklet). The main intention to create and share these guides is to support teaching and administrative staff, who are sometimes left with the overwhelming task of preparing students for study abroad but have little or no time to prepare their own materials, and/or who want to make sure the opportunity to talk to these adventurous, albeit sometimes quite naïve future sojourners, is not wasted reinforcing stereotypes or folk beliefs about the potential contribution of a period of study abroad to the intellectual, professional and personal growth of our students.

We hope tutors and administrators will find these materials useful, and more importantly, that as many students as possible can benefit from them. We would love to hear your feedback and stories, and learn how our initiative has evolved and developed in the hands of our colleagues.

For any questions or comments, please contact Dr L. Patricia Romero de Mills at:

P.Romero@soton.ac.uk

Langsnap Guide 1: Being an international Student

Dr Patricia Romero de Mills

According to the last survey of outward mobility for the UK, nearly 20,000 students studying in a UK higher education institution, participated in student mobility programs during 2012-13 (Carbonell, 2014). The time students spend abroad, the locations they choose and the reasons for opting to study away from home vary immensely, but it is undeniable that all participants in student mobility will be faced with observable differences between the higher education institution hosting them for a few months, and the UK institution organizing this exchange for them. The challenges that such variances between their home and host societies (and higher education

institutions) pose to the sojourn were clearly identifiable in the qualitative data collected for the *Languages and Social Networks Project* (LANGSNAP), a longitudinal study which closely monitored 56 undergraduates participating in mobility schemes (see below). Participants were interviewed before departure, three times during their nine-month residency and twice more on their return. As time progressed, some noticeable transformations in our participants' behaviour and way of thinking could be observed, but in other areas (such as personality, for example) adjustments were less tangible (Mitchell et al 2014).

Our student participants spent nine months as Erasmus students in a French or a Spanish university. During the pre-departure interviews (available at <http://langsnap.soton.ac.uk/project.html>), the vast majority of the students showed at least some awareness of the fact that they were going to live and study in a place where a language other than English was spoken, and where the way of life could be somehow different from their own, even if their views on the possible contrasts they were about to experience were rather naïve, stereotyped or heavily based on their limited experience as tourists in these countries (see for example, 156aSSF, 163aEDR, 164aEDR). Strangely, students did not mention that these discrepancies would also have an impact on the way academic life is conducted and organized at universities in other parts of the world. However, as their period of residency progressed, it became more obvious that aspects such as the overall organization of the courses, the communication between students and academic and administrative staff and/or the learning and teaching styles most commonly used in a specific country, posed enormous challenges to international students trying to adopt a life in a foreign country (see for example, 108bKMcM, 118bKMcM, 121cKMcM, 168bNTV, 172dNTV), perhaps because students struggled to see these practices are also examples of behaviour rooted on and explained by the cultures, histories, and general way of thinking of the societies hosting them. It was evident, from the data collected that participants would have benefited from an opportunity to reflect on the impact that cultural differences would have on education systems and, as a consequence, on their experience as visiting students.

Our *Langsnap Guide 1: Being an International Student*, addresses some key issues in this respect. The selection of learning outcomes for this workshop, and for the complementary materials accompanying it, emerged from our qualitative data, where the most salient issues to be addressed were:

- a) Adapting to unpredictable administrative and organizational differences
- b) Assessment and expectations of what an undergraduate student "should know"
- c) Studying complex topics in a foreign language
- d) Dealing with emotions related to this aspect of their experience

The workshop, in-class tasks and follow-up activities proposed in this guide, are designed to help students develop their awareness of some of these challenges, and to help them reflect on their possible impact on their experience as international students before departure, so they can develop some possible strategies to cope with them once they are abroad.

IMPORTANT: This guide and the complementary materials were designed with the intention to be shared with all educators, administrators or other professionals who require to prepare undergraduates for study abroad. The materials can be modified and adapted to particular needs free of charge, but the intellectual property of this initiative must be acknowledged by citing the original guide, and the source where it can be found. All the credits to the Langsnap team and project must be clearly displayed on any modified versions you create. No modified versions or adaptations of this work should be shared; professionals interested in modifying this original version must download it from:

The Languages and Social Networks Abroad Project

“Social networks, target language interaction, and second language acquisition during the year abroad: A longitudinal study” is a project funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (research award number: RES-062-23-2996) from May 2011 to October 2013. This project ([LANGSNAP](http://langsnap.soton.ac.uk) for short) tracked 56 UK students during their year abroad in France, Spain or Mexico. Extensive longitudinal data were collected on participants’ language development, social networking, language use, intercultural learning, and personal development. This project provided extensive findings, which form the basis for the themes covered in the *Langsnap Guides* series, and for the practical exercises proposed in them. We hope our national and international partners in Europe and in other Anglophone countries find these resources helpful.

