

Topic:

Exploring multilingualism through the prism of Erasmus students – The experience of dealing with L2/L3 on a daily basis



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Introduction

Every year, approximately 300,000 students, as was stated by the European Commission (2019), decide to embark on an Erasmus+ journey. During this experience, they get to develop personally and, among others, learn to use a language or more than one language different from their mother-tongue on a daily basis. The last one initially comes as a challenge for most of them, however as the time goes on and the more incentives they get, as also suggested by Jung (2020) and Gallucci (2011), the more confident they become in using the language(s).

We were particularly interested in the further examination of the thoughts and feelings of Erasmus students while finding themselves in a different linguistic and cultural environment, as well as the level of their participation/adaptation to it. Do they manage to create a comfortable place in the country they choose to temporarily study at and, if so, is this done within the realm of Erasmus people or the broader local community? Based on Beaven and Spencer-Oatey (2016), they tend to form groups with fellow students of the programme rather than opting to open up to locals. Our field research provides more details about this aspect.

While examining Erasmus students (15, in total) from Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland and Universidad de Sevilla, Spain, the majority of whom were towards the end of their studies, we created two instruments of both quantitative (survey) and qualitative (interview) data collection to gather information for our research. It is important to mention that the survey conducted was completely anonymous.

Research questions

1. How do Erasmus students feel about having to use a language other than their mother tongue/L2-L3 at university?

Living in a foreign country where your mother tongue is not spoken can be challenging. It requires lots of effort and hard work to shift to the new environment. Thus, it is worth researching whether this change proves to be difficult for Erasmus

students, especially those who study at universities where they have to rely on their second or third language, or sometimes even have to begin learning yet another language.

2. Is the environment supportive towards the development of the languages the students use besides their mother tongue?

Getting used to a new language setting is challenging not only because of the language skills it requires, but also because of the mental difficulties that may co-occur. Such a demanding task often relies on the motivation of the student living abroad, along with their attitude. However, both motivation and attitude can be modified by external factors, one of them being the environment, more precisely, the community. Receiving positive feedback and support from surrounding people in the university setting can reinforce positive attitudes and improve motivation, while negative feedback and a lack of support can do the exact opposite. Thus, it is essential to discover what the experiences of Erasmus students in this area are.

3. How does their identity develop through the use of different languages?

Languages can shape cultural and social identities, personalities and feelings of individuals. In a setting where a student has to rely on using various languages, more often than not their second or third languages, the influence might be very noticeable. It is worth finding out exactly what effect it has, and how the identity of an Erasmus student can shape and develop when studying abroad.

4. Do they participate in local culture? How is their interaction with locals language-wise?

The Erasmus experience encourages students to participate in the local culture, get to know the traditions, the people, and their way of living. However, it might be difficult to become a part of the local culture due to the language barrier. Having in mind that getting familiar with the culture of the chosen country of residence is a part of the experience, it is essential to learn about how Erasmus students manage to adapt to this new setting. Moreover, it is crucial for such research to include the very linguistic aspect of these experiences.

Methodology

To study the previously explained questions, it seemed necessary to have a first-hand insight from Erasmus students. This was the most effective way of data collection that we came up with, which we then operationalized into two more specific methods. The most important part of our study were interviews with Erasmus students. We interviewed 4 Erasmus students, studying at various universities outside their home countries. The interviews were conducted via online video calls, and were all conducted in English. Three out of four interviews were not recorded, thus the data was written down simultaneously, in the form of notes and then transcribed. One of them was recorded. Moreover, we also decided to conduct an online survey, containing questions very similar to those used in the interviews, to gather additional data.

Findings/Discussion (survey)

We obtained survey answers from 11 Erasmus students, 10 of which were female, and 1 male. All of the students who participated in the survey answered that it was their very first Erasmus experience. Interestingly, all of them answered that having to use a language different than their mother tongue affected them positively, which shows that development of language skills, along with the social and cultural aspects it is connected with, is in fact perceived as a positive influence.

1. Do you feel that having to use a language different than your mother tongue during your Erasmus experience affects(ed) you positively as a person?

11 odpowiedzi

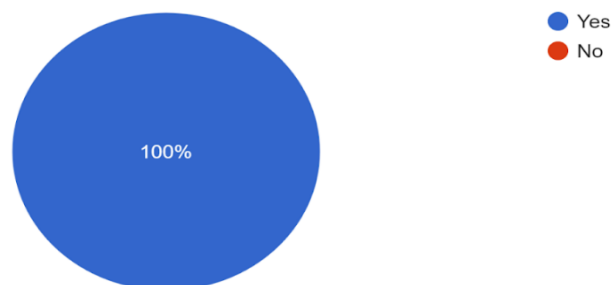


Figure 1. Results from RQ1.

This positive influence is further reinforced by the statements of students who answered that they had an opportunity to develop all the languages they speak. When it comes to the difficulties with shifting to a new language setting, 7 out of 11 students answered that it was in fact challenging at first, while the other 4 stated that it was not exceptionally difficult. Moreover, most of the students do believe that living in this new setting changed their identity.

4. Do you feel like your identity is different now than it was before the Erasmus experience?

11 odpowiedzi

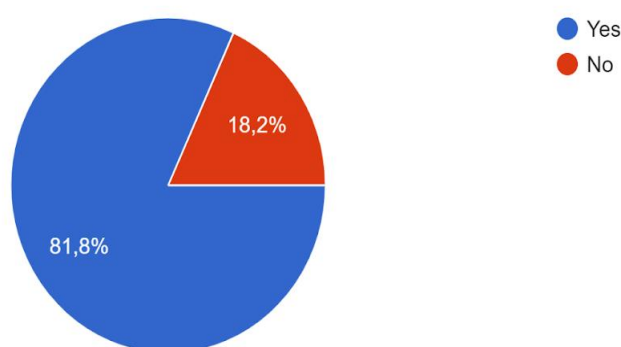


Figure 2. Results from RQ4.

In terms of contact and participation in the local culture, the opinions were rather diverse. Not all of the students had positive interactions with the locals, some even answered that they did not manage to participate in the local culture at all. Still, 7 of them stated that they did communicate with the locals in their language. Those who managed to participate in the local culture mentioned a few examples of activities they participated in, and the most frequent answers included going to restaurants, bars, and cultural events. What might be one of the most important findings is that all of the students stated that they would like to take part in the Erasmus programme again. This shows that all the experiences that are connected with living and studying abroad are in fact rather positive and might prove to be a great development in terms of language, but also cultural awareness and students' own identities.

Findings/Discussion (interviews)

Based on the data collected through the four interviews conducted, we came up with rich insights on the thoughts and feelings of various Erasmus students, which all speak (or used to speak while in Erasmus) different languages than their mother-tongues.

To begin with, there were four interviewees, three from Germany and 1 from Spain. The Germans used to study in Seville, Spain during their one-semester Erasmus program, whereas the Spanish one was still studying in Poznan, Poland at the time of the interview and had almost completed a whole academic year there. It is important to mention, at this point, that the ones that used to study in Spain had university classes exclusively in Spanish (L3) and in everyday life they mostly had to use the regional language, therefore the local language and the language of instruction in the university were the same. On the other hand, our Spanish participant mentioned that she has classes in English (L2) and that she did not speak Polish up to that day, so here the local language and the language of instruction in the university were different. In all of these cases, however, we are dealing with Erasmus students who were using language(s) other than their mother-tongues, as mentioned in the first paragraph of this chapter.

