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Student's Adaptation to Córdoba, Spain

Nguyen, Thanh Xuan

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Student's Adaptation to Córdoba, Spain

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Nguyen, Thanh Xuan

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Nowadays Spain is a popular exchange destination for students. Spain has many good sides that interest many to travel, study or work there. Many are after Spain's warm weather, beaches, landscapes and even the cheap cost of living. Spain as a country has an interesting culture and habits that are worth to experience. It is recommended to learn Spanish, at least the basics, to survive the everyday life in Spain.

The purpose of this research thesis is to elucidate the cultural adjustments of exchange students in Spain and give useful advices for living in Spain. Mainly the thesis focuses on life in Spain, Spanish culture, habits and cultural encounters from the perspective of exchange students. The research concentrates on matters that a student needs to know before going there. The idea is to prevent upcoming problems and ease the adaptation process to the new environment. The main objective is to produce a handy source of information for exchange students and for Andalucía Loyola University as commissioner. This information package is drawn up by using literature and Internet sources. The used methods are observation and theme interview. The research work is meant for university students, who carry out an exchange program in Spain. The theoretical framework contains the definition of culture, Spanish culture in specific, cultural differences and behavior.

The results show similarities in the answers of all the interviewed exchange students. Most of the issues seemed to arise from the language gap. Research concludes that the main ways to tackle the obstacle in order to adapt well to the new culture, besides learning the language itself, are open-mindedness and proactive behavior.

Keywords: culture, culture shock, Spain, student adjustment to Spain, student life in Spain

Nguyen, Thanh Xuan

Opiskelijan sopeutuminen Espanjan Córdobaan

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Opiskelijavaihto Espanjaan on nykypäivänä erittäin suosittua, sillä on monta hyvää puolta, joiden vuoksi paikka kiinnostaa monia. Monet suosivat Espanjan lämmintä säätä, rannat, maisemat ja Espanjan halvat elinkustannukset. On kokemisen arvoista oppia tuntemaan Espanjan kulttuuria ja tapoja sekä elämää Espanjassa. Espanjan kielen osaaminen on suositeltavaa pärjätäkseen arkielämässä, sillä espanjalaiset eivät puhu kovin hyvin englantia.

Tämän tutkimuksellisen opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena on tuoda esiin vaihto-opiskelijan sopeutumista Espanjaan sekä antaa hyödyllisiä neuvoja. Opinnäytetyön aiheena on keskittyä Espanjan elämään, sen kulttuuriin, tapoihin ja kulttuurilliseen kohtaamiseen vaihto-opiskelijan näkökulmasta. Työ keskittyy asioihin, joita opiskelijan on hyvä tietää ennen vaihto-ohjelmaa. Kulttuurishokin välttämiseksi pyritään aina ottamaan selvää, minkälaisesta maasta on kyse ennen maahan lähtöä. Näin pystytään ennaltaehkäisemään tulevia mahdollisia ongelmia ja helpottaa huomattavasti omaa sopeutumista Espanjassa. Tavoitteena on tuottaa tietopaketti vaihto-opiskelijoille, jotka ovat lähtemässä Espanjaan opiskelemaan. Tämä tietopaketti on koottu käyttäen apuna teoriakirjallisuutta, nettilähteitä ja havainnointi- sekä teemahaastattelu-tutkimusmenetelmiä. Tutkimus on tarkoitettu korkeakouluasteen vaihto-ohjelmaan lähteville vaihto-opiskelijoille. Opinnäytetyön tietoperustassa määritellään kulttuuria, Espanjan kulttuuria, kulttuurilliset eroavaisuudet ja käyttäytymistä sekä opiskelijana olemista Espanjassa.

Työn tuloksessa ilmeni yhtäläisyyksiä haastateltujen vastauksissa. Merkittävänä havaintona nousi kielen osaamisen tärkeys. Sopeutuakseen hyvin uuteen kulttuuriin ja ympäristöön tärkeintä ovat avomielisyys ja proaktiivinen käyttäytyminen.

Asiasanat: Espanja, kulttuuri, kulttuurishokki, opiskelijan elämä Espanjassa, sopeutuminen ulkomailla

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1 Introduction

The central topic in this thesis is a research using a theme interview for university students from other countries that come to Córdoba, Spain, to study. Thesis focus on student's adaptation to Spain, particularly in Córdoba city. Going to study exchange abroad and whole new culture environment always brings new challenges. There is constantly a possibility for culture differences, therefore gathering information about target country before going there is very important. It will help to adjust better, understand the new environment and the way of life. The main question of this functional research are as followings. What is good to know about Spain before going there to study? How is the student's process of adaptation in Córdoba? What cultural differences has a student faced? The purpose of this thesis is to clarify those questions so exchange students can make used of them.

The research focus on matters that are related to everyday life and Spanish culture. Main purpose is to give students foundations to learn Spanish cultural behaviors and at the same time stand up the importance of these necessities to adopt Spanish habits and manners that will make student's social life more efficient and versatile. Like Graff (2008, 4) has mentioned the motto "when in Spain, do as the Spaniards do" as the boundaries of common sense. The meaning of this, is you could experience more by living like Spanish. Although this does not mean to abandon own standards and culture but having the correct behavior will be appreciated and ensure a cooperative friendliness in future.

Nowadays as we can see that the world is becoming more global and main interest is to travel abroad either for their studies or work. Many might face the culture shock or not at all. In this case it is very individual. As a target it would be good that this would be in good use for new coming students that are going to study in Spain. This thesis can use as an information tool for making easier to live abroad and encounter culture differences. Consequently it will make faster the process of adjustment in foreign country when one has enough information before going to target country.

Contents of thesis and research results of the work form the overview of Spain as a country. Furthermore, the thesis open more the concepts of culture such as identifying the culture, student's adaptation in unfamiliar country, cultural encounter and also main information about the culture of Spain. As well included basics about interview and qualitative study research.

2 Background

As a background field this thesis is focused in Córdoba in Spain and target persons are exchange students from other countries that come to Córdoba to study in Universidad Loyola Andalucía. Depending on students' culture background it differ somehow, how these students actually face Spanish culture and encounter it. In the next chapter will explain more about Spain and Andalucía-province in generally, Spanish culture and tell more about Universidad Loyola Andalucía. With this information it makes a good foundation and make you have a basic knowledge about these matters before going to Córdoba.

2.1 General information about Spain and Andalucía

Spain is located in South-West-Europe. The population in Spain is around 47 million and Madrid, as a capital, is the biggest city with the population around 3 million. Spanish is an official spoken language. Based on Hobbs (2005, 43) aside from Spanish (Castilian), there are at least three other prominent spoken languages: the Basques, Gallegos and Catalans that are so-called also "historical nationalities". As a neighbor, there is in North, French, and a small Andorra nation and in West side, Portugal. The Canary Islands in Atlantic side, the Balearic Islands in Mediterranean Sea and few islands in the coast of Morocco are also part of the Spain, as well as the city of Ceuta and Melilla, that are situated in the North-Africa. (Espanja 2014.)



Figure 1: Spain-map (Maps of World 2012.)