For more information about this project, please visit:

<http://langsnap.soton.ac.uk/project.html>



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Being an International Student

Languages and Social Networks Abroad Project
Pedagogical Guide 1
Designed by: L. P. Romero de Mills

Modern Languages, University of Southampton: LANGSNAP Project (ESRC research award number RES-062-23-2996)

The time proposed for this workshop is 1:30hrs our 2 hours max.

The main aim is to provide students with an opportunity to reflect on the possible difficulties that could arise from studying abroad, in a different system of education.

Why study abroad?



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This blank screen indicates it's time to discuss (we recommend pairs or trios). Students will watch a video, but before they do so, get them to discuss their main motivation(s) to study abroad.

We don't consider more than 5-7 minutes are necessary for this task.

After they have discussed, collect a quick list of their motives (perhaps, write a few of them on the board).

Why study abroad?



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Switch to 'Slide show' view, and click on the image to get to the original video.

Source: Negleiro, J. 2008. *Why Study Abroad?* Accessed 09 September 2015.

Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eikxZN5OZkc>

Play the video (1' 31").

Allow a further 3-5 minutes for students to discuss their reactions in pairs or trios: Is this what they imagine their experience would be? Are some of the reasons/motivations illustrated in this video in the list they had gathered before?

Gather their thoughts.

What the average student predicts may be different between their life at home and abroad:

"I think it will be difficult because I am not familiar with the structure and modus operandi of the country. Like I don't know how banks work" (163aEDR)

"It will be difficult to understand my university lectures" (168aEDR)

"I don't think it will be too different because I will be a student at university and I will live with other students like I do here. That's the same life, just in another language" (72aNTV)

"I will be able to go out more. I will study in the morning and relax in the evening. Because it seems that here, I'm always working or studying" (166aEDR)

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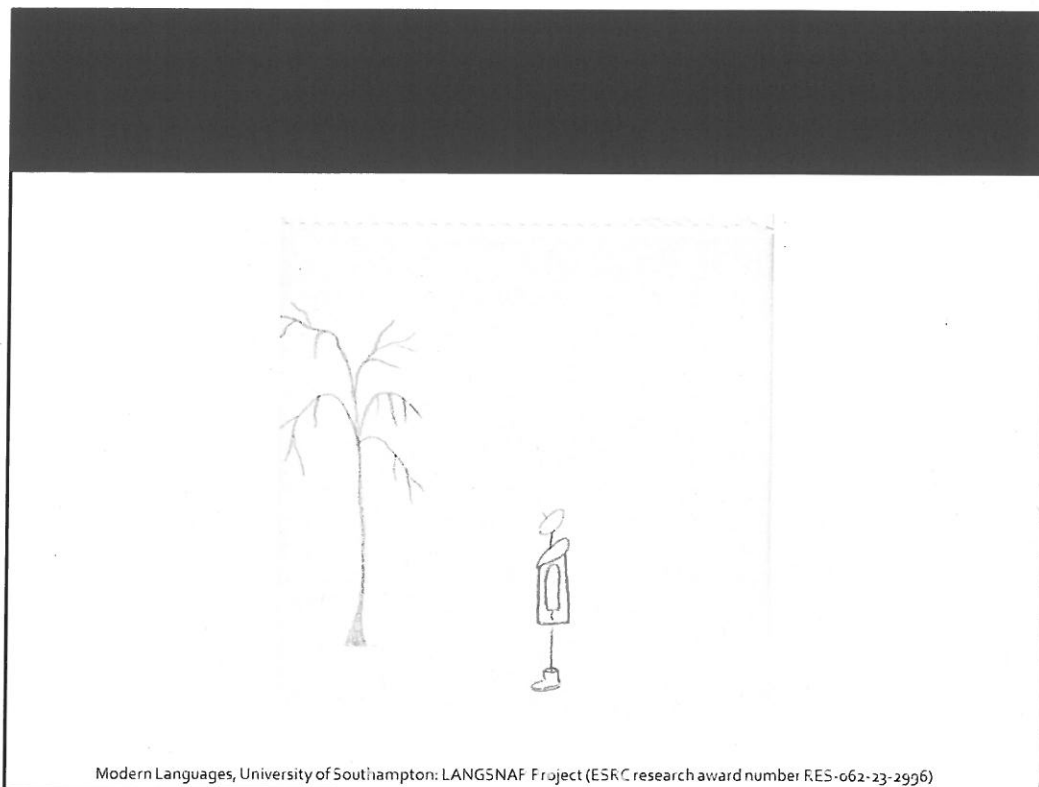
Show these quotes to the students. Explain they come from interviews with students who, like them, were preparing to spend a period abroad (these students were going for nine months).

Do they agree with these opinions? Are these their worries too? Is there anything else they worry about or are any of these aspects something they don't worry about at all?

