Intercultural Interventions in Study Abroad

This series addresses key themes in the development of internationalization within higher education. Up to the minute and international in both appeal and scope, books in the series focus on delivering contributions from a wide range of contexts and provide both theoretical perspectives and practical examples. Written by some of the leading experts in the field, they are vital guides that discuss and build upon evidence-based practice and provide a clear evaluation of outcomes.

Titles in the series:

Edited by
Jane Jackson and Susan Oguro

Contents

Figures

Chapter 6

Mentoring students' intercultural learning during study abroad

Angela Giovanangeli, Susan Oguro and Lesley Harbon

Introduction

Globally, study abroad programmes in the university sector have grown markedly over the last two decades, alongside the increased mobility of capital, goods, and people across the world (Block, Gray, and Holborow 2012, Duchêne and Heller 2012). The higher education sector has introduced various initiatives in order to address these 'new times' (New London Group 1996), including international-ised curricula with an intercultural dimension, and the option to study abroad for a component of a degree. Indeed, the opportunity to incorporate study abroad experiences into degree programmes is attractive for individuals seeking profes-sional qualifications to work in internationally connected spaces.

In the context of international and intercultural education, the role of men-tors in facilitating university students' intercultural learning has emerged as significant (Lou and Bosley 2012; Bennett 2008; Savicki and Brewer 2015), with cultural mentoring identified as one of the key factors impacting the devel-opment of students in study abroad contexts (Paige 2013; Paige and Goode 2009). Although interventions are now recommended at the pre-sojourn, sojourn, and post-sojourn stages to optimise study abroad learning (Jackson 2012, 2015a, 2015b; Vande Berg, Paige, and Lou 2012), it is argued that mentoring in these programmes is inconsistent (for example, Goode 2008; Ziegler 2006) and 'uneven at best and often nonexistent' (Paige and Goode 2009: 334).

The chapter firstly reviews the ways in which mentoring has been conceptual-ised in the higher education sector and then describes applications in relation to the fostering of intercultural learning in study abroad contexts. To better under-stand the requisite skills and attributes of study abroad mentors, we then examine the practices of a group of academics from an Australian university who mentor undergraduate students throughout a study abroad programme that spans two semesters. The analysis of their interview transcripts revealed useful information about their practices and offered insight into the challenges academics face dur-ing the mentoring process. The findings underscore the need for the professional development of educators who serve as intercultural mentors.

Cultural mentoring and study abroad

Mentoring in the context of intercultural education has been defined as 'inter-cultural pedagogy in which the mentor provides ongoing support for, and facili-tation of, intercultural learning and development' (Paige 2013: slide 6). This highlights the key role that educators can play when they adopt a mentoring approach. Likewise, as Vande Berg et al. (2012) argue, most students learn to learn effectively while abroad 'only when an educator intervenes, strategically and intentionally' (19). Exploring the value of cultural mentoring, Paige and Goode (2009) make several recommendations concerning the importance of adequate professional development for international educators who mentor study abroad students. They emphasise the need for professionals to possess knowledge of intercultural concepts, the ability to integrate intercultural dimensions into the student learning process, and the ability to create and implement learning activi-ties which challenge students' understanding of culture (Paige and Goode 2009). They advocate that mentors have an understanding of core concepts and theories related to intercultural learning and the development of intercultural competence as well as a solid grasp of the mentoring process. Few publications, however, pro-vide concrete examples of how study abroad professionals engage in intercultural mentoring in practice.

Within the context of higher education, Felten, Bauman, Dirksen, Kheriaty, and Taylor's (2013) work on mentoring communities draws attention to the use of 'formation mentoring', a mentoring style that goes beyond simply impart-ing information and advice or proposing solutions to students. Instead, in this approach, the mentor draws out what is implicit within the mentee. Felten et al. (2013) describe the mentor as someone who facilitates a space for discussion in which the mentee is able to seek guidance, problematise concerns, and share ideas to subsequently form their own reflective responses. This formation approach to mentoring builds on student responses to 'threshold experiences' (Felten et al. 2013: 15), that is, the experiencing of a 'significant juncture that may call for change, transition, reassessment, or conversion' (16). For example, in study abroad contexts, students are apt to encounter unfamiliar situations which can lead to consciousness raising, especially with the interventions of a skilled mentor.

