**IEREST**

**Intercultural Education Resources for Erasmus Students and their Teachers**

**Module 3 - Activity 1**

**Bringing interculturality back home**

1. **Introduction**

Data from a questionnaire administered by IEREST to Erasmus students indicated that most respondents would have liked to be given the opportunity to reflect on their experiences abroad and share these with others upon return. Sometimes they also linked this with the desire to help future mobile students. This activity responds to these needs. Here, Erasmus students are asked to consider how they translate their experience (intercultural or otherwise) into self-representation, and how they can help future Erasmus exchange students to reflect on their pre-departure expectations.

The estimated overall time for completing the activity is 8-10 hours.

1. **Learning objectives and outcomes**

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|  | **Learning objectives**  This activity aims to enable students to: | **Learning outcomes**  Learners will be able to: |
| **2** | Understand and appreciate how language and interculturality are empowering resources for engagement with others. | Use their language and intercultural skills as empowering resources for engagement with others. |
| **3** | Become aware that interlocutors are active producers and receivers of meanings (e.g., through the narratives they tell). | Monitor how they convey their meanings to others, taking into account that interlocutors are active producers of meanings. |
| **4** | Develop the ability to name, critically question and explain to others their Erasmus intercultural experiences. | Name, critically question and explore ways to explain to others their Erasmus intercultural experiences. |
| **5** | Develop an awareness of the importance of monitoring their own language to avoid perpetuating culturalist discourses. | Use their own language in a way that avoids perpetuating culturalist discourses. |
| **6** | Develop a sense of responsibility towards future mobile students as recipients of one’s narratives. | Act upon a sense of responsibility towards future mobile students and reflect on their own Erasmus stories accordingly. |

1. **Overview and description of tasks**

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| ***Task 1.***  **Thinking in terms of small cultures** | * Show two excerpts from *L’Auberge Espagnole* (Klapisch, 2002). * Introduce the concepts of ‘stereotypes’, ‘prejudice’, ‘essentialism vs. non-essentialism’, and ‘small vs. large cultures’. * Show a third excerpt of the film and ask the students to answer the questions provided. |
| ***Task 2.***  **Looking back** | * Introduce the *PechaKucha* presentation format. * Ask each student to prepare a *PechaKucha* presentation, focusing exclusively on the small cultures they belonged to (a shared flat, a sports team, their class, a group of friends, etc.). |
| ***Task 3.***  **Sharing experiences** | * The students give their presentations in groups or in plenary, and reflect on a set of suggested issues. |
| ***Task 4.***  **Preparing future Erasmus students** | * Organise a workshop for future Erasmus students, which will be run by your students. * Divide the students into groups of 3 and ask them to merge and revise their *PechaKuchas* in light of the reflections following the previous task, in order to present it during the workshop. * The students give their presentations and manage the workshop. * Invite students to assess other students’ presentations (*Attachment 1*). |

***Task 1. Thinking in terms of small cultures***

Time required: 2 hours

*Task overview: This task takes as a starting point the film “L’Auberge Espagnole” (Klapisch, 2002), and specifically the scene when William, the English student Wendy’s brother, arrives in Barcelona. The purpose is to introduce the students to the concept of ‘small cultures’ (as opposed to large, national cultures), and how outsiders can destabilise these when they enter an already-formed social group. The task then addresses the difficulties of returning home after a period of study abroad, and in particular, the problem of how to share experiences.*

1. For this task, you will need the film *L’Auberge Espagnole* (Klapisch, 2002). Show the short excerpts from min 1.06.15 to 1.08.38 and from min 1.14.21 to 1.16.50. As the students watch, ask them to consider the following questions:

* What happens when William arrives? What is he trying to do? How do the others react?
* Why and how does William generalise about Spanish people? And about the Germans? What reactions does he get from the others?
* Reflecting on your own experience abroad, in what ways, and to what extent, did you encounter (dis)similar experiences to these characters?
* How is language used throughout the dialogues (ideally, you should watch the clips in the original languages)? When and why do the different characters switch languages?

1. Introduce the students to the theoretical concepts of ‘essentialism vs. non essentialism’ (*Slides 10-17*), stereotypes (*Slides 18-21*), prejudice (*Slides 22-26*), and ‘small vs. large cultures’ (*Slides 76-80*). When introducing these last concepts, guide students to notice the small culture of the Spanish apartment which was established before William’s arrival, in terms of stated and unstated rules, shared values, language norms, etc. How were these stated and unstated rules established? How easy or difficult do they think it would be to learn these rules, and what would they have to do to “fit in”.
2. Students now watch the section of the film where the main character, Xavier, is about to leave Spain and returns home (from min 1.40.29 to 1.49.11). Here you could introduce the concept of ‘reverse culture shock’ (see *Slides 81-84*). Then ask them to discuss the following questions in small groups:

* Why can Xavier not bring himself to finish packing?
* Why is he so quiet? What kind of information is he incapable of sharing with his mother?
* His mother comments: “You have nothing to say after a year abroad”. What do you think is going on in his mind?
* How does he define his new identity?
* Have you had a similar experience? Were you able to explain your development to your friends and family upon your return? Which parts of your experience were difficult to make others understand? Why?
* Why do returnees feel frustrated about this, and why does it matter?