Does the video they have just watched illustrate these worries can actually be true?

**** One possible thought to share, here: We hear returning students talking about "the best year of their life", which is somehow illustrated by the video produced precisely by a returning student. But is studying abroad consistent fun and happiness throughout the semester/year? We don't recommend you answer these question yourself. Leave it open to them to reflect on through the content of this workshop.**

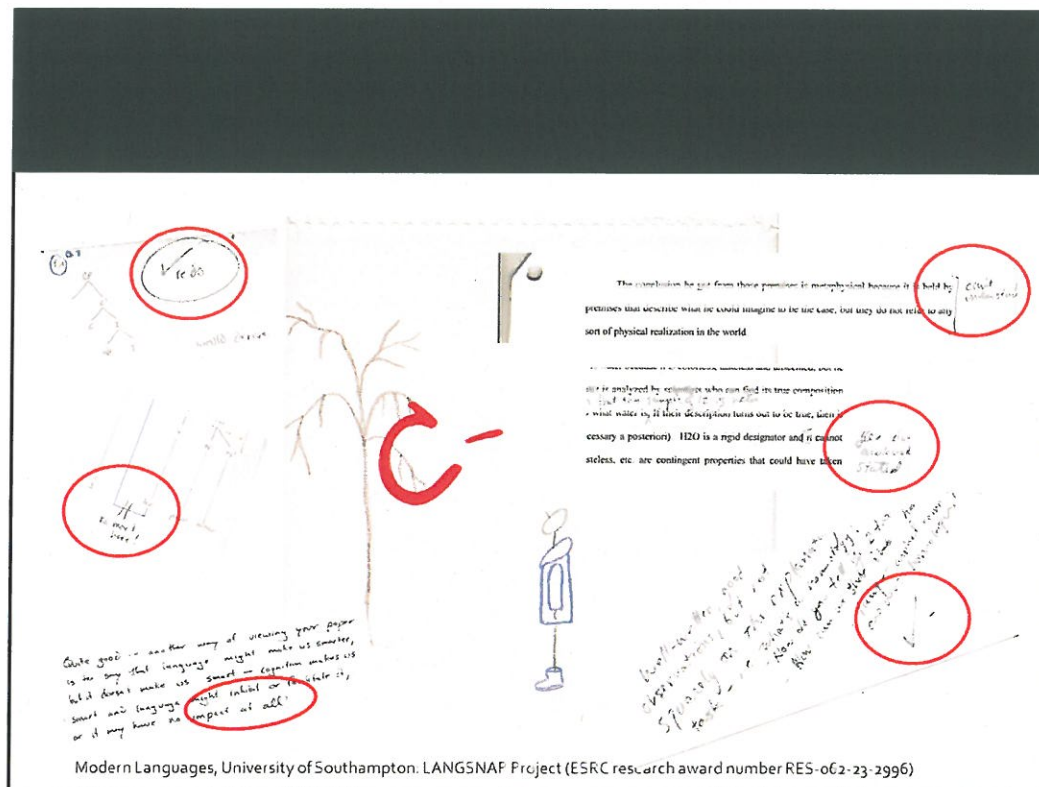
NOTE: These quotes have been translated from their original French or Spanish. To read the full interviews, please visit: <https://langsnap.soton.ac.uk/> (The code provided identifies the interview where the extract was taken).



Show this picture to students: where do they think it came from?

Explain to them this comes from the personal journal of an international student, during her first weeks after arriving to her new location (USA). Is this the same impression as the video has given us of life as a student abroad?

The next slide shows some of the possible reasons behind her feelings; despite having travelled with the same ideas of 'fun', 'adventure' and the intention to 'explore the world', the first few weeks proved challenging. But instead of explaining this to students, ask them if they can think of the reasons why this particular student felt rather nostalgic/disappointed once she arrived in her location (the next slide shows some first thoughts they may have foreseen or that can explain to them what happened if they haven't deducted it already).



These scans come from academic work belonging the same student, who at her home university, was normally placed in the top of her class. But abroad, her average mark was C- (for the first half of her period of residency). Can they think what went so wrong in her academic level?

Why did that happen?



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Time to discuss:

Can this result/discrepancy be explained by any of the 'worries' discussed previously?

Give students a few minutes to figure out why they think this student struggled a bit to improve her marks and to derive a few first conclusions from this first part of the workshop.

Read what some British students studying abroad have reported:

"For the 17th and 18th Century Literature [course] it is a bit difficult. The tutor makes reference to Ronsard, and I have never studied Ronsard, I don't know who he is... and the tutor makes jokes [...] he says "Oh, Erasmus students never know anything" (112bLRR)

"One subject I find very difficult is syntax, but that's because I don't have enough knowledge of English grammar, so it's difficult to apply knowledge I don't have, and everyone else has a grammatical foundation I don't have... so it's a bit difficult" (152dNTV)

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These quotes come from the same group of students interviewed before, but these particular contributions come from interviews carried out when they were half way through their period of residency.