The approach described by Felten et al. (2013) could readily be applied to the mentoring of students' intercultural learning in study abroad contexts. In an unfamiliar environment, students are routinely confronted with diverse cultural values and language structures that require reflection and critical questioning. Mentoring can help them to make sense of notions such as the foreign 'other' or the 'self'. To optimise the learning potential of 'significant junctures' (Felten et al. 2013: 15) in study abroad and promote intercultural awareness and under-standing, academics have a vital role to play as intercultural mentors.

Currently, a common approach to mentoring in higher education assumes that the 'mentor possesses some knowledge' (Felten et al. 2013: 16) that can be passed on to students. Felten et al. challenge the approach to practice which seeks

to impart knowledge and provide answers to students. Instead, they focus on a mentoring approach that draws out knowledge through a 'personal storytelling' approach (Felten et al. 2013: 29), which requires specific skills in listening, conversing, and asking questions. They advocate the development of a mentoring community that is focused on process rather than outcomes. In this approach, the following elements are emphasised: 'hospitality, safety, courage, honesty, trust, diversity, humility, accountability and friendship' (Felten et al. 2013: 32). Applied to the context of students studying abroad, a mentoring style that draws out knowledge and acknowledges the personal nature of study abroad experiences could help students to develop skills that support their intercultural learning.

Context of the intervention

The mentorship that is the focus of this chapter takes place in an Australian university programme that aims to facilitate the intercultural development of student sojourners. To this end, in the two years (four semesters) leading up to the study abroad period, students take a series of credit-bearing courses in their degree programme that are designed to help prepare them for their sojourn abroad. They include a course that introduces the study of societies and cultures, and covers issues related to globalisation, migration, and identity. Before going abroad, students must also spend four semesters studying the language that is widely used in their host country (e.g., Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, or Spanish) and also take a semester-long course that explores key contemporary social issues related to their selected study abroad location.

The two semesters of study abroad take place in one of 14 non-Anglophone locations across Asia (China and Japan), Europe (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Switzerland) and the Americas (Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Latino USA, Mexico, and Québec) during the fourth year of the students' undergraduate degree programme. Approximately 250 students undertake the study abroad programme each year.

As is common in international exchange programmes, the students who participate in this study abroad programme complete courses at their host university. During the sojourn, they also enrol in courses organised by their home university which require them to reflect on their intercultural awareness and engagement. The students must also undertake an independently chosen and designed research project, which requires significant local fieldwork and data collection on a contemporary aspect of their host society. By way of an e-learning platform, students are provided with extensive learning materials to scaffold the tasks. These online materials include learning guides, readings on research methodologies, and exemplar projects. Orientation to the use of these materials and the purpose of the tasks is conducted in the semester leading up to the students' study abroad period.

Each student is assigned an academic mentor to work with for the year they are abroad. Depending on the size of the student cohort in any given year, a

team of 12 to 15 academics are engaged in mentoring the students who are at various locations around the globe. Each academic has a research background and expertise related to the particular host society and culture(s) where their allocated students are living, including proficiency in the local language(s). All of the students who are studying in a particular country are usually supervised by the same academic but when there are large numbers of students in a specific country, they are divided among several academics. The students' work is graded by their assigned academic at the home university and the marks are recorded on their academic transcripts. Further details about the students' academic work, examples of their projects, and details about their level of engagement with the local community are presented in Oguro (2016).

During the sojourn, communication between the academic and student is primarily conducted using email or Skype. The use of communication technologies offers the academics the means to guide and facilitate the students' intercultural learning while they are in the target country. Researchers in the field of study abroad have acknowledged the value of communication technologies for educators as they allow them to remain connected to their students while they are abroad and also enable the implementation of online learner-centred interventions during the sojourn (Lou and Bosley 2012; Savicki and Brewer 2015; Deardorff 2015). In addition to distance communication, in this programme, there is one face-to-face meeting in the host location when the academic travels to the students' study abroad location.