Starting with the first set of questions, which was: *“How did it feel initially when you arrived at your Erasmus city and were put into this environment where you couldn't communicate in your mother tongue? Did that change over time?”*. Three out of four answered that their initial feeling was weird and overwhelming at times, because they could neither understand nor communicate in the local language. There was also a specific reference to university by the German contestants. One contestant said that, due to a former Erasmus program experience in a Spanish-speaking country, they felt relaxed with everyday communication from the start. The Spanish contestant expressed the wish to have had Polish classes prior to her arrival in Poland, as this would have made things easier for her. Regarding the second question, all of the participants stated that they felt more confident in using another language than their mother-tongue as the time progressed, because they had more exposure to them (a statement that is also reinforced by previous literature, for instance Gallucci, S. (2011).

Another question was about *the chance to practice other languages during Erasmus and if so, which ones and in which situations*. The contestants said that they do/did have the chance to speak in their L2s/L3s, etc., with them being English (mostly with friends and for the Spanish participant, also in the university), Spanish (for the German participants, in the university and in everyday life), some Portuguese and French, as well as the Austrian dialect (again, with friends). In the follow-up question “*Did you find it easier to do this at Erasmus than at home?*”, 4 out of 4 answered affirmatively, as they did not use to speak in their L2s or L3s back in their countries. The reason given was that there was no need for them to do so, as their social circle back home did not require the use of a language other than their L1. One participant said that she used to speak in English (L2) both before and after the Erasmus, whereas two other participants referred to little engagement with English in the form of movies, books, etc.

When asked about *the existence of a multilingual approach in their university classes*, 3 out of 4 participants shared that there was no such approach, except for some references to Erasmus students’ countries, but even this was exclusively in the local language. The Spanish participant referred to some elements of other languages, including her mother-tongue in a university class she attended, due to the nature of the subject examined, but apart from that, the rest of the classes were either in English or Polish. She also made a specific reference to her peers who, coming from other academic fields (medicine, for example), had classes exclusively in Polish. In that sense, she felt lucky that she had English ones.

Moving on to the category of questions that linked to language and personality, we asked “*Were you able to express yourself the way you wanted when you talked in English/Spanish when compared to your mother-tongue?*”. The German participants answered that they were not always able to do that in Spanish, with some of the reasons being the need of time to think about the words they wanted to use or the lack of the necessary vocabulary to express their sense of humor, for example. The Spanish participant mentioned that she did not face any particular difficulty while using English, meaning that she did not need to translate her words from Spanish to English every time, it came automatically to her.

Interestingly, when asked “*Do you feel like you were projecting out a different personality when communicating in your other languages? How was that personality different from the one in your mother tongue?*”, all of the German contestants said that they did not notice any change in their personalities, but in their way of behaving or in the way this behavior was perceived by others. For example, one of them was aware that she projected “shyness” because of uncertainty while speaking in Spanish, but she saw that as a change of a characteristic of her behavior and not of her entire personality. Contrastingly, the Spanish participant referred to an obvious change in her personality while speaking in different languages, basing her statement in the distinct characteristics of the Spanish dialect she uses (harsher sounds, more loud talking) and English (was not born as a Spanish-English bilingual, so she came into contact with the neutral form of the language, softer sounds). In this sense, when asked “*Do the personalities “merge” over time or did the difference stay quite pronounced?*”, she said that some elements of Spanish and German she is currently learning are close, so personalities do “merge” sometimes. Based on personal experience while using our mother-tongues and L2 (English), we also support this last idea, as a lot of factors (people who one is using each language with, environment [academic, friendly, etc.], form of language learned, vocabulary known, purpose of communication, confidence or lack of it, etc.) contribute to the shaping of a different personality or at least, help a specific part of the personality come out according to the situation.

Changing the topic a little bit, we asked the interviewees whether *they had participated in local culture and which language(s) they used to communicate then*. All of them responded that they had taken or were at the time of the interview still taking part in local culture in the form of culinary culture, artistic shows (e.g. flamenco, international music festivals), dance, and theatrical classes. The languages used by the German participants were Spanish and English and the one used by the Spanish one was English. In one case, German was mentioned as mostly used while being in a flamenco show. In the case of the Spanish student, during her participation in a local event, another person had to interpret whatever she was saying into Polish for others to understand. Also, in her theatrical classes, Erasmus students were the minority, so the prevalent language was Polish. She mentioned that the main problem was that maybe there were things discussed that were important for the whole group, without her and the rest of the Erasmus participants being able to take part in them.

As for the question “*Were the locals friendly/supportive of your efforts (while using a language different from your mother-tongue)?*”, the answers varied, but were mostly on the positive side. Specifically, 2 out of 4 interviewees responded that as far as the university is concerned, they were treated like anyone else and received support from groups of locals who they were collaborating with for projects. The other two focused on everyday life, with one mentioning that she was complimented at times because of her effort to use Spanish, even though sometimes there was a switch to English, as the others understood that she was a foreigner. The Spanish contestant referred to a positive behavior, especially by youngsters, as older people would stare weirdly at her. That could be due to the fact that young people nowadays are a lot more exposed to different languages and cultures through many sources, especially in English (e.g. social media, travelling, studies, etc.), so they are likely to understand someone speaking the language, even if they cannot fluently respond to them.

Our last question “*Did you establish connections with the locals? Could you say that you became a part of the local community in a way?*” was answered both positively and negatively. In detail, the German participants said that they did not feel a part of the local community, with one of them mentioning that she did establish some connections with the locals, even if those were not that close. The Spanish participant said that she managed to create some friendships and because of her shared university classes with Polish people, she got to meet a lot of locals, as well. What was noted, though, was that the short duration of her stay had not allowed neither her nor the rest of the Erasmus students to get to know locals better, because they had already established their groups of friends. What is more, there is the tendency among international students to hang out mostly with each other. All of these experiences had led her to feel a part of the university community. It seems that the duration of the stay plays an important role in the adjustment of a person to a new country. The more exposure, the more the person gets involved in various aspects of life there.

Cultural shocks were part of the conversation, as well. For example, the fact that Polish people are a bit distant compared to Spaniards was something that was brought up, in the sense that they may be with company on the street and not exchange a word with the other person for a long time. Whereas, this is not the case for a Spanish person, who behaves in a more extroverted way. This topic can actually work as an interesting

“ice-breaker” for people from different countries, something that was visible in the fourth interview.

Conclusions

Our study tried to explore some claims regarding the experience of studying abroad, using Erasmus students as our sample, to provide valuable insight from a direct source. We formulated our research questions with the help of existing literature in the area, and tried to find whether results similar to those in the aforementioned literature could be found. The aim of our study was to see how studying abroad affects language learning, students’ self-perception and their experiences with the local culture and people. The strictly linguistic aspect of our research intertwines with the socio-cultural aspect, and thus the findings have to be considered with a holistic approach.