***Task 2. Looking back***

Time required: 2 hours

*Task overview:* In this task, students are asked to prepare a *PechaKucha* presentation of their Erasmus experiences, focusing exclusively on the small cultures they feel they were part of.

1. Introduce the *PechaKucha* presentation format, consisting of 20 slides which advance automatically, each shown for 20 seconds (see [http://www.Pechakucha.org/](http://www.pechakucha.org/) for further details). A *PechaKucha* can be created by collecting different materials (pictures, images, personal notes, quotations, etc.). To help students understand what a *PechaKucha* is, you can show them some examples, such as:

<http://www.pechakucha.org/presentations/conquering-mt-fuji>

<http://www.pechakucha.org/channels/global-cities-week/presentations/tokyo-photo-walk>

<http://www.pechakucha.org/presentations/the-power-of-yes>

1. Thinking back to Xavier’s difficulties in telling his mother about his experiences, ask each student to prepare a *PechaKucha* presentation of their own experiences abroad based on 20 images they choose. Ask them to focus exclusively on the small cultures they belonged to (a shared flat, a sports team, their class, a group of friends, etc.). Tell the students they will have to give their presentations to the rest of the class. This task can be done in class or out of class if time is short. If done in class, you need to remind the students beforehand to bring the images they will need for their presentations.

***Task 3. Sharing experiences***

Time required: 2-3 hours

*Task overview: In this task, the students present their PechaKuchas in class. At the end, they discuss in plenary to what extent they managed to convey their experiences to others.*

1. In turn, students present their *PechaKuchas*. With a large class, divide the students into small groups, make sure that each group has at least a laptop or other electronic devices, and ask them to present their *PechaKuchas* to the other members.
2. After the presentations, ask students to discuss the following points in their groups or in plenary:

* How difficult was it to choose the 20 images to include in your presentation?
* Did you succeed in translating your experiences and emotions into words?
* Did you manage to communicate what you wanted? Why? Why not?
* Did you manage to explain the complexities of the small cultures you described?
* Do you feel that speaking about small cultures helped you to avoid stereotyping others, particularly in terms of their national cultures?
* Do you feel the other students managed to communicate what they wanted? Why? Why not?

***Task 4. Preparing future Erasmus students***

Time required: 2-3 hours

*Task overview: In this task,* *students prepare a new PechaKucha presentation in groups of 3 and present it during a pre-departure workshop for future Erasmus students, organized within the university.*

1. Divide students into groups of 3. Ask them to merge and revise their *PechaKuchas* (choosing again only 20 images) in light of the reflections following the previous task. The aim of this final task is to move away from the individual experience and concentrate on how to present the small cultures in which they may have taken part during their Erasmus sojourn. Make clear to students that they will be asked to give their presentations during a dedicated workshop to people who have not yet experienced study abroad.
2. Organise the workshop.
3. During the workshop, encourage the students to take the responsibility of the group management. They could begin by asking the participants how they imagine their Erasmus experience, and generally about expectations regarding their study abroad. Then, they can present their *PechaKuchas*. Finally they lead a discussion within the group, introducing the relevant theory, and encouraging participation with the following questions:

* Have these *PechaKucha* presentations encouraged you to think about your future Erasmus experience in a different way?
* How familiar were you with the concept of ‘small cultures’ before these presentations?
* What steps will you take to be part of one or more small cultures during your experience abroad?

1. Back in class, invite students to assess their peers’ presentations using *Attachment 1* together with a copy of the expected outcomes of the activity.
2. **Assessment methods**

* Peer assessment, asking groups to comment on each other’s presentations using *Attachment 1* (*Task 4*).
* Teacher assessment of groups’ lessons, using the same form used for peer assessment (*Attachment 1*).

1. **Suggested reading**

* Holliday, A. (1999). Small cultures. *Applied Linguistics, 20*(2), 237-264.

1. **Materials and resources**

* Computers, access to the Internet, a projector.
* Klapisch’s 2002 film *L’Auberge Espagnole*.
* The IEREST slides.
* One IEREST attachment:
* *Attachment 1*: Grid for peer- and teacher-assessment of group presentations (*Task 4*).

**Attachment 1 (*Task 4. Preparing future Erasmus students*)**

Using the following grid, provide peer feedback and assessment to each group on their presentations. The grid is inspired by the “plus/delta method” (Helminski & Koberna, 1995). It invites you to identify three positive points in the group presentation, and three areas that could be changed/improved according to how well the learning outcomes were met. Use a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is ‘weak’ and 10 is ‘strong’.

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| **Title of presentation:**  **Names of group/participants:** | |
| **Three things that were good about the presentation:** | **Three things that could be improved:** |
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