The mentoring provided to the students during their study abroad year includes support and advice which aims to refine and challenge their ideas as they carry out the reflective and research-based assessment tasks. These interventions are intentional, with each mentor regularly guiding their assigned students through the purposes, nature, and process of conducting each of the six assessment tasks throughout the year. Communication is in the form of messages addressed to the whole group via email or posted on a message board, or private messages addressed to individual students directly. The amount of contact with each student varies according to individual needs and circumstances, and may range from around three emails per semester to weekly contact. The focus of the assessment tasks and the style of supervision provided by the academic is highly learner-focused to encourage students to individually engage with the host society and reflect on their intercultural encounters. This approach aligns with Vande Berg, Connor-Linton, and Paige's (2009) recommendation of a learner-centred intervention as well as Felten et al.'s (2013) notion of mentoring as the creation of a space for discussion that builds on the experiences of each student.

Participants

At the students' home university in Australia, an invitation to participate in this exploratory study was extended to the 12 academics who were serving as mentors for study abroad students during the 2016 academic year (autumn and

spring semesters). Five volunteered to share their mentoring experiences in semi-structured interviews. Given the relatively small number of academics in the programme, limited personal details are provided about the participants to ensure anonymity. The five interviewees were broadly representative of the larger team in terms of their disciplinary background (e.g., cultural, language, literary, political studies) and they were engaged in mentoring students in Asia, Europe, or the Americas. The gender balance in the group of participants was also in line with the full cohort of mentors. The amount of their experience in mentoring study abroad students varied, with two, four, seven, nine, and twelve years. In the chapter, the interviewees are referred to by pseudonyms.

Data collection and analysis

Data were collected in the form of semi-structured interviews with the five academics (see Table 6.1 for a list of the leading questions that were used in the interviews). The questions were designed to elicit data on their experiences as academic mentors and in particular the methods they use to nurture their students'

Table 6.1 Guiding questions for interviews with facilitators

Interview questions

1. Tell us about yourself and the length of time you have been teaching in the In-Country Studies (ICS) programme.
   - How many years have you done this?
   - Have you done a similar task in previous jobs here or elsewhere?
2. Tell us about the aims of ICS that are mentioned in the curriculum documents.
   - What is the aim of intercultural reflection?
   - Can you give some examples of how the curriculum documents deconstruct this?
3. Tell us about the meaning of ICS supervision for you.
   - What does supervision mean to you?/How do you see your role in fostering the students' intercultural learning and reflection?
   - How do you carry out your supervision?/How do you engage your students (pre-/during/post-study abroad)?
   - Why do you carry out your ICS supervision in the way that you do?
4. Tell us about your perceptions of your students' reactions to this supervision.
   - Do you perceive that your supervision makes a difference to their experience of living and studying overseas? How do you know? Give some examples.
5. How do you build a relationship of trust with students so that they can share their intercultural experiences (e.g., explorations of their host society while studying abroad)?
6. How do you deal with student issues that arise (e.g., language level, homesickness, adjustment problems, fear of failure, etc.)?
7. To what extent do you try to encourage a community approach through the way you mentor the students?
8. Do you use personal stories with students? If so, what does your personal storytelling entail?

developing intercultural awareness and encourage local engagement. Drawing on Felten et al.'s (2013) notion of formative mentoring, and in particular the three themes of trust, community, and narrative outlined above, the interviews sought to draw out the academics' experiences of building a relationship of trust with their students on an individual level, the extent to which they seek to create community among the group of students, and the role of narratives in facilitating student reflections and intercultural learning.

Each interview lasted between 45 and 70 minutes and was conducted by one of the authors. Our role can be considered that of participant-researcher given that two of us have had extensive experience teaching on the programme and mentoring study abroad students; one brought similar experience from another university. Our shared experiences allowed for a relaxed, collegial discussion with the interviewees. Of course, our familiarity with the participants may have also influenced some to withhold information. To encourage them to freely disclose their views, it was made clear that the aim of the study was not to evaluate their performance as mentors but to collect examples of their practices to better understand the methods of cultural mentoring of students during study abroad. Participants were assured that they would be able to withdraw their participation at any time. None chose to do so.

The audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed and subjected to an initial content analysis (Ryan and Bernard 2000) by each researcher individually and then collaboratively, which enabled common themes to be identified. In particular, we examined how each interviewee saw his or her role in facilitating students' intercultural learning. The analyses then involved the sorting of data according to the three themes identified by Felton et al. (2013) on higher education mentoring, namely *Trust and Guidance*, *Community*, and *Narrative*. This afforded further insight into the practices and challenges of mentoring students during their sojourns.