Our participants, both in the surveys and the interviews, agreed that the experience of studying abroad had a positive influence on their language skills. Not only did they develop their L2 and/or L3 skills, but they also managed to become more familiar with the languages and the use of them, which in turn allowed them to express themselves easier, when compared to the time period prior to the Erasmus experience. This goes in line with what Gallucci (2011) suggested, when she found that greater exposure to the target language, along with a more extensive use of it, can lead to increased confidence and willingness to use that language.

Developing the linguistic aspect further, we found that the participants were given the opportunity to practice all of their non-native languages, regardless of the country in which they studied abroad. This includes the local languages, which some of the participants already knew prior to taking part in the Erasmus programme, and were then able to practice in a setting whereby it was the majority language. Considering what the participants stated, it can be said that our findings are similar to those of Llanes et. al (2016). As they found in their research, studying abroad even in a non-English-speaking country can in fact improve English proficiency. With that in mind, we can say that similar conclusions can be drawn from our study.

Moving on to the socio-cultural aspect of our study, it is necessary to consider what our participants said about the feedback and interaction with the local community

and native students. As some of them stated, the locals treated them just like everyone else, while also being appreciative of their efforts. Such positive feedback may build great foundations for living and studying abroad, and practicing language skills. This approval of locals may help reinforce positive motivation and attitudes to language learning. The reason for this being important comes from the intra-individual differences of language learners, in which even seemingly irrelevant factors such as mood can vastly affect the effectiveness of learning. Similar findings were proposed by Jung (2020), who found that participating in a community that uses the target language, and thus having more opportunities to use it, can improve the skills of a speaker.

Participating and becoming a part of the local culture seemed to be the most demanding task for our participants. It was often the case that the language barrier made it impossible to create desired connections with the locals. Nonetheless, a number of the interviewees and survey participants stated that they managed to explore the local culture in terms of culinary and entertainment events, in some cases with the help of friends who spoke the language of the majority. They were, however, able to establish connections with the university community and feel like they were a part of it, and they did belong there.

One of the most interesting pieces of information that we managed to gather from Erasmus students is related to their own self-perception and identity. Not all of them stated that their identity changed due to the Erasmus experience, but they all noticed that being in a different language setting changed their behaviour to some extent, and some even believed that this change applied to the whole of their personality and who they were as members of communities speaking various languages. This is one of the most prominent conclusions in terms of showing the relation between language and socio-cultural experiences.

As mentioned previously, all these findings are intertwined and it can be easily noticed that the socio-cultural aspects noticeably affect the linguistic aspects, and the same can be found for the opposite. Our findings are in agreement with the previously proposed ideas that can be found in the literature on studying abroad experiences, showing that this area of research not only can provide significant results, but also expand the understanding and knowledge about the effect of living in a country whereby the majority does not speak one's mother tongue.

With that being said, our study had certain limitations that have to be considered. Firstly, our sample size was rather small, meaning that our results and findings are not generalizable, although might be considered somewhat significant, considering the fact that they are in line with existing literature on the topic. Secondly, the qualitative nature of the study is a reason why conducting such research is rather challenging. Narrowing the scope of such research can lead to involuntary missing out on potentially unknown and unseen findings, yet still it is necessary to do that, due to the amount of time and effort required to conduct a study which would be at the same very thorough and focus on a large area of research. Nonetheless, this leaves opportunities for future research to be conducted using similar principles but in a more precise and in-depth manner, preferably on a larger sample.

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Interviews (4) conducted via videocalls (transcripts available in the *Appendices* section)

Appendices

a. Photographic material



Image 1. Educational excursion to Córdoba, Andalusia.

b. Survey questions

Age: ____

Sex:

- a. Female
- b. Male
- c. Other
- d. Prefer not to say

First time in an Erasmus programme:

- a. **Yes**
- b. **No**

1) Do you feel that having to use a language different than your mother tongue during your Erasmus experience affected you positively?

- a. **Yes**
- b. **No**

2) Did you have many chances to develop your additional languages during Erasmus?

- a. **Yes, I use(d) all the languages that I am aware of**
- b. **Yes, pretty much all**
- c. **Not quite, I use(d) only the official language of the country I study(ied) at**

3) Do you feel that it was much harder for you to adjust to using your other languages in the beginning?

- a. **Yes**
- b. **No**

4) Do you feel like your identity is different now than it was before the Erasmus experience?

- a. **Yes**
- b. **No**

5) Did you communicate with the locals in their language?

- a. **Yes**
- b. **No**

6) Was the interaction with locals pleasant / were they welcoming?

- a. **Yes**
- b. **No**
- c. **I haven't formed an opinion on this yet**

7) Did you get to participate in local culture during your Erasmus stay?

- a. **Yes**

b. No

8) If yes, specify in which type(s) of local culture you participate(d): _____

9) Would you choose to go on an Erasmus programme again?

a. Yes

b. No

c. Transcripts of interviews

- **Transcript #1 (Paula's and Lea's interview - joined interviews/the contestants were responding in turns)**

Myrtó: Beginning with you, Pau (short for Paula): How did it feel initially when you arrived at Sevilla (Erasmus city) and were put into this environment where you couldn't communicate in German (mother tongue)?

Paula: Well, it was exciting to hear Spanish on the streets, but overwhelming and stressful at the same time. Especially, when I firstly arrived in the International Office (of the university, it was responsible for our enrollment after our arrival, among others), I couldn't make out what they were saying to me, because they were talking exclusively in Spanish, the talking was too fast and in dialect (Andalusian).

Myrtó: I see, it was quite stressful for me that one, too. And you, Lea?

Lea: For me, it felt a little bit safer, because I lived for quite a while in Ecuador before, (Spanish-talking country). So, moving around the city wasn't stressful, but that wasn't the case in the university, where we couldn't switch to another language at all.

Myrtó: That came quite hard in the beginning for all of us, as we not only had to deal with Spanish, which we were least familiar with, compared to other languages we use

(mother tongue and English, in our cases), but with the daily use of English, as well. Did that feeling, however, change over time for you?

Lea: Shall I start?

Myrtó: Sure!

Lea: Listening and understanding got better. Communicating, especially in the university, was still stressful.

Paula: Pretty much the same for me, too.

Myrtó: Alright, moving on to the next question now. Our topic is the use of different languages during the Erasmus. So, did you get to practice other languages that you know? If yes, which ones?

Paula: In the university and with my flatmates, we talked mostly in Spanish. With friends, we used English. Apart from those two, Portuguese and French were present, however I only worked with the understanding part. I spoke a little bit of German, too.

Lea: The same goes for me, as you know :) (important to mention: Paula and Lea were flatmates, they came together in Sevilla and had more or less the same social circle there). Also, I had contact with the Austrian dialect through friends, but they had to speak slower so to understand them.

Myrtó: Did you find it easier to do this at Erasmus than at home?

Paula: The truth is that I didn't have the chance to speak Spanish in Germany. English is a language that I have been frequently using, both before, during and after the Erasmus.

Lea: Same for me, I didn't speak Spanish in Germany at all. With English, I had contact through books reading, movies watching...orally speaking, however, I didn't use them that much back home.

Myrtó: I see. Concerning your experience, I am interested in knowing which method or practice is the most effective for you to immerse yourself into another language and culture.

Lea: I'd say being in the country where the language is spoken and hanging out with multiple people is the most effective one.

Paula: I agree with that, generally being in the country, especially walking around the city, participating in events and the culinary culture. I don't feel that language classes help as much as those.