Spain became independent in 1512 and in 1978, after created constitution, Spain was divided to 17 autonomous communities (see Figure 1) with own flag. Every autonomous community is divided as well into provinces. There are 50 provinces in Spain. Moreover in five autonomous communities, those are in officially bilingual regions. In Balearic Islands, Catalonia and Valencia use Catalan, in Basque country Basque language and in Galicia uses Galician. (Espanja 2014.) Hobbs (2005, 43) has written that some of the regions act like separated countries by operating their own police forces and the education and health systems are controlled by themselves. Though the reason for the regional divisions of Spain are not by simply political. Rather also differences are evident: in language, culture, traditions, landscapes, cuisine, architectures and attitudes. Each region is individual in its own way. (Hobbs 2005, 43-44.)

Andalucía is one of the biggest autonomous communities with population of 7 million and which capital is Sevilla. Andalucía is in southernmost region and border by Atlantic, Gibraltar and Medi-terranean Sea in south and Portugal. Also in north, it is border by Castile La Mancha which is autonomous communities. Andalucía is divided to 6 provinces that are Almería, Cádiz, Córdoba, Granada, Huelva, Jaén, Málaga and Sevilla. (Espanja.org. 2014.) Andalucía was once Spain's poorest region, especially Sevilla, Malaga and Granada, that are now the most attractive and popular among tourists who appreciate region's sandy beaches, beautiful countryside, mountain ranges, fabulous monuments and high-spirited people who live the life to the fullest and are warm and helpful. Andalucía is also known for the home of flamenco and bullfighting. In Andalucía, there can be seen fascinating cities that have unspoiled villages and white towns. Therefore it gives a chance to experience Spanish real life and cultural flavors that are worth it to experience. (Andalucia 2014.)

2.2 Spanish entertainment and culture

The most ill-famed Spanish entertainment is bullfights which ritualized by bull killing. It is seen spectacle of cruelty by many foreigners and for Spaniards it is an art form that can be compared with ballet with courage and technique of the bullfighter, and stamina and cunning of the bull. Notwithstanding by it, it does not even shown any signs of abating among Spanish people. A bullfight is in many village fiestas an indispensable part. This kind of entertainment is not highly recommended for sensitive people. (Graff 2008, 122.)

Flamenco is Spain's best known music and dance which is originated in Sevilla and Jerez, in Andalucía. The flamboyant dance with guitar music and songs is performed in theatres and bars and mostly in the tourist resorts. Also in fiesta time it can be seen performed in the

streets in very spontaneously way. The best chance to see and hear good flamenco is in flamenco festivals which are held in throughout Andalucía during the summer months. Flamenco has two main singing styles that are cante chico, with meaning of small song, and cante jondo, it means deep song. Performance of flamenco is usually light weighted and cheerful but the latter is sad and passionate. (Graff 2008, 127-128.)

Only 25 % of movies in Spanish cinemas are home-made and the rest are dubbed into Spanish. These have been a problem for foreigner who does not know much about Spanish language. Though Graff (2008, 126-127.) mentioned that in few larger cities in Spain have cinemas which show in the original language. In that case there can be seen as listed in papers and marked with the letters "V.O" that goes for Original Version. However going to see real Spanish movies is an improving way to polish up the language skill and also give more aspects of Spanish society. By just seeing how a language is spoken and how it sounds can be as teaching as listening to it even when not always understand them all perfectly. During the summer months in local plaza, there is the cinema festival that is called cine de verano, are one of the absorbing way for Spanish culture also. (Hobbs 2005, 240-241.)

2.3 Universidad Loyola Andalucía

First of all located in Córdoba and Sevilla and it is the first private Andalucía university which mission is to train men and women for being the best people for the world. Before 2014 this university was called ETEA and still in nowadays local people still think it as an ETEA and have not gotten used to a new name yet. This university of Córdoba focus on Faculty of Economic and Business Sciences and its purpose is to expand Business and Administration Sciences studies all over Spain. The Universidad Loyola Andalucía offers quite wide kinds of courses in business and economics through the bachelor's degree in Business. Moreover since 2013 university has offered many new degrees such as law, communication and social work. As a teaching languages those are Spanish and English. (Universidad Loyola Andalucía 2013.)

As a part of multilingual and multicultural environment, it is much more than a school of languages. The institution is focused on research, education and action serves those in need. The values are passion for learning, demanding attitude, leadership, commitment, service, dialogue, excellence, exigency, universality and sustainability. For the case of teaching the courses and guiding the learning process, Universidad Loyola Andalucía has an excellence teaching staff who has a large knowledge of the economic and business field. The main teaching method is going forward with an active and participative methodology that student is the main point in the learning process. This methodology helps to train for leadership that is combined with intellectual training and mastery of technical knowledge and those leads to development of social relationship skills. Moreover in the development of learning process

there is many courses, languages, theater, sport activities, training courses, seminars, internships, academic exchanges and so on that works with educative project. (Universidad Loyola Andalucía 2013.)

In generally university's students have between 20 and 25 contact hours of classes per week and mostly those are in the classroom, assignments, case studies, practical sessions etc. that are depending on the subject and lecturer. Usually also lecturers include other complementary assessment such as assignments, problem-solving and presentation in class. Spanish grade are giving as numerical, from 0 to 10. A minimum grade to pass a course is 5. (Universidad Loyola Andalucía 2013.)

In Universidad Loyola Andalucía, it quite accepts a lot of exchange students all over the world every year that tells that this university is international. For exchange students university offers a very good information package for them that include many useful information and likewise international tutors who help eagerly new coming exchange students to adapt the life in Córdoba more easily. During the stay in Universidad Loyola Andalucía international students will have to attend for the introduction meeting in welcome week and those students will get information about institution, the city, the registration procedure etc. Additionally Loyola organizes some cultural activities and tours in Córdoba. Exchange students will also have a free Spanish course during their first days in Cordoba to improve the language skills and get to know more about Spanish culture. (Universidad Loyola Andalucía 2013.)

3 Culture

This chapter will introduce the meaning of culture and what differences there is. The key point is to give students a great way to adapt a new culture and understand the social behavior. By having these knowledges, they helps one to have a great aspect for future outcomes.

3.1 Defining culture

At least one time in a person's life, one will meet a substitute with different culture background. There is many reasons being abroad such as a desire to experience new things, holiday causes, study and work excuses. More and more, every activity has become international. It is vital to be a part of this that act as an advantage for further. Defining the word culture, can come from many different starting points and it is multilateral. According to Salminen and Poutanen (1996, 8) they have defined the meaning of culture as a people's action and as a produce of activity. Typically in the cultural community are associate with language, race quality, religion and fellowship with shared history. Defining the meaning of

culture may not be easy because this word is very wide scale that are build up with many things that are shared with: value, religion, history, behaviors to handle time and relationships etc. Salminen and Poutanen (1996, 8-9) related that the central part of understanding the culture could be hard to realize the real meaning. Even started to live in a foreign country, will not lead to completely understand the country's culture. As a part of culture, it is based on individual's act and behaviors that are learnt to relate to environment. In individual's environment aspects, they are grounded with belief, attitudes, self-definition, norms and values. According to Frisk and Tulkki (2005, 7) they point out that every person acts instinctively along with their internalizations of values and etiquettes. Hence the culture influences partly who we are. (Triandis 1994, 1-3.)