Findings and discussion

The analysis of the interviewees' responses confirmed that they saw their roles not only as supervisors of academic programmes but also as cultural mentors who seek to facilitate students' engagement with the host society and prompt deeper reflection on intercultural experience. They explained that as mentors they try to encourage their students to 'engage with the local community', 'contrast and critique the different societies – the one they come from and the one they're in at the time', 'challenge stereotypes', and 'think about why differences have come about in host societies'. Such statements are aligned with research literature on intercultural learning, such as the desire to help their students develop the ability to shift cultural perspectives (Hammer 2012) and refrain from making snap judgements when interpreting unfamiliar behaviours in the host culture (Scarino 2009). Few, however, made explicit connections to intercultural development theories or recent work in the field of intercultural education.

The remainder of the discussion of the findings centres on the three themes of *Trust and Guidance*, *Community*, and *Narrative* to highlight in practical terms how the interviewees view their roles and responsibilities as mentors. Their sharing offers insight into their mentoring practices and provides direction for the preparation and support of other academics who are expected to provide intercultural mentorship for study abroad students.

Trust and guidance

The interviewees explained that the mentoring process in the study abroad programme must be based on a relationship of trust and guidance between academics and students. This aspect of the mentoring approach begins in the pre-sojourn phase, namely in the six semesters before students undertake study abroad. These meetings help the students prepare for study abroad in practical terms and also facilitate the building of a constructive student–mentor relationship. On a personal level, this phase allows the academics to familiarise themselves with the profile of each student and helps the students to become acquainted with their mentor.

The academics interviewed in this study made an effort to foster a relationship of trust between themselves and the students. The interviewees reported that trust developed as they informed and guided students through the study abroad year. They covered a range of topics and concerns, such as basic information about the host university or city, adjustment issues, and academic matters. The following statement illustrates how one academic viewed the aims of this type of guidance: 'I just try... to be reassuring giving them as much as information as possible because the whole year abroad is so unknown to them' (Katia).

Another interviewee explained how he believed study abroad students benefit from the guidance that academics provide, not only in terms of the supervision of their project work and assessment tasks, but also in terms of helping them to deal with the personal challenges that many students face as they adjust to the new environment. This academic underscored the value of having a specific mentor assigned to each student:

> Some of them [the students] let us know that the guidance has been good for them... The fact that from one assignment to the next they're taking on board what you said, thinking more critically about the society they're in, for example... But, there are a lot of other issues as well... They feel they've got someone who is there, who will answer them promptly or who will help them.
>
> (Chris)

The interviewees also stated that much of the guidance they offer needs to relate to the student's specific circumstances. As the following comment illustrates, one

academic reported incorporating a problem-solving approach that focused on the needs of each of her mentees:

> We don't know exactly what happens once they arrive so I guess we encourage them to find their own individual paths, there is not just this golden key.
>
> (Tanya)

Vande Berg et al. (2012) stress that the main aim of study abroad is not 'simply to acquire knowledge but to develop in ways that allow students to learn to shift cultural perspective and to adapt their behavior to other cultural contexts' (18). Yet to help the mentors shift the cultural perspectives of their students requires them to understand each student's 'genetic makeup, previous learning experiences, and current needs and interests' (Vande Berg et al. 2012: 18). The interviewees' comments above suggest that they take into account the students' individual differences and aspirations and recognise that these are key factors that influence the ways in which students' intercultural learning develops (see also Giovanangeli and Oguro 2016 for a discussion of individual elements that impact developmental trajectories).

The interviewees also commented that the nature of the relationship between individual academics and students is somewhat ambiguous because of the interplay between the supervision of academic tasks and the more personal dimensions of mentoring. A common practice in distance teaching programmes is to send group emails to provide support for the academic tasks and projects that the full cohort of students has been assigned. The tasks require students to choose an aspect of their host society and culture to investigate, and this naturally generates individual questions from students that deal with specific intercultural issues. As the following excerpt illustrates, discussions of academic matters may become very personal in nature.