Myrtó: Now this last one is a great point that brings us to the next question, which has to do with the multilingual approach on your university classes. More specifically, "Did the teaching method include a multilingual approach or the whole lesson was conducted in the target language?". (Note: Questions 3A-3B were altered during the interview, because I was already aware that the interviewees did not take Spanish classes during the Erasmus. As a result, I decided to ask them whether there was a multilingual approach in their university classes in general).

Lea: There was a little bit of immersion, but that happened exclusively in the target language. Basically, it had the form of some references about Germany during the class, there was also encouragement by the professor so that we talk more and say our opinion on stuff, but all of that was in Spanish, as I told you before.

Paula: I agree, we were attending the same classes, after all.

Myrtó: True that. Moving on to our next category then, which is about language & personality. First of all, did you feel like being able to express yourself in the way you wanted to in Spanish? Was that way of expression close to the one you use in German?

Paula: For me, no, but it got better, especially in uni.

Lea: Same, even though I learned some slang words, which helped towards that direction, I'd say.

Myrtó: I see, so would you say that you were projecting out a different personality when communicating in your other languages? If so, how was that personality different from the one in your mother tongue?

Paula: In Spanish, especially in Cristina's classes (she is referring to a university class), I used to feel somewhat "shy" because of uncertainty, meaning that I was not that

certain in the use of the language. In English, on the other hand, I felt more outgoing, I would discuss with random foreign people without a lot of effort.

Lea: I'd say that I had kind of the same personality in all the languages I used. Maybe there were some behavioral changes, in the sense that I wasn't feeling differently, but I probably seemed different.

Paula: Yes, exactly. Language and context are important to feel this way or another.

Myrtó: I agree with both of you, I'd just add the level of confidence in the languages used, as well. Our last questions have to do with your participation in the local culture. First of all, did you participate in local culture and which language(s) did you use to communicate then?

Paula: We were once to a flamenco show with Mexicans. Apart from that, visiting tapas bars was something frequent and in these, I used to speak Spanish. In general, I believe that language and culture go hand in hand, otherwise you may be treated like a tourist.

Lea: I also went to a flamenco show with some Austrian friends. However, we were just observing the show and our communication was mostly in German, Spanish wasn't the first option.

Myrtó: Were the locals friendly and/or supportive of your efforts?

Paula: In university classes, I was generally expected to speak Spanish eitherway. One of the groups in the practice classes often took time with me to explain stuff (note: the rest of the group members were native Spanish speakers).

Lea: I feel like we were treated like anybody else. In Cristina's class, the group was supportive, as well.

Myrtó: Finally, after all this experience, could you say that you became a part of the local community in a way?

Paula: Not really.

Lea: No.

Myrtó: Alright, so that was it! Thank you very much, guys!

Paula: Thank you, Myrtó!

Lea: Thank you, hope we've helped!

-End of Transcript #1-

- **Transcript #2 (Lena's interview)**

[...]

Myrtó: First thing I'd like to ask you is about the way you felt initially when you arrived at Sevilla (Erasmus city) and you were put into this environment where you couldn't communicate in your mother tongue. Also, I'd like you to tell me whether and how that changed over time.

Lena: Well, at first everything was new. At university, I barely understood a thing. I also remember calling my mum before the beginning of university and telling her that Spanish wasn't that difficult for me. Afterwards, the speed and the accent of the language troubled me, something that gradually got better. I was able to understand more with the university playing its role in that, as I was listening to Spanish everyday through it, as well. Spanish books I used to read to also helped.

Myrtó: I agree that the university played its role in the development of our language skills, even if at times we struggled mostly with the understanding and speaking part. Now, did you get to practice other languages that you know during your stay in Sevilla? If so, which ones were they and in which situations did you use them?

Lena: With friends, English would be the first communicational language, then Spanish with my flatmates and in the university and German with friends again and my family.

Myrtó: Did you find it easier to do this at Erasmus than at home?

Lena: Yes, because I barely used other languages back in Germany. Here, I got to actually practice them in everyday life.

Myrtó: I see, and which method or practice would you say is the most effective for you to immerse yourself into another language and culture?

Lena: I'd say by reading texts and books, watching movies and series, listening to music, speaking to people with a mother-tongue different than mine, because while still in Spain I was somehow forced to communicate in Spanish and wasn't able to switch, listening to natives, too...

Myrtó: I see your point, so for you there isn't only one method or practice that comes first, it's rather a set of ways combined.

Lena: Exactly.

(Note for the omission of questions 3A-3B: As the case was exactly the same for all of the interviewees and those two questions were already answered by Lea and Paula, I decided not to ask Lena, as well).

Myrtó: Let's move on to the next question, shall we?

Lena: Yes!

Myrtó: The forms and ways of expression that you were using to communicate in Spanish were a lot different from the ones you are used to in your mother tongue? In other words, were you able to express yourself in the way you wanted to in Spanish?

Lena: Well, not always. Sometimes, I chose not to say something, because I needed time to think about it. Meanwhile, the topic of the conversation had already moved on. As a matter of fact, I opted for simpler words, but even in this way, I wasn't always able to express my sense of humor. Of course, alcohol made it easier, haha.

Myrtó: Haha, I couldn't agree more with that! Would you finally say that you were projecting out a different personality when communicating in your other languages? And, if that's the case, how was that personality different from the one in your mother tongue?

Lena: No, I didn't feel like my personality was changing, even though I was quieter in Spanish conversations. That, however, always depended on the people who I was discussing with.

Myrtó: I get you; empathy is always a key element in such situations and it's something that can be built by each one of us, actually.

Lena: Totally!

Myrtó: By the way, we're almost close to the end of the questions, it won't take longer than few minutes.

Lena: Don't worry, Myrtó!

Myrtó: Great! So, did you participate in local culture? And if so, which language(s) did you use to communicate then?

Lena: Absolutely, in food culture a lot :) I was also listening to Spanish songs and attending dancing classes. You can say that I was somehow implemented to the local lifestyle!

Myrtó: That's true! Remember el Festivo de las Naciones, as well? (international culinary, music and dance festival, in the heart of Sevilla, quite mainstream and popular among Erasmus students, the locals and tourists)

Lena: Ah, true, we took part in that, too, haha! As for the languages that you asked me about, normally I would talk English and Spanish in such occasions.

Myrtó: Aha! Were the locals friendly and/or supportive of your efforts?

Lena: Yes, but sometimes the conversation was switched to English, because they understood that I was a foreigner. Also, at times, I received compliments about my effort of using the language.

Myrtó: And lastly, did you establish connections with the locals? Could you say that you became a part of the local community in a way?

Lena: I did have some contacts with locals, but not that close ones. I wouldn't say that I was a part of the local community, after all.

Myrtó: I see... so, that was it! Thank you very much for offering to participate in this!

Lena: Pleasure, Myrtó! See you!

-End of Transcript #2-

- **Transcript #3 (Claudia's interview)**

Claudia (00:00): Okay.