It is defined that culture and language are always connected. By communicating with the language one gets to inside of culture circle. This leads automatically to intercultural communication. With country's own culture and language, it separate them from others that give a recognition to something unique and having differences comparing to others. It is typical to hear some individual or group to say "They are different, they do not do things the way as we do. They are strange." Therefore being connected could be important and it is heighten to note how important it is the communication with others, the common language. It is all about confrontation of one language-culture link with another. We need to communicate individually, as we meet, converse, talk, struggle i.e. in face-to-face interaction. That is intercultural communication. (Senft, Östman & Verschueren, 2009. 185-189.)

Frisk and Tulkki (2005, 6-7) note that from the aspect of history culture, it has also a meaning of tradition that has passed on from generation to another. Everything what is practical, functional and precious passed on forward. For example folk poetry, stories, beliefs, traditional foods and folk dance characterize culture's features.

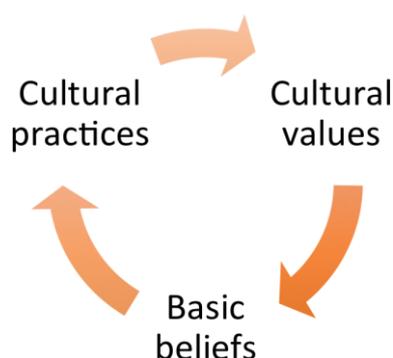


Figure 2: A Closed system of culture (Maude 2011, 4-5.)

In Picture 2 it is an integrative circle of culture. It is a system of values, beliefs and practices that is to be said to solve universal problems (Maude 2011, 4-5). Maude (2011, 4-5) point that these universal problems refer for example that how children should be raised, how one should behaved depending another's age. Solving universal problems depend on each cultures unique way to solve that differ from others. As a part of inheritance of culture, it usually reflect on social behaviors and habits. This is the reason it would make an unpleasant feeling for behaving along with unfamiliar culture's norms. In addition the strength of voice and the speed of talk vary in different culture and theirs deviation from the usual may cause confusion (Frisk & Tulkki 2005, 6-7.)

3.1.1 Culture shock

The word of culture shock run into you when being in foreign country with unfamiliar culture. Accordingly culture shock is called when being wrapped up in a foreign culture for a long-standing period that may give a frustration emotion. Moving to another country and living temporally in unfamiliar culture is always a huge change of life. It always causes some among of stress or tension because it is all about new environment with strangers. It is vital to notice that culture shock does not mean only the "shock" or outrage like it is a typically way to think but it includes variable stages where it has the change in sensation that goes from pleasant to displeasing. (Aro 1998, 17-18.)

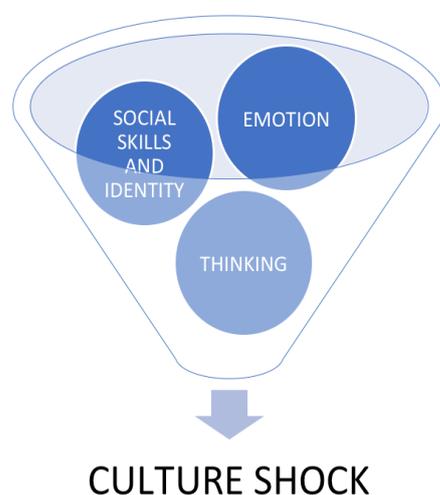


Figure 3: the culture shock's funnel

Based on the model of culture shock in picture 2, has Marx (1999, 12) uttered that for the cultural encounters there is consequences, involved by the potential stress and the adjustment to overtake satisfaction. However the culture shock leads to confusion about individual's roles and values. Therefore for improving the international effectiveness, it is needed to consider all the levels of culture shock in picture 2. Emotion part tells about

individuals' mood that what person are likely to feel. Individual's change of life that means for moving to foreign country has a risk of psychological difficulties like depression, anxiety or nervous breakdown that have an influence of one's well-being. (Marx 1999, 13-14.)

The thinking part in picture 2 means a stereotypic thinking. Living in a familiar and predictable environment always makes everything easier and brings a secure feeling. The meaning of norms and values are clear. Nevertheless it is necessary to be able to expand the way of thinking and learn new things. Things cannot take as a generalization because there is some things that have own meanings depending on cultures. For this reason understanding and absorbing them to oneself helps to encounter the culture. Marx (1999, 15) points that there is three ways how a person behaves when facing a new situation or situation that does not make sense: a person started to ignore and not even react to the foreign culture, started to treat it as a familiar situation, therefore it draws to the wrong conclusion or a person admits that it does not make sense to he or she and try to enlarge the "typical thinking" for looking more information and develop a new way of thinking. Ideally everyone wants to achieve the effective state that means being aware of the complexity of exchanges in unfamiliar culture and trying to adapt the changes in thinking and attitudes by trying to make a compromise between cultures. (Marx 1999, 15-16.)

Finally the meaning of social skills and identity in picture 2 is one's identity of self develops in mature state of self-knowledge and self-acceptance that leads to a knowledge of individual's personality. The sensation of secure get lower in unfamiliar environment and the behaviors that make sense in home country may not have a same meaning in abroad. For example self-confidence and directness have a positive assess in the USA but would be rude and improper in Vietnam. It concludes to shaken up self-identify. Hence it is possible that one may not understand some of other's behavior or feeling ups and downs that he or she experiences as a part of adaptation. Then it is necessary to build up again the identity by integrating new experiences and reactions into our "old self". By changing oneself it occurred to a conflict of cultural values of differences when facing a new culture. (Marx 1999, 16-17; Voestermans & Verheggen, 2013. 2-6.)

3.1.2 Cultural differences and stereotypes of culture

For making different explanations for success and failure, it is variable and depends on culture. Using the same example like Triandis (1994, 133) about Japanese and American. Japanese usually explain the success by referring the help of others and failure by pointing out to the lack of effort. Whereas Americans prefer to explain the success to their ability and the failure to the difficulty of the job. Notice that ability and effort are internal to the individual and external are the difficulty of task and luck. For the internal sides to the

person, it is likely easier to do something about it because you can change the effort to be better in effective way but about task difficulty or ability there is not much to do. (Triandis 1994, 133-134.)

It is said that the greater the differences between groups of people or detail of appearances are, the more likely it is that the person will give the idea of the stereotyped image of others. The significance for stereotypes are likely a comparative judgment that people experience as an unconditional. An important separation is between normative stereotype and a personal stereotype. In reality we do not actually have direct knowledge of exacting groups of people. For example the chance of getting a stereotype about Eskimo are obvious even that you have not ever meet an Eskimo. This is called normative stereotype that has influenced on you by school lessons or writers. Personal stereotypes take shape based on individual's own experience with the other group. That experience is likely to be flawed but having more and more contact with that specific group may turn into more correct. The stereotypes differ a lot depend on countries and which international relations there is with other countries are positive or negative. Particularly also if there are countries that are seen as powerful, active, excitable, unique or familiar. Finally it is understandable that the view of stereotype is affected by how often the contact is. The more contact there is, the more contrast will be given to the group. Consequently the more differences there is, the more expected we are about ourselves being different from another. (Triandis 1994, 137-140.)

3.1.3 Social behavior

There is many differences in the meaning of social behaviors among cultures. There is methods for identifying social behavior so it makes possible to train to take these differences into account. Each culture has its own standards for social behaviors that is needed to recognize. Therefore understanding the cultural differences in social behavior can enable to social interaction and avoid misunderstandings. Some behaviors can be easily to be successfully predicted for knowing a meaning of roles and behaviors gained from samples in a given culture as the basic information from what a person will response to the behavior of another. (Triandis 1994, 116-118.)