> Normally before assessments, I send a group reminder, explain what the assessment is about... then [communicate] on a one-to-one basis. Sometimes students open up and say it is really difficult [study abroad]. We give as much support as we can on cultural knowledge and in a flexible way because there is not just the one concept. I can't say this is how the locals in the host country are, you have to be careful with generalisations. So basically we give advice but with a lot of flexibility and pathways on individual experiences that allows them [the students] to reflect on themselves.
>
> (Tanya)

Thus, the group emails often prompt individual, personal discussions between individual students and the academic who has been assigned to work with them. In these exchanges, mentors may offer advice on intercultural strategies to help students deal with the issues they are facing.

Another academic referred to the challenge of helping students who are confronted by situations that challenge their judgement and sense of integrity. He explained that they struggle to find a balance between what is considered acceptable behaviour in their home and host cultures. To illustrate his point, he provided an example of a situation in which he prodded his mentee to reflect on options to deal with sexual harassment:

> [I say to them] You have to use strategic judgement. You don't have to compromise your integrity, you know. For example, men 'wolf whistle' women in the street but students say it is an accepted cultural norm here but I say you don't have to put up with that just because it is a local cultural norm. What is your priority? Being a woman first or a supplicant international exchange student who accepts everything?
>
> (Kelvin)

Kelvin also added that 'they struggle with this because they get the message that if I go to another country they must be respectful. I find students struggle with that, to find the right balance' (Kelvin). This situation underscores the role of the educator as a mentor who helps students engage in critical thinking about complex cultural scenarios.

In situations of this nature, the aim is to encourage student reflection on themselves as individuals and to create meaning in diverse cultural contexts through guided critical analysis (Vande Berg et al. 2012). Building on Byram and Zarate's (1996) notion of cultural mediation and the attributes of an 'intercultural speaker' (240), the excerpt above illustrates how mentors can help students reflect on values in the home and host cultures and learn 'to identify the areas of contrast and contradiction in the relationship between two given communities' (Byram and Zarate 1996: 240).

Community

Mentoring study abroad students also offers multiple possibilities for community building. The analysis of the interview responses revealed that the academics generally aim to foster a group approach amongst their students and call upon former study abroad students to mentor current students, to help create an intricate community of intercultural learners.

Of course, the notion of community varies. One of the interviewees explained the approach she used to create a sense of community among her study abroad students:

> I try to get them [the students] to form a community for themselves. I say they should be reading each other's work and critically editing each other's work. I try to position myself more as a resource for them. I'm not trying to be their peer.
>
> (Katia)

For another academic, a sense of community must be nurtured during the pre-sojourn, sojourn, and post-sojourn stages. The comment below illustrates how the academic sought to empower study abroad returnees to act as mentors for the students who will soon travel abroad:

> I invite students who were on study abroad to come to talk to students about to go on exchange... The students are part of a big family and [have] a slight obligation to think about the whole program, to stay tuned in or linked through Linked In or to stay in touch through private emails.
>
> (Kelvin)

This approach was also articulated by another academic who was interviewed:

> We invite a lot of the international exchange students to our class, the 'Language and Culture' class offered here. So before our students go, they already know some of the students from their future host city... Our students see them again in the host city so they have like a sense of community. They have a community between the international exchange students and our students so I think that's helping both parties very much.
>
> (Fran)

This understanding of community focuses largely on the establishment of a supportive network, with the students at the centre. This is important as Woolf's (2007) findings indicate that significant learning can operate within study abroad student groups through 'discussion' and 'social interaction' (497). The facilitation provided by mentors relates to what Felten et al. (2013) refer to as 'process' rather than 'outcome' (32). In the study abroad context, the mentoring community generates a space of enquiry and presents students with diverse possibilities that allow them to critically assess the study abroad context through the perspective of their own experiences and evolving intercultural understanding.

Narrative

The sharing of personal narratives was a dominant feature in the mentoring practices reported by the academics. This is not surprising as extensive research in the field of education has established how the telling of stories enables individuals or groups to make sense of events (e.g., Blake 2012; Harbon and Moloney 2013; Mattos 2009; Trahar 2011). The interviewees related how they shared their own narratives with students and also elicited student narratives with the aim of enhancing intercultural learning. One academic described this as 'creating a sort of an encouraging and non-threatening communication strategy', adding 'I've found it quite helpful to bring that in [the story telling]' (Chris).