Nikodem (00:02): So, uh, our project, uh, is about, uh, Erasmus students in mm-hmm <affirmative> foreign universities, as I told you. And, uh, we are interested in how, uh, how Erasmus students, uh, are doing in the foreign countries at the foreign universities in terms of the language use and how they, if, whether they feel comfortable, whether they are able to, uh, get along with the locals, with the community, uh, at, at the foreign university. And to begin, I would like to ask you, how did you initially feel, uh, when you arrived at your Erasmus city, so at Poznan, and were put into this environment when, where you couldn't communicate in your mother tongue, as much as you would at home? Because not so many people probably speak Spanish here at our university. And did that change over time?

Claudia (00:57): Um, so, well, uh, for starters, the dorm I live in is practically all Spanish, so I can communicate in my mother tongue, if I wish to. Uh, also, I, I am very used to not speak in Spanish, uh, because of the degree I study and because I have been abroad more times and, well, it was a bit difficult because I know nothing of Polish. So, you know, at first, when you need directions to go everywhere, because I didn't know where the faculty was or like the supermarket or the first time I went to the supermarket, it was like, uh, okay. So, I have to communicate with people. And I had to use Google translate because there were people that didn't speak English. And of course, if you don't speak English, I don't suppose you're going to speak Spanish. So <laugh>.

Nikodem (02:01): Yeah.

Claudia (02:02): Um, it was a bit complicated, but I got used to it pretty quick and I'm feeling much better now. I'm feeling much confident, even though I still know nothing about Polish <laugh>, but, but I'm feeling much confident now. Also, I love the opportunity to use my English more, so...

Nikodem (02:33): Yeah, that, that's great to hear that you are feeling better now because I can imagine how difficult it can be to be put in, in a country where nobody speaks your language. Don't speak the language of all the people and try to communicate using some sort of devices.

Claudia (02:52): Mm-hmm <affirmative>, I think like, it's partly my fault. I should have like, taken a crash course in Polish before coming here, but in my university, they told me that I wouldn't need anything in Polish, uh, anything about Polish. So I thought, okay, so English is great. <laugh> um, I know English, so I don't need to know anything else. And, and I was very wrong <laugh>.

Nikodem (03:21): I'm yeah, well that they didn't give the best advice, I suppose.

Claudia (03:26): No, no, they didn't.

Nikodem (03:28): Okay. So, um, and so you told me that you were, were able to use English quite a bit here, in Poland. So I suppose that let you practice it a bit to get to have that sort of improvement because of all the things that you had to do in English, but, um, did you find it easier to use English here in Poland than you did in Spain?

Claudia (03:55): Well, the thing is that, um, I don't know if it happens to you, but in Spain, it's weird to speak in English, like for me, because, um, like I know that some people are not going to understand me and I know that I can speak to them in Spanish, and they're going to understand me at the first try. So sometimes like, uh, I do try to speak in English in Spain, but it's weirder than here, because here I know that I can't communicate in any other language that it's not English. So it's like normal at the end of the day, but in Spain, it's like, you're in Spain, you know, Spanish. Why don't you speak Spanish?

Nikodem (04:44): Yeah, that's understandable. I actually have like a very similar, similar feeling about Poland. I would really feel weird and not too comfortable speaking English in like an everyday situation here, because first of all, I would also be afraid that a lot of people won't understand me. And also, like, it feels weird not to use the native language when you know that everyone else speaks your native language around you.

Claudia (05:16): Yes. That's, that's exactly why I don't speak that much English in Spain, like outside of the classroom, of course. Uh, also I come from a monolingual family, we only speak Spanish at home. Uh, well, we speak a bit of Catalan too, but we only speak Spanish and like, I can't go out with my mother, my father or, and, or my brother, and like speak in English with someone else while I'm, while I have to communicate in Spanish with my parents, you know? So it's like, it's kind of weird. So it's like, why bother? Like just do Spanish.

Nikodem (06:00): It's so much easier to do that.

Claudia (06:02): Yeah. Like when I'm with my friends, from my degree, then we speak English more because we feel more comfortable also, because if you don't want people to know what you're talking about, it's good to speak a foreign language. So we just speak English more, but not that much. Like we usually, [...].

Nikodem (06:32): Yeah, that all makes sense. Like, yeah, I get that. I sometimes also use English when I'm talking about something that I don't want too many people to be aware of. So that's, I think that's a common practice everywhere. So, uh, I would also like to ask, uh, when you had classes at our university, they were all, I suppose in English, mostly at least. Um, but, uh, did any of the teaching methods, any of the class include a multilingual approach? So did they try to, um, conduct the class using any other languages than English or were all the, were all the lessons just in English, the whole lessons?

Claudia (07:18): Okay. So...

Nikodem (07:19): Sorry to interrupt you, but like, let's, let's just, uh, agree that we don't consider Polish such a language because you know, sometimes the teachers do use Polish and they refer to Polish students.

Claudia (07:31): Yeah, I know, I know that. Um, well, last semester I took, uh, general linguistics for starters, all my classes are in English, uh, because I can't take, take classes in Polish, of course, I don't understand them. And also I can't take, uh, any language because they're taught in Polish, not I would have taken Spanish. It would've been a very good pause for me. Um, so yeah, I had general linguistics last, last semester. And while the class was taught, uh, mostly in English, we did have some points that

required, uh, other foreign languages. Also now I'm taking evolutionary linguistics, which is a class that you took. It's from one BA ELTIT (first year of the course that we are taking at the AMU - English Linguistics: Theories, Interfaces, Technologies). So that class does require, uh, a, a bit of, um, foreign languages, because we do talk about the changes in Portuguese, Romanian, French, Spanish, you know? So you do have those little tidbits that most of the classes taught in English, but you do have those little tidbits in other languages.

Nikodem (08:53): Yeah, that all makes sense. Yeah, I remember that in evolutionary linguistics, we really talked a lot about the changes over the time of all the languages of the, the families. That was quite a lot of stuff, to remember.

Claudia (09:05): Yeah. It, it is quite a lot of stuff, but in the end, if you want to study linguistics is like everything it's a lot of stuff.

Nikodem (09:16): <laugh> exactly. That's the whole idea of it. I believe I would also like to ask you whether the form of the language that you, uh, used while communicating in Poland, so let's, let's stick to English because I think that's the most communicative language you can use here. So when you used, uh, English, uh, did the form of the language change in the sense that was it, for example, more formal than when you talk in Spanish or was it less formal? Maybe it was, I don't know, maybe you used more, uh, more difficult words for example? And were you, and that's, I think that's the most important part. Were you able to express yourself the way you wanted when you talked in English when compared to Spanish?

Claudia (10:08): Um, well I think the formality of my speech depends on the, uh, on the moment [...] than to a fellow student, uh, like, you know, I'm not going to go up to Dr. Bruskevic and say, hi, they me, you know, <laugh> so I think it depends, uh, mostly on the context, I am able to communicate in English very well because I am used to communicate in, in English. And I think I'm more or less at the same level at that my Spanish is. So I am able to communicate, like in both languages at the same level. Um, maybe, you know, Spanish is my mother tongue, so of course I know a bit more vocabulary and it's like, it comes more naturally to me. But, um, like, you know, when you use a language a lot, it starts to become easier. So, uh, I think that, uh, yeah, I'm, I am able to convey the messages I want to convey. And I do use with vocabulary

sometimes because like in university we are taught, uh, mostly formal vocabulary and like a very formal way of talking. But, um, well, everything like is mixed, but yeah. I think I am able to convey the message.