Mostly the thing that define the individual's social behavior based on self-definition, perception of the situation and habits. For internalizing the differentiation on culture it is needed to be aware of these differences to avoid a certain kind of behavior that can be seen as rudeness in a certain culture. For example in the intercultural situation showing the bottom of shoes by crossing legs or placing them in table is seen as enormously insult in Lebanon. In other hand in America it is a sign of comfort and relax. However having knowledge about this may needed to change own habits not to do so for considering other's

culture. It can be seen that habit determines the behaviors. Mostly, when being in a new situation or being surprised of some events, it leads to think conclusively. It is typical that a person will stop using a certain habit as a replacement, he or she will gather information to make a decision about how to behave. (Triandis 1994, 209-210.)

Self-definition is necessitating to act in the way that have a thought of rightness and morality in particular situation. Social behavior is also an agreement made with others. This can be called also a special kind of personal norm. The effect on behavior depends on the attitude how we feel toward another, is it liking or hate, and the emotions that reflects on another. These will shape the thought of doing something. For example if you are getting a hating on someone it is obviously impossible to act in a certain demand behavior such as the thought as “I should be kind and touch” and the hate attitude toward that person will not make it possible. (Triandis 1994, 209-211.)

3.2 As a student in foreign culture

In this moment a student has decided to go to study abroad. This decision tells that he or she wants to go to see the world and having an international experience. Going to abroad is committed with many positives matters such as it gives a change to take a look on new culture, learn a new language, get new friends and educate yourself. Certainly with positives matters there is also some negatives such as new environment, different country and culture, practical arrangement of moving and adjustment process individually. So it is unavoidable to think closely reasons to go to abroad, what you want to receive and the main purposes. Also if you are ready to leave your family and friends toward new experiences. The list goes on but by thinking these things and having still made your mind to study abroad, it will make the adjustment process much easier. (Saviaro & Helaniemi 2005, 28-29.)

Commonly when student go to study abroad, it always happens either alone or with a friend. When going with a friend everything will naturally be easier in every aspects but it is possible that you will not learn same certain things as going alone abroad. On the other hand going along can end up to undergo some challenges. The practical arrangement may be always easier but mental pressure is accordingly bigger. It can take a lot of energy and effort to get used to a new environment with new people around. When our cultural environment change, usually we will start to realize how different we are. This leads to make some changes on our own behavior's pattern. In other words you have to start over indeed but at the same time this force you to move forward and be active in social way for avoiding feeling alone and depression. Similarly one will start to see more the surroundings and experience more different things when get cut from the group where the usual safety feeling are shaped. Even

though going abroad is a very exciting moment and it will be spend in a splendid way. (Saviaro & Helaniemi 2005, 35; Voestermans & Verheggen, 2013. 3-4.)

When placing yourself into foreign culture where values and behaviors, habits and routines differ a lot from where we have raised into, it requires adaptability. In a foreign country can be noted easily that insignificant matters such as greetings, discussion style and interaction in daily life may cause problems at first. As Saviaro and Helaniemi (2005, 74-75) have made a list of advices that help in adaptation that are as followings. Be patient and remember that there is many things that may not be handle in the same way and efficient way as in home country. There is no reason to hurry and make busy schedule that will only lead to unnecessary stress and frustration right away at the start. Taking first step bravely can lead to many good things. Therefore remember to be active and participate in events where you can meet new people and create a new social network. It is very easy to get stuck on own same friends that are same nationality. These people bring the feeling of safety and the easiness of communication. Thus there is no sense to go abroad for a reason to get to know new things and make unique experiences if there is no brave to make a big first step forward. (Saviaro & Helaniemi 2005, 74-75.)

3.2.1 Student's adjustment in Spain

In the adaptation process there is many things that are needed to take care. For going study abroad there is always some kind of orientation day for new coming students that explains practical issues and rules, Spanish culture and university's backgrounds. These all are examples that make the adaptation easier and make all more understandable. For the start a student must do some necessary things before going to Spain such as finding an accommodation and all the issues regarding to a renting process, opening a bank account if necessary and language self-training. It is vital to be aware of basics of economic situation in Spain and common socially encounters like greetings, culture and habits. (Saviaro & Helaniemi 2005, 82-83.)

Córdoba, Spain

<i>Meal in Restaurant</i>	9.50€
<i>Milk (regular), 1L</i>	0.81€
<i>Chicken breasts (boneless, skinless), 1kg</i>	5.10€
<i>Beef, 1kg</i>	6.50€
<i>Water, 1.5L bottle</i>	0.75€
<i>Bottle of wine</i>	3.25€
<i>Domestic beer, 0,5L bottle</i>	0.87€
<i>Pack of Cigarettes (Marlboro)</i>	4.85€

<i>One-way Ticket (Local Transport)</i>	1.20€
Apartment (1 bedroom) in City Centre	400.00€
<i>Apartment (3 bedrooms) in City Centre</i>	733.33€

Table 1: Cost of living in Spain (Numbeo 2015.)

In Spain there are thousands of apartment for rent that are possible through both commercial agents and private owners. Spanish rentals depend on the city for example flats in Mallorca are started minimum of 800€ per month and in the same stage is Madrid. Prices are defined on the size of flat, the time of the year and the location; flats near to beaches obviously raise the price. For students it would be very advantageous to look for shared flat in Córdoba and the price are expected to pay 250€, more or less, per month (table 1). With the rent price it is usual that water and internet are included. There is some rental agents that cooperates with university. It is more convenient and speed up the process to find a flat. It is compulsory to sign the rental contract in Spain just like in all other countries. It is available to find both short- and long-term depending on how long a student is going to stay in Spain. More details about rental contract, it has to include always personal details about renter and landlord, the terms of the lease and payment and expenses details and also the amount of rent. When signing a contract, usually you have to pay specific amount of deposit for covering the damage and this deposit will be returned depends on the state of the property when the contract is terminated. Moreover there is needed to pay bills for electricity, gas and the telephone besides rent. (Hobbs 2005, 136-140; Numbeo 2015.)

Health service in Spain has both public and private health care and every person that makes social security payments, who receives a pension state, is unemployment or under 18 age is justified to a free medical treatment. The free healthcare is such an advantage because it is available for all in Spain as a part of European Union countries. In Spain the only thing that is compulsory to pay for is prescription medicine, except for pensioner. However this is not a perfect system and there is some certain disadvantages. Such as long waiting list, one can go to see a doctor only in a specific time and have to visit special national health center. These disadvantages can be irritation if thinking that you have to always make an appointment for seeing a doctor and this appointment will be at least happen in next week or more. Also local public's doctor is available for example only from 8 am to 1 pm and after this time you have to travel to other city to find a doctor that is still on duty and this can turn out to be very frustration. (Hobbs 2005, 221-222.)