While familiarity with the host city is part of the storytelling process, what is more important is the awareness of intercultural processes and how they can be

shared with the mentee. In the following excerpt, the mentor explains how she emphasised the process of intercultural awareness while sharing her experience of adjusting to a new environment. Even though she had lived in the country where the study was studying abroad, she chose to focus on the process of adjustment and relationship building more broadly:

> I use my story for the student I just mentioned, who had a culture shock… She said that she was not able to make friends so she feels very isolated. So then I talked about my own experience when I moved to a new country, when I moved to this city or that city.
>
> (Fran)

Another interviewee stressed the value of actively listening to the words and stories of their mentees. Fran revealed the strategy that she employs to encourage student reflection and sharing:

> There was one student in first semester who just couldn't submit assignments on time, and she had culture shock so she sent me lots of emails. So rather than just telling her what to do, I tried to listen – so what was the problem, what was happening, is there anything that is bothering you? So I think I was trying to be a listener first rather than saying what I think from the start. So I think, I think that helped her. From my point of view, I think it was, at least she started to open up and tell me a lot more.
>
> (Fran)

The academics' use of narratives and active listening can prompt the students to reflect more deeply on their intercultural experience and develop new understandings of the host society. As Felten et al. (2013) emphasise, the key to a mentor's role is not proposing to students 'solutions on complex situations' but rather drawing out what is implicit within the mentee' (16).

The mentoring approach used by the academics is similar to that articulated by Felten et al. (2013) who advocated the use of 'formative mentoring'. In this approach, trust, guidance, community building, and narrative are deemed essential elements to facilitate students' intercultural learning. In the present study, the interviewees revealed that this approach is being used to support both the academic work and personal intercultural development of study abroad students.

Rather than simply adopting the role of imparters of knowledge and information, the academics who were interviewed view themselves as facilitators who provide support for the *process* of intercultural learning. In addition, in relation to the themes that were explored, the findings point to the complex and extremely individualised nature of the mentoring strategies used by the academics. While the overall programme is highly structured, with consistent learning materials, tasks, and expected learning outcomes irrespective of the study abroad location, the students' unique developmental trajectories and individual experiences in the

host community naturally mean that they have specific challenges and opportunities for intercultural learning. As noted by the interviewees, these individual elements must be recognised and reflected in the ways in which mentors interact with them.

Conclusions and pedagogical implications

As the field of study abroad research has established, simply sending university students to undertake study abroad programmes is not enough to facilitate the larger objective of intercultural learning. A growing number of study abroad researchers emphasise that students' intercultural learning is enhanced when 'educators intervene more intentionally through well-designed training programs that continue throughout the study abroad experience' (Vande Berg et al. 2012: 21). This chapter has examined the practices of a group of academics at an Australian university who facilitate the intercultural learning of study abroad students.

For those working in the study abroad sector, Felten et al.'s (2013) three features of formation mentoring (trust and guidance, community, and narrative) can inform mentoring practices in higher education, including study abroad contexts. The findings of this study also highlight the complexity of cultural mentoring. Effective mentoring not only requires educators to be familiar with intercultural concepts and theories, but also to hone facilitation skills and attributes that can help study abroad students develop a higher level of intercultural awareness and understanding.

Drawing on our findings, we offer some recommendations to help academic staff become effective mentors who can help students maximise the opportunity afforded by study abroad experience. Our ideas build on existing calls for the professional development of mentors in the study abroad sector (e.g., Paige and Goode 2009; Vande Berg et al. 2012):

1. Provide opportunities to enhance and develop study abroad professionals' familiarity with the concepts and theories which underpin intercultural learning. Ideally, this might take place within workshops where academics have the chance to critically reflect on the application of theories in their particular context.
2. Establish a support system (e.g., buddy system) within a university department, school, or international office to enable more experienced cultural mentors to guide less experienced academics. As well as providing information that is relevant to their study abroad programme, the experienced mentors could serve as models for the novice mentors.
3. Provide training on ethical issues in study abroad cultural mentoring. For example, some discussion should centre on how and when to intervene to assist students with the process of cultural reflection and analysis. It is also important to acknowledge that this work is not straightforward or easy.