What we see here, is examples that illustrate that the **knowledge** that students are expected to have may be different from what they actually know. For example, British students would not necessarily study who Ronsard is at school or A-levels, equally, they do not study (English) grammar in the same depth that students do in other countries. University tutors take for granted that university students know certain things, those they know are taught in their own country's national curriculum!

The following slides develop this idea further.

NOTE: These quotes have been translated from their original French or Spanish. To read the full interviews, please visit: <https://langsnap.soton.ac.uk/> (The code provided identifies the interview where the extract was taken).

Be aware of your educational background:

■ Structure of the English education system:

Child's Age on 31st Aug	School Year Group	Curriculum Stage	School Type	
3	Nursery	Foundation Stage	Nursery school	
4	Reception		Key Stage 1	Infant school
5	Year 1			
6	Year 2			
7	Year 3			
8	Year 4	Key Stage 2	Junior school	
9	Year 5			
10	Year 6			
11	Year 7	Key Stage 3	Secondary school	Secondary school
12	Year 8			
13	Year 9			
14	Year 10	Key Stage 4 / GCSE		
15	Year 11			
16	Year 12 (Lower Sixth Form)	Sixth form / A' level	Sixth form college	
	Year 13 (Upper Sixth Form)			

In this slide you could emphasize a salient difference, such as the fact that students in the UK start their specialization at 16, choosing a limited number of A-Levels to focus on (although this table shows only the English system, the specialization occurs also in N.I., Scotland and Wales).

Compare (Bachillerato, Spain):

Bachillerato: curso 1º

Bachillerato 1º	TRONCALES (4+2)		ESPECÍFICAS (mínimo 3 - máximo 4)	DE LIBRE CONFIGURACIÓN AUTONÓMICA (nº indeterminado de asignaturas)
	TRONCALES GENERALES (4)	TRONCALES DE OPCIÓN (2)		
CIENCIAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lengua Castellana y Literatura I Primera Lengua Extranjera I Filosofía Matemáticas I 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Física y Química Biología y Geología Dibujo Técnico I 	Siempre: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educación Física 	Siempre: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lengua Cooficial y Literatura I (si la hubiere) Otras: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A determinar Una materia del bloque de específicas no cursada Ampliación de materia del bloque de troncales o específicas
HUMANIDADES Y CIENCIAS SOCIALES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lengua Castellana y Literatura I Primera Lengua Extranjera I Filosofía 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historia del Mundo Contemporáneo Griego I Economía Literatura Universal 	Mínimo 2 máximo 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Segunda Lengua Extranjera I Cultura Científica Tecnología Industrial I Tecnologías de la Información y la Comunicación I Dibujo Técnico I (si no escogida en troncales de opción) Dibujo Artístico I Volumen Anatomía Aplicada Análisis Musical I Lenguaje y Práctica Musical Una materia del bloque de troncales no cursada 	
ARTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lengua Castellana y Literatura I Primera Lengua Extranjera I Filosofía Fundamentos del arte I 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historia del Mundo Contemporáneo Literatura Universal Cultura Audiovisual I 	Religión	

Mínimo 50 % del horario

Source: Gobierno de España. 2013. *Reforma del sistema educativo español: novedades y calendario de implantación*.

In contrast, students in Spain, for example, do not specialize in a selected number of subjects, they cover a whole range of disciplines, even if these seem irrelevant for what they want to do in the future or at university. Here we see that students who do Sciences in Spain (at 16), MUST do Literature and Philosophy, which would be optional A-levels for UK students.

In sum, this table shows how European systems of education can differ in content and structure.

But, what does that mean for the student going abroad?

**This is a reform to be implemented in 2014-15. for the full details, please refer to: Gobierno de España. 2013. *Reforma del sistema educativo español: novedades y calendario de implantación*. Edition 10-12-13. Accessed 09/06/2013. Available from: <http://www.mecd.gob.es/dms/mecd/servicios-al-ciudadano-mecd/participacion-publica/lomce/20131210-boe/novedades-reforma-educaci-n-10-12-13/novedades%20reforma%20educaci%C3%B3n%2010-12-13.pdf>.

What happens abroad? Here the experience of a student doing a whole degree abroad:

It's not just the language that took some getting used to: local students here have had a very different experience of secondary education from the one I had in England.

The Belgian students at my university had 32 hours of lessons during their last years of secondary schools; the measly 16 hours I had paled in comparison. A mandatory range of subjects such as modern and classical languages, along with philosophy, are commonplace in Belgian secondary schools.

The difference continues at university level: in my first year I'm going to sit a much wider range of subjects than my friends studying chemistry at English universities. Lessons that I didn't expect to see again or had never seen before have suddenly become part of my university life, for example geology, philosophy and a large physics module.