Nikodem (11:54): Yeah. I think at the high proficiency levels, it starts to like mix and melt and it's really similar. Uh, even though it might not seem so because when you are able to easily say anything you want, anything you like to say in both of the languages, you don't think too much about it and you just do it very spontaneously, very naturally. And I believe that everything is small as the same except of, of course for language itself.

Claudia (12:26): Yes. And also I think that something very important is that I don't have to be translating everything. Like I don't, I'm not thinking what I'm going to tell you in Spanish and then translating it to English, but rather just saying it to English, um, to you directly. So I think that's something that really helps in conversation.

Nikodem (12:56): Yeah, yeah, I would agree with that. Totally. Yeah, and do you maybe feel like when you are talking in English, when you are communicating English here in Poland do you perhaps project a different personality than you do when you talk in Spanish than I...

Claudia (13:14): Yes <laugh>. Uh, so I think I read this in, in a study, but, uh, if we know a lot of languages, it's like we have a lot of personalities. I, for example, have a different personality in every language I know. So yes, <laugh> totally.

Nikodem (13:36): Yeah. I also, I, I also seen a bit of two or three papers about this topic and I, I totally agree with whichever they said, because I also feel like my Polish personality and my English personality are completely different, drastically different. Like I'm sometimes scared <laugh>.

Claudia (13:55): <laugh> yes. Also like, uh, English is a language that we haven't been taught since we were born. So for example, uh, my Spanish is very, um, dialect. So the, the place of Spain I come from is, has a very distinct dialect. And we talk differently from like the, from the standard variety of Spanish. So I, like, my Spanish is more like I am from this place and I talk like this and my English is more like neutral because I learned it, and I learned the neutral variety. So I think that it also helps like

differentiating the personalities because it's like in one you are, uh, very thousand Spanish and the other is like, oh, you're just English, that's all.

Nikodem (15:02): Yeah, I totally good that. Yeah. That's really, for me, at least interesting how different people can be when speaking different languages. That's quite amazing to me that just reaching the language can change so much about the whole person. Yeah.

Claudia (15:21): Also the way we speak, for example, I know that my Spanish is hard than my English. So when I speak Spanish, I speak louder and I speak harsher because, you know, Spanish has a lot of, uh, consonants that sound very harsh and English doesn't. So like, you know, one of my teachers told me that I was made to speak in English, not in Spanish <laugh> because I sound, uh, better in English than in Spanish. So I think that, like, of course we have different personalities. It's like, you are a different person speaking a different language.

Nikodem (16:03): Yeah. That's right. And did, did you ever feel like maybe these personalities merged to some extent or did, do they stay very pronounced and different all the time?

Claudia (16:20): Uh, with Spanish and English, uh, I think it doesn't usually happen, but it happened with German when I started, uh, learning German, it was like, they explained it to us in a very, this is like English way. So I started to associate both languages, even though they are totally different, but I started to associate, so, um, some of the personality I started to have when speaking in German was very similar to the one I had when speaking in English, but also German is harsh like Spanish. So I think it also has some parts of that personality. So it's a weird mix between the two, but, uh, it also has like its own distinctive, uh, features. So I think they do merge sometimes. Um, we also like merged languages sometimes, because, uh, you speak it in, in Spanish and you don't know what in Spanish, but you know, in, in English and you start saying it in English and you know, that people [...] in another way. Um, and I think that in, at that moment, the personalities are like merged...

Nikodem (17:50): Mm-hmm <affirmative>. Yeah, yeah, I would agree with that. I think it also might depend on the, uh, on the way of instruction, because like, yeah. As you said with German, if someone tells you that it'll be similar to another language that

you already know, you will, I believe maybe even unconsciously starts to apply the same features of, of the way you speak to the native language. Yeah, I think that might be also the case. So, uh, well, let's step back from the linguistic, uh, part a bit. And I would also like to ask you, uh, a bit about the local culture here in Poland. Did you participate in the local culture here in Poland, in Poznan or anywhere else in Poland? And which languages did you use to communicate then?

Claudia (18:43): Well, I'm afraid to say that I didn't participate as much as I would have liked because after all I came here to study, [...] did I go to some Christmas? Uh, I think it was like a festival, something like that, um, with my buddy, the university buddy, and we communicated, we communicated in English and if I needed something and the people around me didn't know English, I would tell my buddy and she was speaking Polish. So I just used English, but we did need to use Polish for most of it.

Nikodem (19:34): Yeah, yeah, that's, that's all I think is great to have a translator and you don't know the language.

Claudia (19:39): Yes.

Nikodem (19:39): Sometimes I even feel like I need someone else talk, speaking English next to me because <laugh>, I feel like I will randomly forget all every, all I know about English and I will just become silent and I will need a, someone to hold my hand and tell me what to say.

Claudia (19:56): Yeah. But sometimes it happens in class too, because like I understand Polish is your mother tongue, and you are used to speaking in Polish, but sometimes people around me start speaking in Polish and I'm like, okay, I'm not understanding anything you're saying, sorry about trying to, um, so like people start speaking Polish and I'm like, okay, uh, I don't understand anything you're saying, and I need to have someone next to me telling me, okay, so they're saying this and this and this, and this is important. And this is not because sometimes, um, I know that it's like, you don't even realize it because it happens to me too. Sometimes I start speaking Spanish and I like, I don't know. I don't take into account, like, there's three people who don't understand to me there, uh, so yeah. I feel like sometimes I'm like, okay, can I have someone that speaks English next to me to talk to them, please? Or like, just to translate.

Nikodem (21:16): Mm-hmm <affirmative>.

Claudia (21:18): To tell me what's happening. Because for example, I have a theater class, um, and we are like a lot of students with, uh, one BA (Bachelor of Art - first degree of university level education), two BA and three BA theater together in a class. And like, uh, they're only two Erasmus students and the people started communicating Polish and they they're saying important things to the actual, like the play we have to stage and we're like, oh, how you saying <laugh> because I'm in that play too. You know, if I, if it didn't like, have anything to do with me, okay, I understand. But if it is something important or related to something I need to do, please communicate with me in English <laugh>.

Nikodem (22:12): Yeah, it would be nice to know what's going on, I believe.

Claudia (22:15): Yeah. So I came to the realization that when people start speaking in Polish, all around me, I'm going to start speaking Spanish. So I don't understand you, you don't understand me either <laugh>.

Nikodem (22:28): At some point they maybe will switch to English just to get some information.

Claudia (22:33): Yeah, just to, just to understand what the crazy person talking in Spanish next to me saying <laugh>.

Nikodem (22:41): Yeah. And did you feel like, uh, the locals who, who you, uh, inter, uh, who you have contact with, uh, were friendly and supportive of your efforts of trying to speak English here to communicate with them?

Claudia (22:59): Uh, I think it depends, um, whether the person was old or young, the older people do look at me wierdly when I try to speak to them in English, but people in Spain do the same, so I think it's something worldwide. Um, so younger people do take it a bit less seriously, I think. Or at least they can understand me. So they don't think I'm insulting them in their faces or something like that. Um, and they are, they tend to be more friendly. Um, of course it depends. Every person is a different world and we don't know, like I can be approaching you to tell, to just to ask you which drink do I have to take, or I may be approaching you to tell you something else and you may

be in that offensive mode. And like, I understand all of us have our days. So, um, I expected less friendliness to be honest because, uh, people tell horror stories about you Polish <laugh>.