4. Offer workshops led by experienced intercultural academics and study abroad specialists to enhance understandings of the mentoring process, especially in relation to the intercultural development of study abroad students. These sessions could explore how mentors could engage in active listening and use probes to facilitate intercultural thinking and reflection. Draw on recent research that could stress the need for mentors/educators to develop new communication skills and questioning styles to facilitate their students' intercultural learning (Moloney, Harbon, and Fielding 2015).

5. Establish a space for the sharing of mentoring materials related to the intercultural development of study abroad students. Exemplars of best practice within a specific context can encourage educators to reflect on their own practice and incorporate new ideas into their mentoring.

6. Encourage study abroad educators to develop comprehensive profiles of the students they are mentoring. A variety of ways to accomplish this could be shared in a workshop or in print or online materials.

While the above list is not exhaustive, we hope that it provides a stimulus for the sector to acknowledge the complexities of study abroad mentoring and recognise the need to provide adequate professional development opportunities for academics who are required to work in this capacity.

As more and more students participate in study abroad programmes globally, an increasing number of academics from different disciplinary backgrounds will be required to serve as cultural mentors in study abroad programmes, like the one described in this chapter. In order for them to effectively nurture their students' intercultural learning and optimise the opportunities afforded by study abroad programmes, academics need to hone a range of skills and attributes. The professional development of mentors is central to the success of programmes of this nature.

References

Bennett, J.M. (2008) 'On becoming a global soul: A path to engagement during study abroad', in V. Savicki (ed.), *Developing Intercultural Competence and Transformation: Theory, Research, and Application in International Education*, Sterling, VA: Stylus, pp. 13–31.

Blake, P.W. (2012) *Becoming a Teacher: Using Narrative as Reflective Practice: A Cross-Disciplinary Approach*, New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Block, D., Gray, J., and Holborow, M. (2012) *Neoliberalism and Applied Linguistics*. New York: Routledge.

Byram, M. and Zarate, G. (1996) 'Defining and assessing intercultural competence: Some principles and proposals for the European context', *Language Teaching* 29 (4): 239–43.

Deardorff, D.K. (2015) *Demystifying Outcomes Assessment for International Educators: A Practical Approach*, Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Duchêne, A. and Heller, M. (2012). 'Pride and profit: Changing discourse of language, capital and nation-state', in A. Duchêne and M. Heller (eds), *Language in Late Capitalism: Pride and Profit*, London: Routledge, pp. 1–21.

Felten, P., Dirksen, H., Bauman, L., Kheriaty, A., and Taylor, E. (2013) *Transformative Conversations: A Guide to Mentoring Communities among Colleagues in Higher Education*, Somerset, NJ: Jossey-Bass.

Giovanangeli, A. and Oguro, S. (2016) 'Cultural responsiveness: A framework for rethinking students' interculturality through study abroad', *Intercultural Education* 27 (1): 70–84.

Goode, M.L. (2008) 'The role of faculty study abroad directors: A case study', *Frontiers: Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad* 15: 149–72.

Hammer, M.R. (2012) 'The Intercultural Development Inventory: A new frontier in assessment and development of intercultural competence', in M. Vande Berg, R.M. Paige, and K.H. Lou (eds), *Student Learning Abroad: What Our Students Are Learning, What They're Not, and What We Can Do about It*, Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, pp. 115–36.

Harbon, L. and Moloney, R. (2013) 'Language teachers and learners interpreting the world: Identifying intercultural development in language classroom discourse', in F. Dervin and A.J. Liddicoat (eds), *Linguistics for Intercultural Education*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 139–59.

Jackson, J. (2012) 'Education abroad', in J. Jackson (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Intercultural Communication*, London: Routledge, pp. 449–63.

Jackson, J. (2015a) 'Becoming interculturally competent: Theory to practice in international education', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 48: 91–107.

Jackson, J. (2015b) '"Unpacking" international experience through blended intercultural praxis', in R.D. Williams and A. Lee (eds), *Internationalizing Higher Education: Critical Collaborations across the Curriculum*, Rotterdam: SENSE Publishers, pp. 231–52.

Lou, K. and Bosley, G.W. (2012) 'Facilitating intercultural learning abroad: The intentional, targeted intervention model', in M. Vande Berg, R.M. Paige, and K.H. Lou (eds), *Student Learning Abroad: What Our Students Are Learning, What They're Not, and What We Can Do about It*, Sterling, VA: Stylus, pp. 335–59.