Source: "What I've learned from studying abroad" *The Guardian* (2014)

Read or allow students to read the following quotes from a newspaper article (The Guardian).

What this student is describing here, is precisely the impact that coming from a different education background could have in one's experience as an international student.

The full article can be accessed in: Spijkers-Shaw, S. 2014. What I've learned from studying abroad *The Guardian*. 6th May, 2014. Accessed 09/09/2015. Available from:

<http://www.theguardian.com/education/mortarboard/2014/may/06/students-study-abroad-tips>

Other experiences described by British students residing abroad:

[1] "It's difficult to participate in our lessons because, for example, my History course, is just the tutor [speaking], he speaks for two hours and there's no student participation, it's just him doing all the talking" (121bKMCM)

[2] "It was very disorganized [...] Sometimes I went to class and there was no teacher and I couldn't understand why..." (168bNTV)

[3] "It's just life at university, it's like being at school, it's very different to our university in England; here there are a lot of students in one class, for example, 40 students, but in my [home] university, there are no more than ten students in my French class!" (121cKMCM)

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****Note that the word "EXPERIENCES" has been used for the title, as opposed to "issues/problems", because it is important for students to start transforming these "unexpected experiences" into opportunities to grow, understand and to become more open-minded intercultural beings.**

[1] Opportunities for students to contribute to the class

[2] Communication with students and organization of the university in general.

[3] Class-size

NOTE: These quotes have been translated from their original French or Spanish. To read the full interviews, please visit: <https://langsnap.soton.ac.uk/> (The code provided identifies the interview where the extract was taken).

Other experiences reported by British students residing abroad:

[4] "Tutors here are very different. They have a very different attitude; you can't say anything to them, you need to agree with them, and if you don't agree with them, you can be in trouble..." (163cNTV)

[6] "...there aren't lots of slides, so you need to write everything down, and that can be a bit difficult..." (152cNTV)

[5] "In my German class, we have to work really hard, we have to write lots of things, study grammar, because we normally don't speak in class, it's not a class based on speaking like in England; here the tutor prepares the exercises and we do them, and if we have questions, we ask..." (165cNTV)

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- [4] A different teaching-style/ Teacher-student relationship
[5] and [6] Learning styles/strategies.

NOTE: These quotes have been translated from their original French or Spanish. To read the full interviews, please visit: <https://langsnap.soton.ac.uk/> (The code provided identifies the interview where the extract was taken).

Why did that happen?

- Because we have all gone through different educational systems, which means, we know different things and have learned them in very different ways.



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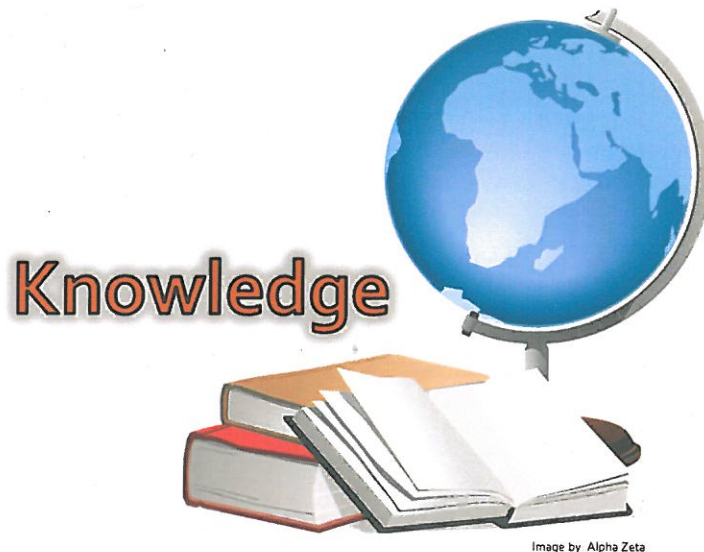
The following slides are designed to simply be clicked on and to present a few conclusions on top.

Why did that happen?

- Because we have all gone through different educational systems, which means, we know different things and have learned them in very different ways.
- Therefore, our understanding of what counts as 'knowledge' and our way to provide evidence of the fact that we possess it, is not the same across countries.

