

Title of scenario: “As time goes by ...” (Example Project: Time and the Spanish)

Target group: Students who will soon go abroad on work placements or exchange programmes and also students who are already abroad

Description of scenario: A student in his/her home country will be matched with a student who is spending a period of time in the country where he/she is going to go.

For the sake of clarity I will here choose an example which we will follow:

The German student Karsten is planning an internship in Spain. He will be matched with Marie, a Swedish student who is already in Madrid. Their common project is called “Time and the Spanish”. Karsten’s task is to design a questionnaire to find out about Spanish attitudes to time. His questions range from what the ordinary working hours in shops and offices are to how long it takes a Spanish person who waits for a bus to get nervous when the bus has not arrived. Antonella helps him by handing out the questionnaire to 20 Spanish people and by then putting the results of the mini-research into graphs. She sends the graphs to Karsten in Germany who will interpret the results and check his interpretation by sending it to Antonella. Antonella will confront some Spanish colleagues with the interpreted results. It might be possible to document the reactions of the Spanish people when they are confronted with this interpretation.

All communication between Karsten and Antonella as well as all the results will be documented in the digital platform where they will serve as a personal info bank for other students who plan their stays in Spain.

Aims:

To increase awareness of differences (and similarities) in time perceptions (monochronic vs. polychronic; linear vs. cyclical time perceptions)

To increase intercultural understanding by seeking plausible explanations for the unusual attitudes to time in the other country (e.g. long afternoon siesta in Spain)

To increase the student’s media literacy by working with online groups, posting photographs and exchanging views.

Equipment needed: Contact to the local population, questionnaire with questions about behaviour associated with time and maybe a digital camera. Access to the Internet. Some stereotypes about the foreign country in order to make assumptions about areas where time-related behaviour could be different.

Learning outcome: Both, the student who is still at home and the student who is in the host country will be encouraged to look very closely at differences in time-related behaviour between their own country and their host country. Starting from the answers that people in the host country give in the questionnaire, students will be able to gain an insight into the mindset of the host country. They will also be able to view their native society from a different perspective, as they will have to compare their home countries with their new environment.

The second learning outcome concerns improved media literacy i.e. the ability to post pictures, correspond in a meaningful way with others in the online community.