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Erasmus Student Mobility: Some Good Practices According to Views of Ankara University Exchange Students

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ABSTRACT

In this case study, opinions of Ankara University Erasmus mobility students were analyzed about their experiences at host Erasmus universities. The aim of the study is to learn the experiences of Ankara University mobility students, find out the reasons of attending Erasmus mobility, the good examples they experienced and discuss whether it changes according to a host country. It is a case study examining the views of Ankara University Erasmus mobility students. A case study research method is used in many situations. It is used very often in education, social sciences, political science, sociology, anthropology, etc. The positive feature of case study is that the researchers can have the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events (Yin, 2009). All data were collected with digital questionnaires. Based on empirical data, the research focuses on the added value of Erasmus student mobility. The qualitative analysis was conducted using MAXQDA 11 program.

Results showed that language learning and living in a different culture are the main reasons of participating in Erasmus mobility. Good practices were discussed according to academic, social and psychical dimensions. In academic dimension, students liked mostly courses, instructors, academic development opportunities and language learning opportunities. In social dimension good guidance, attitudes toward students, flexible bureaucracy and multicultural learning environments are most liked attributes of host universities. In physical dimension students indicated their positive views about accommodation, technical facilities, facilities for study and facilities for handicapped students. Ankara University students indicated numerous good implications at their host universities and the programme seems to achieve its goal. Although the programme seems to achieve its goal further researches are needed to analyse its effect on students' future life.

Keywords: Erasmus, student mobility, higher education, good practices, views of mobility students.

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Erasmus Öğrenci Hareketliliği: Ankara Üniversitesi Değişim Öğrencilerinin Görüşlerine Göre Bazı İyi Uygulamalar

ÖZ

Bu durum çalışmasında Ankara Üniversitesi Erasmus değişim programına katılan öğrencilerin görüşlerine göre yurtdışındaki üniversitelerdeki iyi uygulamalar belirlenerek değerlendirilmiştir. Araştırmanın amacı Ankara Üniversitesi değişim programına katılan öğrencilerin deneyimlerini öğrenmek, bu programa neden katıldıklarını, yaşadıkları iyi uygulamaları tespit etmek ve uygulamalar arasındaki farklılığın gidilen ülkelere göre değişip değişmediğini belirlemektir. Aşağıdaki araştırma sorularına yanıt aranmıştır: Öğrencilerin Erasmus programına katılma nedenleri nelerdir? Gidilen üniversitelerdeki iyi uygulamalar nelerdir? İyi uygulamalar gidilen ülkeye göre farklılaşmakta mıdır?

Araştırma durum çalışması niteliğindedir. Durum çalışmaları eğitim, sosyoloji, antropoloji gibi sosyal bilimlerin farklı alanlarında kullanılabilir. Durum çalışmasının olumlu yanı araştırmacıların gerçek yaşam koşullarına ilişkin anlamlı ve bütünsel bir bakış açısı kazanabilmesidir (Yin, 2009). Bu çalışmada da Ankara Üniversitesi Erasmus programı değişim programına katılan öğrencilerin görüşlerine dayalı olarak programın Türk öğrenciler açısından iyi uygulamalar olarak adlandırılabilecek boyutları belirlenmiştir. Veriler öğrencilere uyrulanan anket ve açık uçlu sorularla toplanmıştır. Araştırmada Ankara Üniversitesinin 11 farklı fakültesi, 4 enstitsü ve 1 meslek yüksekokulundan Erasmus değişim programına katılmış olan 65 kız (%68.4), 30 erkek (%31.6) toplam 95 öğrencinin görüşleri alınmıştır. Araştırmaya katılan öğrencilerin % 56.8'i (n: 54) sosyal bilimler, %43.2'si fen bilimleri (n: 41) öğrencileridir. Öğrencilerin %80'i lisans, %20'si lisansüstü programlarda kayıtlıdır. Araştırmada MAXQDA 11 programı kullanılarak veriler analiz edilmiştir.

Araştırma sonuçları öğrencilerin Erasmus programına katılmalarının ana amacının dil öğrenme ve farklı bir kültürde yaşama isteği olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Araştırmada gidilen üniversitelerdeki iyi uygulamalar akademik, sosyal ve fiziki boyutlar açısından icelenmiştir. Akademik açıdan bakıldığında öğrenciler dersler, öğretim üyeleri, akademik gelişim olanakları ve dil öğrenme olanaklarına ilişkin olumlu görüşleri belirtmişlerdir. Sosyal boyutta gidilen üniversitedeki yönlendirme ve danışmanlık hizmetlerinin iyiliği, öğrencilere karşı tutumlar, esnek bürokrasi ve çokkültürlü öğrenme ortamları iyi uygulamalar olarak gösterilmiştir. Fiziki boyutta teknik olanaklar, çalışma ortamları ve engelli öğrenciler için sağlanan olanaklar iyi uygulamalar olarak belirtilmiştir. Ankara Üniversitesi öğrencileri gittikleri Erasmus üniversitelerine ilişkin çok farklı iyi uygulama örnekleri belirtmişleridir. Bu boyutları ile bakıldığında Erasmus programının amacına ulaştığı söylenebilir. Ancak programın öğrencilerin iş yaşamına etkilerine ilişkin çalışmalara ihtiyaç vardır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Erasmus, öğrenci hareketliliği, yükseköğretim, iyi uygulamalar, öğrenci görüşleri.