Modern Languages, University of Southampton: LANGSNAP Project (ESRC research award number RES-062-23-2996)

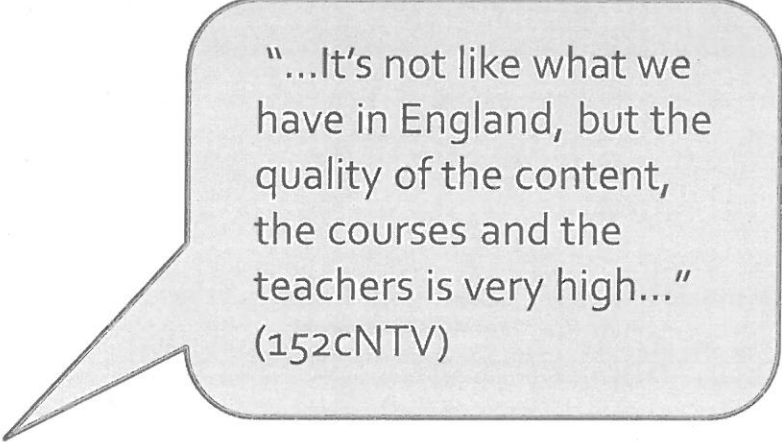
What does your own culture understand by 'knowledge'?



This “pause” slide is a good opportunity to mention a few things:

- 1) Attempts have been made to rank all the education systems in the world, based on their academic achievement or performance (see for example, the OECD PISA Results obtained in 2012), but some are sceptical about the possibility to compare educational systems across the globe accurately and fairly, since there are so many variables to take into account (See for example, That & Must, 2012). Student mobility offers the opportunity to EXPERIENCE different systems, but not necessary better or worse.
- 1) It's difficult to generalize what “knowledge means” for a WHOLE country!! And we must not forget countries are not monocultural, either... So there might be an idea of 'knowledge' and 'education' that is rather widespread, but then a particular tutor at university might have a different nationality to that of the locals... so the kaleidoscope gets complicated.

BUT as one participant concluded:



"...It's not like what we have in England, but the quality of the content, the courses and the teachers is very high..."
(152cNTV)

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This is just an opportunity to sum up, that none is a 'better education system', but simply, **different.**

Now, observe this other side of the experience:

The conclusion he got from these premises is metaphysical because it is held by premises that describe what he would imagine to be the case, but they do not refer to any sort of physical realization in the world.

... and a statement of an abstract or metaphysical truth is not a statement that can be analyzed by scientists who can find its true composition ... and the ... of ... water is, if their descriptions have not to be true, then it is necessary a posteriori. H₂O is a rigid designator and it cannot ... stess, etc. are contingent properties that could have taken

Gibbs
Gibbs

Gibbs
Gibbs

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- Difficulties also arise because, you are studying difficult subjects in a language other than your own!

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Some Linguistic Challenges



LISTENING

--

SPEAKING

--

READING

--

WRITING

--

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Before you provide them with the list, give them time to make their own lists of the linguistic challenges they may face in this respect. Some 3 per box (?)

Some Linguistic Challenges

LISTENING

- Understanding lectures/lecturers
- Following instructions
- Following informal conversations
- Understanding regional accents (or accents of other learners of the language you are trying to improve!)

SPEAKING

- Giving class presentations
- Participating in social events
- Asking for instructions/explaining a problem you have.
- Using idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms

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****All of these examples emerged from our Langsnap qualitative data (students interviewed during their study abroad).**

Is their list similar? Different?

Are any of the elements they have in their list specific to life at university or are they transferable to other aspects of life?

WRITING

- Taking lecture notes
- Writing essays and reports (style, register, conventions; think 'knowledge')
- Using abbreviated language for texts, and social media.

READING

- Comprehending difficult academic content
- Reading speed and dealing with fatigue
- Understanding abbreviated language.

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Brainstorm some strategies:



Before departure



Once abroad



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Allow students to come up with 2-3 strategies they think would work to deal/minimize the impact of these challenges. Here a few examples:

Before departure:

Watch lectures in the language (available in YouTube)

Build up glossaries of your subject-specific discipline by looking for articles in the equivalent to "Google Scholar" in the relevant languages.

Once abroad:

Ask permission to record the lectures.

Make sure you read about the topic to be covered in class before you go.

The vast majority of the instructions you are given abroad test more than your language skills...

"It was very hard for me to choose my modules, the staff at the Student, and International offices were not very helpful..."
(164bNTV)

"It thought it would be better organized... but the library, the administration, the organization is sometimes chaotic. It's not like in England..."
(108bKMCM)

"I'm now used to the system here because it's a bit different from England... the administration, mainly... I had a lot of difficulties finding my lectures because here you have to see a secretary from each department... and build up your own timetable, but if I were in my home university [in England] they do everything for you, it's all prepared and ready for you" (108bKMCM)

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Show these quotes to the students, they illustrate some common frustrations students report having felt regarding the administration of their university. Explain that this can also happen OUTSIDE the university, for example, when they open a bank account or try to sort out their visiting student status to the Police, which is required in some countries.

NOTE: These quotes have been translated from their original French or Spanish. To read the full interviews, please visit: <https://langsnap.soton.ac.uk/> (The code provided identifies the interview where the extract was taken).