About economic state in Spain comparing to such as other Northern European countries, it is lower in the cost of living, look table 1, and comparing to Asia countries like Korea, Spain is little more expensive. Nevertheless those people who see that Spain is cheaper has make it as a reason why foreign people decide to move or travel to Spain. The tax on alcohol and most

of the prices in shops are lower (table 1). Shopping hours are changing little by little and supermarkets and department stores open between 8am to 10am and are closed either at 10 pm or 11pm. Between 2pm to 5pm it is common that stores are closed for lunch and a siesta. On Sunday mostly all shops are closed cause of the law. For the food shopping many international brands are available in Spain. Those who are determined to experience the Spanish way of life, there are small shops which sell food and drinks without paying extras and bigger markets which offer high quality and fresh product in the best prices. On the other hand if you will not survive without home country's favorite food products, there are possibilities to order via internet that will ship them even directly to your door. As there is said that going shopping to local markets despite indoor or outdoor ones, it is a best way to bring you more closely with locals. (Hobbs 2005, 248- 250; Numbeo 2015.)

3.2.2 Social adjustment

Even though there is tens of millions of tourists visiting Spain each year and make Spain in the same time one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world. There is still many cities like Córdoba that very few Cordobean speak English but obviously in these kind of cities many foreign can taste the real Spanish flavors. Nevertheless for understanding the real Spanish character and attitudes, knowledge of history and ancient are the must and this can do in successfully way by learning the Spanish language to communicate with Spanish. After all Spanish is an international language, after Chinese, English and Hindustani, it is one of the most dominant language in the world, spoken by at least 320 million people in 20 countries. So it is very useful to learn Spanish in a wider scale. It is strongly advised that before going to Spain one needs to learn the basics of Spanish language. Commonly situations such as in restaurant or cafeteria that many Spanish does not speak English thus by knowing how to deal with them in basic way is highly recommended. (Hobbs 2005, 173-174.)

In Spain there is a lot of traditional customs in the villages and smaller town where the social life often is around cafes and bars, and outdoor fiestas in which whole citizen takes part. Bar and nightclub life is very similar to any city in anywhere in the world. But the distinct difference is that nightlife begins later and goes on into the early hours. About Spanish people many thinks that they are noisy and friendly. Traditionally they are mostly self-reliance and self-centeredness, proud, macho, showy and unpredictable. For the Spanish life, they always have an attitude of having fun. Hence they enjoy their life and live for every moment. The attitude for tomorrow is usual over-emphasized. It is common that Spaniards put off tiresome duties to a later date. In other words because of their relaxed attitude to life, they are very often unhurried in their activities, and do not eagerly hurry for anyone else's urgency. Spaniards have the sense of enjoyment so apparently they are thinking that why not enjoy now fully when one do not know when the next celebration will come. Younger Spaniards

have wider knowledge than previous ones therefore they are more tolerance of those with difference opinions or have a different way of life. Towards foreign Spanish people tend to be open and helpful. They are warm and friendly that show less formality. It can be said also that it is honor to be invited to a Spanish home because invitations only goes for close friends. (Hobbs 2005, 235-237; Expat Arrivals 2015.)

The Spaniards are more likely more tactile than Northern Europeans that can be seen as men embracing their male friends. Male and female kiss each other on the both cheeks one time as a greeting. The Spaniards' manner that may run to misunderstanding is that usually they are unwilling to queuing. Their style is the attitude for being first which means the queue-jumper is always a king. For Spanish people there is nothing more important than family and it is usual that they live all together. Spanish people care their children very gentle and like to spend time with them as much as possible. Attitudes towards elderly are revered and cared. Usually young people do not leave home until they get married and parents seem to like that way, even though there is not expected that their children will help parents financially or help with household works. This is the reason that has allowed children to have enough funds to buy their first house or start their own business. However the situation in Spain has led to the way that more and more are getting to have independent life, less people are getting married in young age and divorce are becoming more common than before. (Hobbs 2005, 238-239.)

4 A research output

When the research purpose is clear and discovered, it is time to start to plan usable methods for project. Qualitative research's typical point is the research is overall way to gather information and the materials are collected together in natural and real situation. People as a target for collection information is preferred by researcher because he or she trusts on his or her observe skill and for the conversation. It is due to this case that it is necessary for individual's experiences to make an improvement. As an effort it is to articulate unexpected matters. Hence it is multilateral and detailed examination. The group of target are chosen with care and more importantly are theirs aspects and "voice". Methods for this research are for example theme interview, group interview and attentive observation. (Ojasalo, Moilanen, & Ritalahti 2014, 61-62 & 104-105.)

Researchable is a vital part of development. The meaning is that with the research actives components is handled more extensive and is more considered to be more systematic. The results are better to be argumentative. Considered with everything, it is common that having strong dominants attitudes and beliefs, that define theirs action and also based of these they look theirs environment. Hence, if making results without research and is upon to only own

uncritical point of views, dominates beliefs have an influence on decisions and could not analyze materials impartially. It is important to take account for research that it is moved on systematically, analytically and critically. The purpose is that own solutions and produced knowledge are based over the existing information. Practically in the project it is required to see the ability to move information that is based on theories, into practice. The research output turns up specially as a systematic; choices are reasonable and documented, as a data captured; searching both investigated and practical data that supports the project, as an analytic; different methods are identified, classified and created in different viewpoints, as a critical; evaluating gathered data, different point views, own decisions, processes and results and finally as a sharing point; the process and final result are being documented precisely and take care of spreading the information forward. (Ojasalo, Moilanen & Ritalahti 2014, 21-22.)

Observations is used as a method and a qualitative research method in thesis, more closely a theme interview. Observation is one of the effective way to collect the data that researcher takes a part of own research society actions and observation employs the researcher's senses. Normally it is surveillance about everyday life or some event. The main idea is that researcher observes and stores gathered data systematically. Researcher takes part, as an active individual, in real natural situations and also it is possible to take part of observation as an outsider point of view. (Eskola & Suoranta 2005, 98-100.)

The observations are based on author's own experiences during her exchange period in the year of 2014, from January to June, was studying in Andalucía Loyola University. Observations had taken place in Córdoba City. Is focused on what was the reasons for going study abroad, culture differences, Spanish everyday life, possibilities culture shocks and author's adjustment process in Spain in her whole study period in Córdoba.

Choosing a theme interview as a method, even it is used very commonly, because in this case it makes more understandable results. The best way to make a research is by interviewing people that are experiencing same situations. It is a good way to gather information and students are always willing to share their experiences during their exchanges to everyone.

With the interview, it helps to analyze and make development for the student's adjustment process in Spain cause of experiences. It brings possible problems out or some bad experienced issues that can do differently in the future. The interview was taken place in Córdoba, Spain, started in February and the main target was exchange students in Andalucía Loyola University. Interviewees needed to be stayed in Spain at least 3 months that he or she had already gathered some experiences and opinions to be shared. The interviews had carried out by making an individual, face-to-face conversation. Mainly interviews had been a freely

conversation that was led by the theme questions (Appendix 1) that all the participants had read beforehand. Interviews had last approximately 2 hours and had taken place in either one's apartment, in a quiet room. Target interviewees are listed below. Some of the interviewees wanted to stay as anonymous so their names are not told in below.

A 28 years old Finnish female and studying in Finland in tourism field. She studied in Spain for 6 months, in the year of 2014, September till March 2015. During her sojourn in Córdoba, she had studied Spanish basics beforehand for 3 months but did not learn much more when living in Spain. Some difficulties she had faced due to language barrier and only had English speaking friend group.