Nikodem (24:19): It's all for a reason.

Claudia (24:21): Yeah, I know. But like coming from Spain, a country where you like present yourself, hugging people and kissing them, everything is cold, you know, like, uh, I'm used to hugging a lot of people and, uh, like my friends and everything and kissing people all the time and here I'm like, okay, so I'll give you that <laugh>, because it's like the most, um, like the most touch that some people are <laugh> are comfortable giving. So I know, I knew when I came here, what was going to happen. And I, as I said, I did expect you to be a little less friendly, so...

Nikodem (25:15): Well, I'm glad that you are positively surprised and negatively surprised.

Claudia (25:21): Yeah. Well, you know, um, people tell to tend to over-exaggerate Spanish people tend to over, over-exaggerate things, uh, and self in Spanish, even more so like, you know, um, a teacher of mine told me that you wear blocks of ice that no one could talk to. So, you know, [...]

Nikodem (25:49): Honestly, thing that sometimes that happens that people like act like nobody else exists. They just live their own life. And like, don't see, don't perceive, don't acknowledge the existence of anyone else. And I, I think that is something that happens mostly like in public, uh, situations when you are on the street somewhere or in a gallery or anywhere else. That's, that's where people like completely disregard anything about, except for the fact that they are somewhere, they are doing something.

Claudia (26:25): Yeah. So, um, you know, I, I get it. And the first days here were weird because like, well, Spaniards are very loud. Also, you are loud, too! People told me you went loud and you're very loud, too. But we Spaniards are very loud. And I'm used to hearing everyone's conversations in the street because you do shout a lot. Because you don't want, you want to be heard over other people that are shouting a lot. So coming here and seeing people in the street, not talking at all with anyone like going and being in a group and not speaking between them, between them was like, are these people

together, like in a group or they just, they are just walking in the same direction <laugh> and collided between themselves, I don't know. So yeah, it was a bit weird at the beginning, but now it's like, okay, everyone's doing their business. And, uh, I'm not going to understand you either way. So <laugh>

Nikodem (27:45): Yeah. These are just groups of individuals. Like with, we, we have an emphasis on the individuals <laugh> because like, it's also, like when I, now, when I think about it, I can remember that this is something that I also do often that when I'm out with, with a few people, we sometimes walk like pretty far, and we just don't say a word to each other the whole time, or sometimes we just randomly start speaking and we have a massive conversation, but then it ends. And again, it's silence. So it's like, we have this bad, best of, uh, friendliness to each two each other. And when they end it's, you know, all gone.

Claudia (28:31): Yeah. Like in Spain, I think we can't be silent for more than a minute. It's like chronometrically, uh, done. Like, if you are silent for more than a minute, something's happening and you have to speak <laugh>.

Nikodem (28:48): I will remember that if I will ever visit Spain.

Claudia (28:52): Oh, no, don't worry. Like with, um, that happens between Spaniards. With the foreigners, we're a bit less <laugh>, uh, we we're with between each other because we know we're with, so, but if you go to Spain, like, uh, on an Erasmus, like I am doing, and you get, uh, you know, into Spaniards...Spanish group, which they're probably going to, because we like to like get people in our groups. Um, if they invite you to get beer, please, don't <laugh>.

Nikodem (29:38): Okay, I, I will.

Claudia (29:39): 9:00 AM in the morning is not the, the moment to go get beer. And they just, they just want you to like, uh, get drunk to start speaking a lot.

Nikodem (29:50): Oh, okay. Well, they, they would, they would have a difficult with me cuz I drink only non-alcoholic beer. So they would need to really try their best to get me talking.

Claudia (30:02): Well, but we do have a way of getting people to talk.

Nikodem (30:06): I, I believe

Claudia (30:07): Even if, even if you didn't drink, uh, you would be speaking a lot.

Nikodem (30:13): I mean, at some point I think I would just start speaking of, on my own because it would feel weird not to speak when others are speaking. So

Claudia (30:22): Yes.

Nikodem (30:23): Yeah. It's just nice to be a part of the conversation and not just a listener.

Claudia (30:30): It is, it is very good to be honest.

Nikodem (30:35): So, uh, to nicely close the whole interview, I would like to ask, uh, one more question about the local culture, the participation in local culture. So, do you think that you have established some connections with the locals here in Poland? And could you say that you became a part of the local community in some way, like it can be the university community or it can be any other community like in the park or where you live in a dorm or whatever?

Claudia (31:07): Well, uh, as I said, the dorm is mostly Spanish, so like we had a connection just by coming here. Um, but I do think I am part of like the university community. Uh, not all of my classes of course, because like there are people for everything and some are more open, some more closed and also like I get it, you have all your classes together. And then an Erasmus comes once a week <laugh> and it's weird, but I think I, I made myself a comfortable spot in the university life and I'm very comfortable there, so <laugh>. I do, I don't think I have to like move or anything.

Nikodem (32:01): Well, that's good, it's very good, actually. That's great to hear because you know, it would, it wouldn't be too nice if you felt like you don't belong here, because I think that's part of the whole idea of studying abroad to become a part of something and like, feel that you actually belong here and that what you are doing is what you, what you want to be doing and to feel comfortable or added.

Claudia (32:26): Yeah, but, um, something that I got while being here is I'm going to be here for a year, like two months now. And what I got is that yes, I made connections.

Yes, I, I made people, I met people that I can call friends and I will hope to cherish those friendships for a long, long, long time and hope to see them in Spain and be able to like, you know, do what, uh, speak in Spanish in front of them <laugh> without it being that weird. But, um, like we are here for a very short time. And what I have gotten is that Erasmus students usually, um, do groups between themselves and less with the locals, because like you have your own groups, it's your third year. You've been with the same people for three years now. So like, we feel sometimes that your groups are so close that we can't go in there, you know?

Claudia (33:49): And also like, we're not going to be here next, next year. So why would we be inside of a group if we're not going to be here much longer? So I think Erasmus students usually connect with, with all the Erasmus students. Um, you can see that in the Spanish people <laugh>. Not me because I I'm not Spanish it's I also, it seems. But, um, yeah, they tell me that, that much, I've heard a lot of times this, this year, but, um, yeah, so usually we connect with people that are in the same situation as us. So you are not going to be here next, next year or next semester. Like there were people that came for just one semester. So people don't tend to go to the locals.

Nikodem (34:48): Mm-hmm <affirmative>.

Claudia (34:49): Because they don't understand the situation, you're going to be here for what, two more years, three more years. Five, you know?

Nikodem (34:58): Yeah, yeah. Yeah, and though, I think it might be difficult to like get in touch with people who you complete, who you have pretty much nothing in common, like at first, because when, of course, when you get to know someone, you might, you might find out that you have a lot of in common, like for example, you like the same music or whatever, but when you don't know people, and the only thing you have in common is that you study at the same university, it's really difficult, I think, to like, even start a conversation, because you don't know if you speak the same languages, you don't know what these other people, what these other people like. And you know, it's, it's hard to like get started with all that, I think.