Photo credit: Felipe Ibazeta

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This pause allows you to reassure students and say **confusion is NORMAL**, if not a necessary mental state when one starts a life abroad. But there are things they can do to reduce the impact of this shock, for example, thinking of strategies they can put in practice such as keeping a reflective journal. It is advisable that they make contact with other students who have travelled to the same country or area. Alternatively, they could visit the website thethirdyearabroad.com for very every-day practical advice.

Understand your emotions:



Explain to students that their emotions will change and develop throughout the year, and that these feelings are not linear; they will sometimes identify feeling they thought they had left behind. But it is all ok. The important thing is to sit back and reflect on the changes they identify on themselves. Writing a blog or journal helps with this process.

Be prepared, but don't be scared!

"I found some courses that are really interesting, for example Sociology and the Environment. I'm very interested in environmental issues. And I also took some courses on the economies and politics of the developing countries... they were very informative for me ... I learned a lot" (108bKMcM)

"I love my new classes, especially semantics. I have been able to look for many more subjects and to go in much more depth than I ever did in [my home] university". (152cNTV)

"I'm much more comfortable with my Spanish now, also because, now, especially after my lectures, I think in Spanish!" (165cNTV)

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Extracts from interviews conducted towards the end of the period of residency.

NOTE: These quotes have been translated from their original French or Spanish. To read the full interviews, please visit: <https://langsnap.soton.ac.uk/> (The code provided identifies the interview where the extract was taken).

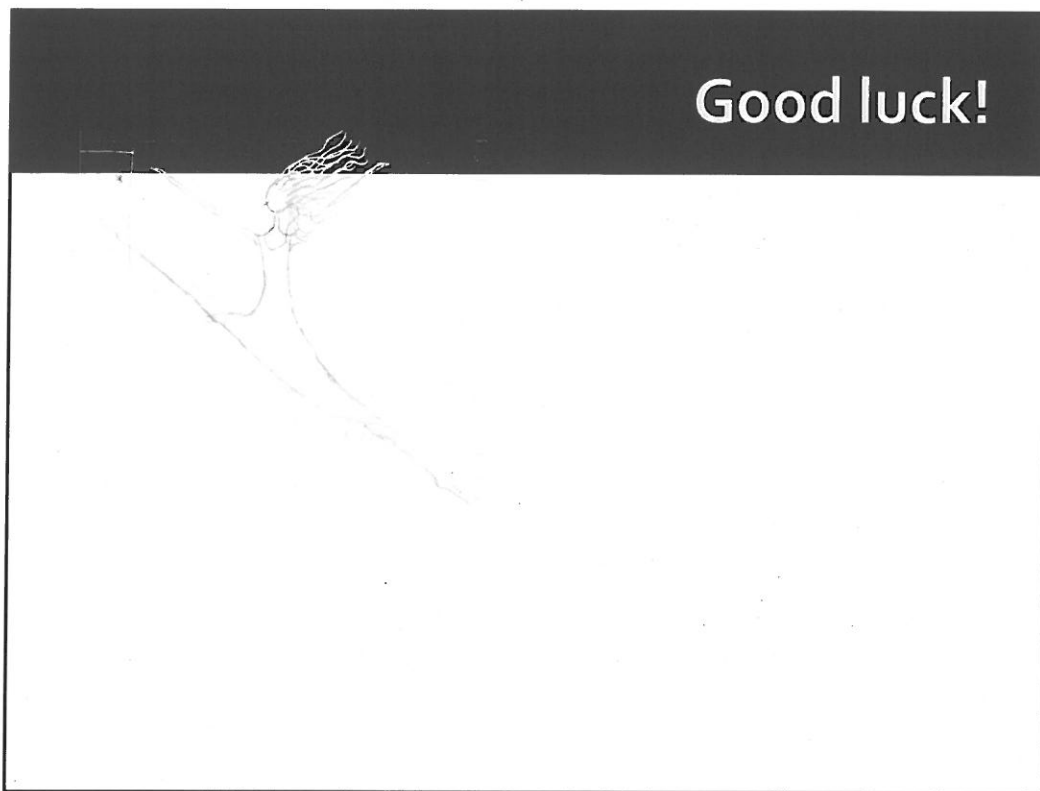
Time is key...

Ryle does not provide a solution for the body/mind problem. He makes the problem disappear. Once he has detected the language games involved, in other words, after he has highlighted the category mistakes that the traditional body/mind dichotomy has been making, he dissolves the problem. Wittgenstein would have thought Ryle did well by not providing a solution, because philosophers for Wittgenstein are not supposed to provide solutions, but to detect confusions of language that are giving origin to these problems. When these confusions are well clarified, the problem is not a philosophical issue anymore, whatever is left there is not a matter for Philosophy, but for another kind of empirical discipline that can solve issues not related to pure language confusions.

This is a small piece of paper, I don't want to write it. (A)

P.S. Schopenhauer says that the mind is a higher dimension.