INTRODUCTION

In the age of a globalization, education and mainly higher education is globalizing like other social fields. For globalizing of education, cross-border education is an important mode. When student, teacher, curriculum or teaching/learning materials reach other countries, globalizing starts (Absalom, 1990). As a result of globalization there is a competition between the countries. Societies are internationalizing at a rapid speed as a step of globalization. In this rapid internationalization, many nations try to educate and train their pupils in a better way. Therefore, they concentrated on improving their education systems (BayramJacobs, 2005). The promotion of education and training is a major pillar of the European development policy, too. Today the major source of economic growth is knowledge. The capacity to produce and absorb knowledge is a key factor for the growth of knowledge economy. In order to encourage growth, it is necessary to expand higher education (Varghese, 2008). World Bank (1999) stated also that in the process of producing and disturbing knowledge-based goods higher education has an important role.

European Union has many programmes in different areas to support the collaboration of member and candidate countries. One of these programmes, in the field of education, is Lifelong Learning (LLP) Programme. LLP aims to contribute to development of education and training sector across Europe. It has various activities to stimulate people and institutions to take part in different learning experiences. LLP has four sub-programmes: Erasmus, Comenius, Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig. The Erasmus Programme, which started in 1987, has been one of the first initiatives to implement the fundamentals of the European Space for Higher Education and lies at the heart of the Bologna Process.

Erasmus programme funds co-operation between higher education institutions in European countries (EU Education and Training, 2011a). The institutions can have co-operation by preparing projects, networks, student mobility, student placement (internship) and staff mobility. European Commission Education and Training was announced the Erasmus programme as a European success because of the fact that it has Europe-wide reach. Many European universities and more than 2.2 million students have participated in the programme (EU Education and Training, 2011b).

International mobility emerged in the 1980s. That time this mobility was not for everybody but only for brilliant students (Wachter, 2003). In addition to brilliant students, wealthy and adventurous students studied abroad. In 1990s higher education institutions have started more international and European activities and it is known that Socrates programme (former programme of LLP) has played an important role in that (Maiworm, 2001). Erasmus mobility programme which was launched in 1987 intensified the Commission's involvement in higher education (Keeling, 2006). In Lisbon meeting (2000) it was declared that the aim is to make Europe the most "dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world" by 2010 (European Council, 2000). With Erasmus programme the quantity and the quality of student mobility has changed. Not only the brilliant and wealthy students but also the students from lower socio-economic backgrounds could cross the borders with the help of Erasmus programme. Student mobility is stated as the key element of Erasmus programme. The aim of Erasmus is to increase the mobility of students in

Europe and by this way to strengthen the interaction between European citizens (Maiworm, 2001). Mobility of students in higher education has increased enormously after 1987 (Berndtson, 2003) and the familiar pattern of student mobility is from developing to developed countries (Varghese, 2008).

It is aimed in the Erasmus programme that the academic and administrative support at host and home institutions should be effective for the mobility student (Maiworm, 2001). In order to raise international and intercultural aspects of their programs the universities are interested in student mobility. Some universities have specific programs for mobility students (Stronkhorst, 2005).

A common European identity is promoted by European student mobility (Fligstein, 2008 and Green, 2007). "The quantitative and qualitative improvement of the knowledge of the languages of the European Union" (European Parliament and Council, 1995:13) is one of the objectives of the Erasmus programme. Through EU cooperation in the field of education and training the EU states agreed on common objectives. These objectives are supported three strategic goals: the quality and efficiency of education and training systems of EU states, access for all and being open to the wider world (Pepin, 2007).

Aim of the Research

Although there are several researches (Maiworm & Teichler, 1996; Dalichow and Teichler, 1986; Bruce, 1989; Berning, 1992, Teichler, 2001, Boyaci, 2011) done during the years about the effect of Erasmus student mobility, still it is decided to do this research at Ankara University. Ankara University which is located in the capital city Ankara is one of the biggest public universities of Turkey. Totally 2056 students of Ankara University benefitted from student mobility grant to study one or two semesters in a European university since 2004. Also 689 students benefitted from placement grant (Ankara University, 2013). Since Turkey is not a European member but a candidate country and it has different cultural, educational, religious and economic structure than European countries (especially western European countries), it is expected that this study will contribute the existing literature by giving views and evaluations from a different setting. The aim of the study is to learn the experiences of Ankara University mobility students, find out the reasons of attending Erasmus mobility, the good examples they experienced and discuss whether it changes according to a host country. Due to the limited number of studies on qualitative analyses of Turkish students' Erasmus experiences (Aydin, 2012; Demir & Demir, 2009) it is important to see their experiences and views and good implications of European universities.