A 22 years old Finnish female, living in Turku, Finland. Studying as a health nurse and stayed in Córdoba 6 months. She arrived to Córdoba in December 2014 and stayed till June 2015. She went to Córdoba with a Finnish friend that studied the same field. As a student she had a shared apartment with 2 Spanish girls. Her Spanish improved a lot during sojourn and speak fluently. She did not faced any culture shock and as time passed she learnt to love Spain as a country and its culture.

Jiyeon Baek is 21 years old female from Busan, South Korea. She is studying fashion in Korea and fulfilled her exchange period in Córdoba for 1 semester, from January till June in the year of 2015. She has always been interested in fashion so it had been the main purpose why she chose to go to Spain. She had learnt a lot during her sojourn and experienced some minor culture shock but get to used to differences quickly.

Kyeongwon Kim is 23 years old male from Busan, South Korea. He chose to study in Spain for 1 semester because of the football and also is interested in European culture. During his sojourn in Córdoba, he appreciated a lot to learn new things. He was very eager to do everything to make a good memory for his study period in Spain. He had some language barriers because he did not speak Spanish and his English skill is very basic. However he survived and adapted very well.

Marie-Christine Teichmann is 22 years old female from Germany. Her exchange period in Córdoba lasted 1 year, was studying marketing business. She had learnt Spanish at high school for a few years but did not speak it well. Before exchange period she did a 2 months course at her university in Germany to refresh her skills. She wanted to learn Spanish so she took all the courses in Spanish in Spain and made a lot of Spanish friends.

A 27 years old male from Germany. He is studying economy, a master degree in Germany. Before going to Spain he self studied Spanish for 3 months, before that he did not speak

Spanish at all. His Spanish skill got improved a lot by making local people. He fulfilled his exchange period in fall semester, September 2014 till February 2015. His adaptation to Spain was very good and did not face any difficulties during his sojourn.

A 22 years old female from Norway and her field was economy. She studied in Spain for 1 year and the main reason was to learn Spanish language. She did a lot self studying and work very hard to learn language which she accomplished. She made friends with local people and enjoyed a lot during her sojourn in Spain.

A 20 years old female from Norway and is studying a business degree. She was in Córdoba for 6 months and got started with basics on Spanish language. During her sojourn in Spain she had improved a lot and now speaks fluently Spanish. She learnt to love Spain and even had a Spanish boyfriend. Now doing a master degree in Sevilla with her boyfriend.

4.1 Observation as a method

Observation is a relevant part in individual's everyday life. It tells how we perceive our environment and how we react on those things. Also how we are going to understand on our experience and on what we see. When researcher wants to bring out the true understanding on one's research, then he or she will present spectacular factors by observation the research environments. In which case the senses to receive data with common sense. With this observation process it gives to researcher a way to understand the outline of big picture of society with social and culture features. (Aaltola & Valli 2010, 154-155.)

As the following section, it is about the observation of author's own experience when being exchange student in Spain from January to July 2014. It was the first experience for going to live in another country for 6 months and alone. In its entirety, experiences have been eventful, wonderful and memorable that is worth it to do it again anytime again. Also author has made many new friends with different nationality and truly get to know their culture, the typical behaviors and manners depending in their nationality.

Why Spain?	Interested on Spain for very long time and wanted to learn the culture, language and local people. Wanted to experience how it is to live abroad.
How was prepared?	Studied Spanish 3 months before going to Spain and looked main information about Córdoba City.
How was the	Normal. The culture shock was not huge, although kind of minimal. Everything was new but was gladly to accept

adaptation process?	them all as they are.
Culture differences?	Yes, plenty. Food, music, entertainment, Spanish people, habits and tradition.

Table 2: Observation

As a first step in table 2 for why deciding at all for going exchange to other country, it is a clear decision for getting international experiences and seeing other culture and actually live in it. It was not hard choice to just go to new country alone because of the easy going attitude and the eager to experience new things. The first target was to live in whole new environment with other influenced culture. Get to know local people and learn the Spanish culture and see the differences between cultures. Spain was a first choice as a target country because author has been longed interested in Spain and its language. Spain as a fascinating country, has so many different cities that brings its own unique side to traveler's eye. Besides Spanish as a language is one of the most spoken language in the world that is useful to know. Córdoba was actually mentioned by an international coordinator of Laurea University of Applied Sciences during the exchange interview. He suggested this city after hearing what was author's targets and expecting for studying abroad.

The first step for preparing herself to live abroad is to search information about Córdoba and to learn Spanish because Córdoba is a city that most of citizen does not speak English like in bigger cities like Barcelona or Valencia. Therefore before going to Spain, author had studied the basics of Spanish for 3 months (table 2) Going abroad alone was a huge step because it is a first time. Nevertheless author was very excited for this new experience.

The adaptation process have not been so difficult. Although there was a lot of new things like the food and music culture, local people and the living standard that are different to Finnish culture. In the city of other world, there is a very bad habit that we avoid the eye contact with passers. We try to avoid it all cost by checking unexisting text message on phone and so all. So being in Spain could be a shock because it is a country that people actually try to make eye contact and say "Hola" to you. Author remembered that one day she travelled with an empty public bus when old women get on the bus. Among all empty chairs, she chose to sit beside her and say hello. It was so odd at first but then author felt satisfaction for having a company. About Spanish themselves, they are not punctual. As a typical Finnish person, author values being punctual. Surprisingly Spanish has a habit that everyone comes either at the sharp hour or 5-10 minutes late to class. This does not happen only in university but in generally in their life. They are always late with everything. So as a tip for ongoing students: do not expect Spanish to be punctual rather remember to be patient with them.

Spanish traditional food was at first very weird and author could not appreciate the taste but by time learned to like it more. The regatta music that is played in Córdoba was a new experience and so good that just want to dance all the time but by time got bored to this kind of genre because it is always same, around one year always plays same songs. For the television programs and movies in theatre, all are dubbed to Spanish that make too difficult to understand and watch them. Luckily in theatre there is still some movies in original version, although there is not so much choices: only 2 to 3 alternatives and they are not even the newest ones.

By the time when author made friends with local people, author learned that people are so different based on their culture. Spanish people are the kind of persons that they do not actually worry much. They have fun first and always delay the important things for the next day. Spanish enjoy their times in many ways and are very loudly group. They like to socialize with other by going out take tapas or for dinner. Therefore comparing to Finnish people, Spanish go out much more. Ofcourse cause of the economic standard in Spain is lower than in Finland that can affect a lot in this aspect.

4.2 Theme interview as a research method

The idea of interview takes an advantage of interviewees' own experiences that is a unique way for data collection method. Hence being in interview situation, it is a direct interaction. According to Boeije (2010, 62) interview offer an opportunity for researcher to face social life through the perspectives, experiences and language from those who are living in it. In the same cycle interviewees are given an opportunity to share their stories and pass their knowledge.

However like other methods, using interview has both advantage and disadvantage sides. The main advantage is the flexibility of data collection. That means it is possible to regulate the materials and more possibilities to analyze answers. Reasons to choose interview as a method are usually that researcher wants to highlight person as a research's subject. Also interview gives a chance to reveal matters freely in the active and creative conversations. Interview helps to clarify receivables answers and deepen materials in the hand. In other hand, as a disadvantages, interview takes a lot of time. The meaning is that it is not worth it to hold just a half hour interview and think carefully the fitting interview method for the research case. (Hirsijärvi & Hurme 2008, 34-35.)