Claudia (35:42): Yes. And also, for example, I'm very fortunate. I can take classes with you, Polish people, because your classes are in English. But my peers that take like biology, medicine, architecture, law, they can't go to class with Polish people

because their classes are in Polish. So they have to take Erasmus courses where you are just with Erasmus people. So I think I'm fortunate in that regard because I have been able to meet more of you and I have been able to make some friends here, but those people that just have classes with the same people every day that are just from your country, they still communicate in Spanish or in like Greek or whatever language. Um, they don't have the same experience as I did, so...

Nikodem (36:46): Yeah, that's absolutely difficult, like much more difficult, I think, because the only chance you have to like meet with non-Erasmus students then is somewhere in a corridor when you are walking by other people or may perhaps when you are not at the university, because you meet someone I know eating out or whatever then, yeah. But that's much more difficult to actually, I, I believe that it's much more difficult to get in touch with people, start talking to people outside of the university context, because you know, at the university you can always try to be like, oh, do you know where this room is? Or do you know what's for, if there was any homework for this and that class and that makes it easier.

Claudia (37:33): Of course, like the class gives you an excuse to talk to people, like, do you have this exercise? Or do, do you want to, like, for example, me and Johnny neural linguistics, uh, do you want to do the presentation with me? Okay, perfect. So at least you are communicating.

Nikodem (37:55): Yeah, that's true. Well, thank you a lot for your time. It was a great interview. I really enjoyed it. I hope you did, too.

Claudia (38:04): Yeah, I did.

Nikodem (38:05): And uh, if you would be interested, we also have a small survey, uh, online with questions, similar to the ones that I asked you, but, uh, it's if you want to, um, you answer these I as a, well, some of these are very similar. If you will have time and will, you will be willing to, I can send you a link to the survey so you can...

Claudia (38:30): Can send it to me and I can send it to the group we have of the Erasmus students and ask them to fill it. It's not the first survey they're going to have to fill, so don't worry <laugh>.

Nikodem (38:43): Yeah, I get that. That would be awesome, so thank you a lot. And I would also like to ask, uh, could you perhaps, I don't, I don't want to ask you to do anything except, but do you, could you perhaps give me some, the information, how I could contact with other Erasmus students that you know, because I would like to contact one or two more interviews and, uh, well, I don't actually know too many Erasmus people, so...

Claudia (39:11): Uh, what type of Erasmus (students) do you want? <laugh>

Nikodem (39:14): Any, anyone in, in Poznan?

Claudia (39:18): Oh, yes, I've got everyone, I know it's in Poznan, so I can't give you anything else, but like, I don't know. Um, do you have a preference in their degree, their age or anything?

Nikodem (39:32): No. No, that that's really that's, that's not relevant for our project. We just want students who study abroad to, you know. Get a feeling of how they are doing here in Poland.

Claudia (39:45): Okay, so I will send the survey and ask if anyone wants to do the interview and if they want, I will send you their email so you can...

Nikodem (39:54): Awesome. That's really great.

Claudia (39:56): ...can contact with them.

Nikodem (39:56): Thank you a lot for the help, because that's much easier.

Claudia (40:02): <laugh>

Nikodem (40:02): Thanks. Well, I will not be holding you longer. I actually also need to get going because I have a trade in like two hours, so...

Claudia (40:12): Whoa.

Nikodem (40:13): I wish you a great day. I hope you will have a great picnic and the weather will stay as nice as it is right now and...

Claudia (40:19): Ah, there are clouds now, so...

Nikodem (40:21): I'm sure they will be gone. I hope they will be gone, at least!

Claudia (40:24): Fingers crossed!

Nikodem (40:25): Fingers crossed. Thank you once again. See you on our, we'll see each other on Thursday, I think.

Claudia (40:34): Mm-hmm <affirmative>, yeah.

Nikodem (40:35): So, see you on Thursday. Bye.

Claudia (40:37): See you. Bye.

-End of Transcript #3-

d. Additional annotated bibliography

Below follow two extra entries from our annotated bibliography that appear as references in the main text, but were not included in the corresponding assignment.

- Llanes, À., Tragant, E., & Serrano, R. (2012). The role of individual differences in a study abroad experience: The case of Erasmus students. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 9(3), 318–342. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2011.620614>

The authors of the article - Àngels Llanes (Universitat de Lleida), Elsa Tragant and Raquel Serrano (Universitat de Barcelona) built their article on already existing research concerning studying abroad (SA), expanding it further by looking not only at the effects on development, but also at the attitudes of L2 learners living abroad and their influence on learning. Precisely, they tried to measure the difference in written and oral exams performance before and after having studied abroad, and also provided the participants with a questionnaire, which was used to gather data about, among others, attitudes, self-perception, and self-assessed L2 proficiency. The participants for the study were 24 Spanish undergraduates, aged 19 to 24, who studied English as their second language at a university in the UK. The findings they presented show that studying abroad can result in significant improvements in L2 performance. In oral

performance, their syllables per minute ratio (SPM) improved from ca. 120 up to almost 145, alongside with their lexical complexity, measured using Guiraud's Index (GUI) with a ca. 5% improvement. In writing tasks, their words per T-unit (W/TU) ratio improved by ca. 10%. As for the questionnaire data, it was concluded that a highly influential factor on L2 learning is what the authors named "personal orientation", which includes reasons such as traveling and getting to know other countries, alongside with a "professional-academic" orientation, which is driven by academic and working opportunities. It was also found that students who believe they will "never know enough to be able to understand movies in English" (p. 325) progressed more in their lexical complexity. The main findings of the study could be shortened to: SA improves L2 performance, but mainly in oral production; learners' attitudes and motivation to study abroad has a significant influence on their performance and progress.

- Llanes, À., Arnó, E., & Mancho-Barés, G. (2016). Erasmus students using English as a *lingua franca*: Does study abroad in a non-English-speaking country improve L2 English? *The Language Learning Journal*, 44(3), 292–303. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2016.1198099>

The authors of the study - Àngels Llanes (Universitat de Lleida), Elisabet Arnó (University of Catalonia) and Guzman Mancho-Barés (Universitat de Lleida) were inspired by already existing research on studying abroad in English speaking countries, and decided to take a look at L2 English development during studying abroad, but in non-English-speaking countries, where English is used as a *lingua franca*. The study focused on measuring their L2 proficiency using a Quick Oxford Placement Test (OPT) and by asking the participants to write a short paragraph. The participants were 39 Catalan/Spanish Erasmus students, whose country of choice was a non-English-speaking country, aged 19 to 33. The analyses performed on data gathered by the researchers showed significant difference in the OPT, with a ca. 6% improvement. Moreover, a slight improvement was found in the participants' lexical complexity measure with a Guiraud's Index. The authors considered initial L2 proficiency as a potentially influential factor, but found that it only showed any correlation with the participants' sentences syntactic complexity. As the authors themselves stated, this study, unlike previous in the field, analyzed Erasmus students in non-English-speaking countries, coming from different backgrounds, and at different proficiency levels. All

these factors were considered, and the analyses brought some interesting conclusion. Precisely, studying abroad in a non-English-speaking country improves one's performance in a proficiency test, along with a slight improvement in their lexical complexity. Also, an important conclusion is that the initial proficiency is only influential in case of syntactic complexity, but no other areas of the language skills studied.