Doodles and positive notes, from the same 'case student' mentioned at the start of the presentation.



Please refer to the tutor's notes accompanying this presentation to find a few follow-up activities students could develop on their own time as homework. They could also be used as preparation for a follow-up seminar to this workshop.

We hope you found this guide useful.

Dr Patricia Romero de Mills and the Langsnap team.

Credits and Bibliography

THE LANGSNAP TEAM (University of Southampton):

- Prof. Rosamond Mitchell
- Dr L. Patricia Romero de Mills
- Laurence Richard
- Dr Nicole Tracy-Ventura
- Kevin McManus

Quotes from interviews to students extracted from:

Mitchell, et al Languages and Social Networks Abroad Project (LANGSNAP). 2013 Accessed 09 September, 2015 Available from: <https://langsnap.soton.ac.uk/>

IMPORTANT: This guide was designed by Dr L. Patricia Romero de Mills, Lansnap co-investigator. It was designed with the intention to be shared with all educators, administrators or other professionals who require to prepare undergraduates for study abroad. The material's can be modified and adapted to particular needs free of charge, but the intellectual property of this initiative must be acknowledged by citing the original guide, and the source where it can be found. All the credits to the Langsnap team and project must be clearly displayed on any modified versions you create. No modified versions of this work should be shared, professionals interested in modifying this original version must download it from:

For any questions please contact Dr L. Patricia Romero de Mills at: P.romero@soton.ac.uk

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- Image on Slide 22, "Confused Felipe" by Felipe Ibazeta. CC-BY-SA-3.0. Via https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Confused_Felipe.jpg

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Common beliefs students express before departure.
But how true are they?



"I will be able to go out more often, I will study in the morning and relax in the evening, because here in my home university it seems we are working all the



"I think, it will be difficult to understand my lessons at university, but as the year progresses, I'll be ok" (168aEDR)



"I don't think [my life] will be too different because I will be a student at a university [...] it will be the same life, but in another language" (172aNTV)

<http://langsnap.soton.ac.uk/>

Being an International student

Most students who embark in the adventure of studying abroad know there will observe cultural and/or linguistic differences between their host country and their own. But what are some of the challenges that an international student can face in the classrooms and lecture theatres at their host universities?



INTERVIEW AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT



AIM: To provide students with an opportunity to reflect on the possible challenges they may face as international students residing abroad.

PROCEDURE: Ask students to think of 5-7 questions they would like to ask to an international student. If you are using this activity as a follow up to the 'Being an International Student' Lecture, they can find some inspiration on the topics discussed there, or you can provide examples yourself: *What differences do they observe in the organization of the courses? How are they dealing with the linguistic difference?* Etc.

Get students to contact some international students doing courses at your university. This can be done through the Erasmus groups in your university, or via the International Office or through dedicated Facebook groups organized by and for visiting students.

Ask students to arrange a meeting with one or two international students and interview them using the questions they prepared. Remind them to record their interview or to take reliable notes.

FOLLOW UP: Students can either present their findings in class and/or write a short report of their findings, plus a reflective paragraph of what they have learned from this exchange.

ORGANIZE A TEA PARTY TO MEET RETURNING STUDENTS



AIM: To provide students with an opportunity to meet returning students and listen to their experiences.

PROCEDURE: Contact or ask students to get in touch with as many returning students as they can. Ideally, a representative from each of the countries the future sojourns concerned will live in, should be represented. Book or get students to book a suitable room to share an informal meeting with the returning students. They should ask any questions they think would help, but encourage them to ask specific questions about the practicalities of being a student and about the organization of the university they visited. Can they gather 3-5 tips to share with their class? Ask them to think about a possible strategy they would use to minimize the negative impact such challenges could have on their perception of their life abroad.

FOLLOW UP: Get students to share the stories they heard and the conclusions they derive from this gathering. If they managed to learn the how-to for a specific task (eg. Choosing your modules) encourage them to create an infographic describing the processes step-by-step.

PRACTICE YOUR LECTURE LISTENING SKILLS



AIM: To provide students with some practice listening to lectures in a foreign language.

PROCEDURE: Ask students to look for examples of university lectures available on YouTube. (You could identify some good videos beforehand as well. One 15 to 20 minute session could work well, but a longer class could also test their ability to focus for a length of time that might be more similar to what they will get once they are abroad).

Ask students to choose a class to watch, (without stopping or pausing!) and to take notes about the content at the same time they listen to it. If they can't understand it all, they can then take notes about their feelings or thoughts instead: What do they think happened? Was it the accent of the lecturer? The ambient noise? The specialized vocabulary? How does this mini-exposure made them feel? Ask them to write it all down.

FOLLOW UP: In class, ask students to share their experience with the other students (or own their own time). What strategies can they put in place to reduce the impact of this challenge?