There is three points that can carry out the interview such as individual, couple or group interview. These form acts as supplement to each other's. The typical used form is an individual interview due to the freely and natural conversation. In addition it depends a lot on

interviewees how they behave if there is more people around and that can impact on their answers. Therefore researcher has to decide herself or himself how to make an interview and what kind of interview is necessary in own research circumstance. Making the choice can be related to who are the interviewees and what is the main purpose of research. Interviewer needs to be prepared for both talkative and laconic interviewees. Due to this, it is advisable to do test interview before the actual interview. In the same time it is possible to control functionality of interview's themes. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2009, 210-212.)

It is easier to categorize interview by theme questions to discuss in interview. This way in a semi-structured interview the models of questions are same for all interviewees, but interviewer can change questions' orders. And so answers are not tie up to response alternatives but interviewees can answer in their own words. Key points in theme interview are likely as following aspects. Firstly it is known that interviewees have experienced a certain situation. Second, there have been raw research in early cases that has pointed important parts, structures, process and ensemble. In the third stage on the strength of analyze, build up a framework of interview. Lastly interview direct to interviewees subjective experiences on situations that researcher has analyzed beforehand. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2008, 47.)

Theme interview is taken off with an assumption that every individual's experiences, thoughts, beliefs and feelings can make a research with this method. It has highlighted interviewees' world of experience and theirs' definition for situations. The advantage is that does not tied up to specific aspect nor take a stand of the amount of interview or how deep are going to handle the subjects. Mainly this make interviewees feel more free during the discussion and it is moved on freely but still keep on the models of themes. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2008, 48.)

First theme for interview is adaptation to new culture. In the adaptation process many may have initial difficulties but how one handle it will most likely be different to others. Then again everyone respond differently: the effects can differ from mild unease and homesickness to panic and even loss of perspective. In this thesis, primarily brings up students' adaptation process in Spain. How has it been, how has the living in Spain being so far; in housing, economic, social and culture aspects, it is hard or easy comparing to home country. Brings out the differences and similarity. (Study abroad.)

Second theme is cultural differences. Everyone have their language, food habits, myths, religion practices, family structures, economic systems, government, connections, shelter, hygiene and incest taboos. Conversely these groupings are very wide scale and they have many hidings differences. Thinking through about food habits, it contains things like what,

when and where they eat. Also whom they eat with and how they eat are different. The same thing stands for others, every have specific details that differ from another. Due to cultural differences that conclude to misunderstanding by others. Clearly this mean that it is a detail of cultural differences that is necessary for having an understanding social behavior. (Triandis 1994, 5-6.). Based on interviewees' background how they have experience the culture differences. It is hard to encounter or is there similarity that has make easier to encounter the culture. In the same time emphasizing the social adjustment or consider the differences on Spanish people and people in home country. How has it been, facing these people, have it been hard or easy and how is the encounter with them. Take out cases about culture differences and identify them.

Lastly are development ideas as a third theme. For the development ideas, the topic question is: What is the concern? Firstly one need to recognize the matter, after thematizing it from results to the review of the ideas. Note the problems and stable the concepts. (Meaning design 2015.) In this case, will bring up after experienced situations: is there something that can be done in other way and also ideas and advices for new coming exchange students for example how they can prepare in advance that can helps and make easier for going abroad.

4.3 Data collection and analysis

It is standard that after interview there is easily to have huge amount of materials that are needed to analyze and do the interpretation. Therefore sometimes it is just not possible to use all provided materials. Like Ruusu vuori, Nikander & Hyvärinen (2010, 9) have pointed that having an interview done, it is normal to be confused for all gathered materials and for the moment researcher does not know how to act forward. Does all the collected material responded for the research and are they good enough, these questions researched are going to face in the moment of uncertainty. Then it is needed to think the way of analyzing during the interview. If the way of analyze has been considered beforehand, it can be used as a guideline in interview and when doing the transcription of interview. Plenty of materials and intimate of life will make the analyzing stage more fascinating and challenging but in the same time more problematic and troublesome. It is a long process to trying to find meanings and trying to decode right answers of interviewees. (Hirsijärvi & Hurme 2008, 135.)

It is major to remember that after interview it is necessary to start an analyzing stage right away because the interview situation is still fresh in mind and inspires the researcher. It would be easier to open materials and analyze them. Essentials in the process of project are classification of materials, analyzing and interpretation. These three points are involved with each other's but in the meanwhile they are different elements that researcher is going to end up. Different stage of analyzing is good to be aware of, the meaning of it is needed to do

more than just identifying materials. Hirsijärvi & Hurme (2008, 136) has mentioned that analyzing can be done in three ways. First way is tearing down material and moving forward based on researcher intuition. In a second way also tearing down materials but after that codifying and then going forward to analyzing. Both tearing down and codifying are united and then go direct to analyzing. (Ruusuvoori, Nikander & Hyvärinen 2010, 11-12.)

Qualitative analyze can mainly be outline in a following manners. Analyzing starts already in an interview situation. During the interview researcher can makes observations regarding to how often the similarity is mentioned, frequencies, dividing and special cases. With these observations researcher can makes models and also search more materials for checking these observations. Secondly when analyzing materials, it is typical to survey very near the materials and its contexts. The difference to quantitative analyze is that the research retain the materials in a verbal form. Thirdly researcher uses a deduction that can both be based on materials or having ready some theoretical conclusion that is tried to verify with materials. As a fourthly there is varied analyzing technic and working ways to carry out. Anyway there are not differences in methods and there is not the right one or one is absolutely better than others. Accordingly researcher must to make research about available methods and decide which one to use. Also development and experiment different solutions ways. (Hirsijärvi & Hurme 2008, 136-137.)

5 Interview results and analysis through theme questions

The interview was carried out during February to June, in the year of 2015. The main target group for this thesis research are highlighted to be university exchange students from other countries that came to Spain to study exchange. The idea is to bring out their own experiences, adjustment and own aspects of culture differences. Possibilities interviewees was approached face-to-face for participating the research. Before the interview, author told to all participants interview's subjects and what it is about of thesis research.

Participants for interview are divided for countries which are Finland, Norway, Germany and Korea. Each country had 2 persons and all have been as an exchange student in Córdoba. Interview theme questions can be seen in Appendix 1.

Each individual interview had analyzed separately. Then lastly the results was compared to each other and make the conclusion in general view. This way it will disclose the matter in its best way.

5.1 As a student in other country

The main matter for this theme is to present reasons why he or she had chosen Spain to study abroad. As well their own expectations during exchange period. Answers had been very similar for every country.

Spain is very interested as a country and culture that made everyone wants to learn and experience. Spanish language as a spoken language in the world, that make ones wanted to learn, have been many people's objective. During the interview one of the participants from Korea mentioned that Spanish language is world-wide and in Spain there would be something to feel, see and learn. This is something that she wanted to experience and also knows the difference between two cultures that will gives realizations of something worthy and helpful.