Mattos, A.M.A. (2009) *Narratives on Teaching and Teacher Education: An International Perspective*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Moloney, R., Harbon, L., and Fielding, R. (2015) 'Pre-service teachers discovering intercultural enquiry in language classroom discourse', in W.M. Chan, S.K. Bhatt, M. Nagami, and I. Walker (eds), *Culture and Foreign Language Education*, Boston, MA: De Gruyter Mouton, pp. 59–86.

New London Group (1996) 'A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures', *Harvard Educational Review* 66 (1): 60–92.

Oguro, S. (2016) 'Facilitating students' interaction and engagement with the local society during study abroad', in L. Bleichenbacher, B. Kürsteiner, R. Frehner, and A. Kolde (eds), *Teacher Education in the 21st Century: A Focus on Convergence*, Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 247–62.

Paige, R.M. (2013) 'Factors impacting intercultural development in study abroad'. Paper presented at Elon University, North Carolina. Available at: www.elon.edu/docs/e-web/academics/international_studies/facstaff_resources/study-abroad/M%20Paige%20Elon%20PDF%20%20Study%20Abroad%20Impact%208-16-13.pdf.

Paige, R.M. and Goode, M.L. (2009) 'Cultural mentoring: International education professionals and the development of intercultural competence', in D.K. Deardorff

(ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*, Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, pp. 333–49.

Ryan, G.W. and Bernard, H.R. (2000) 'Data management and analysis methods', in N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, pp. 769–802.

Savicki, V. and Brewer, E. (eds) (2015) *Assessing Study Abroad: Theory, Tools, and Practice*, Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Scarino, A. (2009) 'Assessing intercultural capability in learning languages: Some issues and considerations', *Language Teaching* 42 (1): 67–80.

Trahar, S. (ed.) (2011) *Learning and Teaching Narrative Enquiry: Travelling in the Borderlands*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Vande Berg, M., Connor-Linton, J., and Paige, R.M. (2009) 'The Georgetown consortium project: Interventions for students learning abroad', *Frontiers: Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad* XVIII: 1–75.

Vande Berg, M., Paige, R.M., and Lou, K.H. (eds) (2012) *Student Learning Abroad: What Our Students Are Learning, What They're Not, and What We Can Do about It*, Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Woolf, M. (2007) 'Impossible things before breakfast: Myths in education abroad', *Journal of Studies in Intercultural Education* 11 (3-4), 496–509.

Ziegler, N.J. (2006) 'Culture learning in study abroad from the perspective of on-site staff in France and Senegal'. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

Chapter 7

Foregrounding intercultural learning during study abroad as part of a modern languages degree

Simon McKinnon

Study abroad programs are rich with possibilities for meaningful and transformative learning. By living, studying, and working in an unfamiliar culture, students are challenged to make sense of the novelty and ambiguity with which they are regularly confronted. As a result of this sense-making process, students adopt new ways of thinking, acting, and relating to the world. For students who move mindfully through the study abroad experience, it has the potential to change their worldview, provide a new perspective on their course of study, and yield a network of mind-expanding relationships.

(Passarelli and Kolb 2012: 137)

Introduction

Study abroad as part of a degree in modern languages provides invaluable learning opportunities not only for the acquisition of language skills and cultural knowledge, but also for the development of a range of other qualities, skills, and competences: independence and personal autonomy, enterprise and initiative, problem solving, strategic planning, employability, and, crucially, interculturality. Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that an ability to conceptualise culture and navigate intercultural relationships is central to the study of languages, many modern languages degree programmes do not exploit the full potential of study abroad as an opportunity for students to confront and interrogate interculturality theoretically and to develop intercultural skills practically. Indeed, there is a risk that students on these programmes will return from a period of study abroad with an unproblematised approach to interculturality and without being explicitly aware of their own intercultural competences and development.

The problem, however, lies not so much with the students themselves, but rather with assumptions underlying the design of curricula and, more particularly, with the integration of periods of residence abroad within these curricula. Study abroad in modern languages is often not sufficiently aligned to the broader programme learning aims and objectives: formal learning assignments may only tangentially relate to the students' placements and experiences abroad. Students are therefore left unsure about what their own personal aims and objectives for