For going study abroad, it has given a lot of advantages such as knowing other culture and make friends all around the world. Knowing the new culture and learning new language trained you for international communicating situations and give challenges to yourself. One will always learn something during the exchange period. Living abroad had widened own view of life and one will appreciate things more like very simple things such as warm and clean water. Like one of the participants had a comment for what she had learned during exchange period:

“At least I really learned to be patient and relax more in every situation.” - Finland

5.2 The process of adaptation to a new culture

In the process of adaptation knowing the language is very important, as author has highlighted before in Culture-chapter, had also came out in interview as following:

“I tried to learn Spanish, which is the first thing you have to do to be able to adapt. It was hard at first and also hard to make Spanish friends in the beginning“ - Norway

“I could not get to know local people because of the language gap and they did not want to speak in English. Also finding a flat was very difficult process because I did not know Spanish.” - Finland

Learning Spanish before going to Spain have been very essential and at least before staying in Spain it is recommended to learn basics to survive generally in life for example when visiting in post office or buying groceries in the market. In Spain not everyone is able to speak English so for avoiding many challenging situations, learn Spanish at least the basics. Having a right

attitude is essential to adapt the new culture. Being open-minded will make it easier to accept the new culture and surpass possible challenges.

Economy has a lot of effect to students, but living in Spain has shown that it is not so difficult in economy field. Mainly if compare to other European countries, Spain is cheap for living. Although unemployment rate in Spain is very high.

Spanish food, habits and traditions are very unique. Still there has been some things that has been new and is needed to adapt as can be seen as following:

“Spanish culinary is very interesting but I still miss Finnish food culture and eating time. It is very hard to go to sleep with the full stomach because Spanish eat so late.” - Finland

“Spanish eating time was very hard to adapt. I do not like eating late, except that I love Spanish habits; they know how to treat each other and have fun together. Spanish are slow but friendly, open and funnier than Germans” - German

“Spanish are always late, I always forgot the Spanish typical siesta time because shops are closed then and there is so much people on the street that differ to Norway, where everyone stays at home.” - Norway

Remember that Spanish really eat in different time for example their dinner are always around 10pm to 11pm. For the most this is usually a sleeping time. Also one is needed to be always patient in Spain because Spanish are known to be always late and slow to handle things. So as an advice: do not be punctual like usually you have been. Being late is so common in Spain that no one actually see it as a bad manner.

5.3 Cultural differences

There is always some cultural differences when encounter other culture. So here are some interviewed students comments:

“Spanish people are more passionate and really religious in Córdoba. Spanish people know how to enjoy the life” -German

“Spanish greeting way was a huge shock for me! Because when Koreans greet, we do not touch each other. So kissing both cheeks was quite awkward.” - Korea

For Koreans there had come up many differences. Spanish greeting way is awkward for them but they got adapted to it later, although it had took some times. One more thing is communicating way between Koreans and Europeans. In Asian culture they do not usually answer with “No” because it will be seen as being impolite. So for Koreans living in Spain had led to little misunderstandings between them and Europeans.

Spanish are known to be laid-back that can be seen even too much for some exchange students. Especially for Finnish that are determined to deal with matters efficiently and fast. Spanish being late and postponing tasks or appointment are seen as a annoying thing. There is no stress in Spain so after the exchange period everyone had learnt to be more patient and relax. It is easy to live in Spain because people there are more friendly and welcoming than other countries. The communicating between friends in Spain are very open-mind and loud that is only a sign to shown their excitement to express their opinion and to be hear. It is typical Spanish people to greet strangers and asking how it goes. In the public transfer, like in the bus, people greet each other and wish a good day. This reflect very well the country’s warmth and openness toward everyone.

5.4 Development ideas and incoming challenges

The most challenging that had come up through the interview had been the importance of knowing the language. Without the language gap many challenging situations could be avoided. It is necessary to know Spanish to make the living in Spain easier and get to know the true Spanish life. One of the important matters is also having a open attitude toward anything and have a proactive behavior.

Here are some tips for new coming students that interviewed had mentioned as following:

“If you do not speak Spanish, prepare for upcoming challenges! The open mind-attitude for everything is very important and be active. Enjoy the time in Spain because the experience is once in a life!” -Finland

“Enjoy every bit, it ends sooner than you think”-Norway

“If you want to learn Spanish, you should take Spanish courses and live with Spaniards.”-German

“Do not miss any party, go out! Do not be afraid to meet people, make a lot of friends and do anything what you can do. These all will stay as a memory and later you will miss all when you are back in your country.”-Korea

6 Conclusion

It is interesting with the whole informative package in this thesis that Spain is very polymorphic and the manners and attitudes of Spanish differ a lot specially to northern Europe. This thesis subject regarding on culture and Spain had been very interesting and productive, therefore it had been pleasant to work with this research. The research helped to get to know the Spanish culture more closely, train one to know how it is to live abroad and grow the desire to work in international environment in future. The main intent in this thesis was to bring out the life in Spain and Spanish culture in aspect of student. The research had been gathered together student’s opinions concerning how it is to live in Spain. The intention is to have an information package about Spanish culture and give basis about living in Spain.

The decision to choose theme interview as a method was suitable because it gave to interview situation more openness and the liberty to express opinions. The interview conversation had been relax and matters that came out was useful. Interviewees’ opinions and views gave information about how the life is in Spain and the culture differences. They had the opportunity to point out important issues during conversation because it had been open and was focus on main issues in their own aspect. During interview the theme interview questions (Appendix 1) was used as a support. Only thing to improve could be to have more interviewees from different countries but who knows if it may even change the result because this already have very common results. However new aspect could also come out then.

Spanish siesta are already familiar to the most who are going to Spain but it is still something that needed to be get used to. Siesta as a cultural concept has always been a Spanish foundation for foreigners. In many places it is common to have a long break between 2pm and 5pm which many people have a siesta or have a lunch. For this reason it always take time to get used to because many shops are closed during siesta time. (Expat Arrivals 2015.)

It is vital to remember that although Spain is a Western European country, it does not mean that everyone speak English. Spanish appreciate a lot if one make some effort to begin to communicate in Spanish. Thus to ease the culture shock, learn Spanish basics before arriving to Spain. It will make everything easier and make the living in Spain more convenient. (Expat Arrivals 2015.)

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Appendix 1: Theme interview questions

Theme 1: **As a student in Spain**

1. How you decide to come to Spain to study?
2. Why Spain?
3. What are your expectations for studying in Spain? (What you want to receive from this exchange period?)
4. Do you speak Spanish? And how has been the process of learning Spanish language?

Theme 2: **Adaptation to Spain**

1. How have you adapted to Spain? It has been easy or hard?
2. How is your social life in Spain?
3. It has been hard or easy on your economic field?
4. What kind of difficult situations have you experienced? Regarding for examples on getting a house or getting a phone contract etc.
5. What do you think about Spanish habits and traditions? Regarding to Spanish eating time, food habits, Spanish attitudes etc.

Theme 3: **Cultural differences**

1. What kind of culture differences have you experienced?
2. Has there been differences and similarity comparing to your home country?
3. What kind of misunderstanding because of cultural differences?
4. What are your point of view on Spanish culture? Has it been weird for you? Or has it been very easy to adapt Spanish culture?

Theme 4: **Development ideas and incoming challenges**

1. What kind of challenges there has been for you?
2. Could you tell something that you wanted to do in other way?
3. What is the most eventful and memorable experiences you have faced so far?
4. Can you tell some tips and advices for new coming exchange students?