METHOD AND DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH

It is a case study examining the views of Ankara University Erasmus mobility students. A case study research method is used in many situations. It is used very often in education, social sciences, political science, sociology, anthropology, etc. The positive feature of case study is that the researchers can have the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events (Yin, 2009). Ankara University students

who are crossing national boundaries are the focus of this study. All data were collected with digital questionnaires. Based on empirical data, the research focuses on the added value of Erasmus student mobility. The qualitative analysis was conducted using MAXQDA 11 program. The following research questions were investigated with the views of students:

- What are the main reasons of participating in Erasmus programme?
- What good practices are implicated at host universities?
- Do good practices differ according to a host country?

Participants

In the study data were gathered from 95 Erasmus mobility students, 65 female (68.4%) and 30 male (31.6%), at Ankara University. Data collected from 11 faculties, 4 graduate institutions and 1 vocational high school. In general 56.8% of the students are from social science fields (f= 54), 43.2 % of students are from natural science fields (f= 41). 80% of the students are at undergraduate level (f= 76) while 20% of them are at graduate level, 11.6 % of them are master students (f= 11) and %8.4 of them are doctoral students (f= 8).



Figure 1. Host countries of the Erasmus students

As seen in Figure 1, participants of this study have Erasmus student mobility experiences in 20 different European countries. Among these countries there are west European, east European, Mediterranean and Scandinavian countries. From the other point of view, students had experiences in relatively old and new European countries.

FINDINGS

The objectives of Erasmus student mobility are stated as follows:

- To enable students to benefit educationally, linguistically and culturally from the experience of learning in other European countries;
- To promote co-operation between institutions and to enrich the educational environment of host institutions;
- To contribute to the development of a pool of well-qualified, open-minded and internationally experienced young people as future professionals (EU Education and Training, 2013a).

One of the aims of Erasmus mobility is to make students to learn about the other cultures, languages and other education systems of Europe. Erasmus mobility students of Ankara University from wide socio-economic backgrounds found a chance to improve their knowledge about Europe in general, European countries, cultures, higher education systems and languages with the help of Erasmus programme. This study aims to find out the experiences of students about different issues. First of all their reasons of participation to the programme were studied and then good practices at host universities were analysed and discussed within academic, social and physical dimensions.

The Reasons of Participating in Erasmus Mobility Programme

Main reasons of attending Erasmus student mobility were listed in Table 1 below. Among the 11 possible reasons listed the most chosen one is "to improve foreign language knowledge and skills" (93.7% f= 89). In their research Dogancay-Aktuna (1998) and Kirkgöz (2009) investigated the spread of English language in Turkey. They underlined the importance of language teaching politics in Turkey. Although many reforms have been implemented starting from primary education level (Kirkgoz, 2007), language learning is still a problem for many Turkish students due to great disparity between the quality and the quantity of English language teaching in different strata of the society (Doğançay-Aktuna & Kiziltepe, 2005). On the other hand foreign language knowledge is an important prerequisite for making research in Turkish universities (Doğançay-Aktuna & Kiziltepe, 2005; Kirkgoz, 2007). So not surprisingly, students' first reason of attending Erasmus mobility is to improve their foreign language skills. The second important reason is "to acquaintance with foreign culture" (86.3%, f= 82) and third biggest reason is "to get new experiences" (83.2%, f= 79). Spending funny time was also stated as one of the reasons of applying for Erasmus student mobility. If we consider the age of the students, this is not a surprising statement. Although there are academic development and personal development among the reasons, these are not stated as frequently as improving foreign language skills and acquaintance with another culture. In one hand, students want to have a nice time, meet new people, learn about another culture and be free, on the other hand they want to improve their foreign language skills, have personal and professional development and increase future job opportunities.

Therefore, what students mentioned about their reasons of applying mobility, overlaps completely with the objectives of Erasmus student mobility.

Table 1. Reasons of applying to Erasmus student mobility

Reasons	**f**	**%**
to improve foreign language knowledge and skills	89	93.7
to acquaintance with foreign culture	82	86.3
to get new experiences	79	83.2
to academic development	77	81.1
to personal development	75	78.9
to increase job opportunities in the future	66	69.5
to meet with new people	61	64.2
to live in a foreign country	60	63.2
to get education in a different system	54	56.8
to spend funny time	49	51.6
to be free	32	33.7

When we analyse the results according to degree of education; students at undergraduate level applied the programme to improve their foreign language level while graduate students aim academic development. Master students applied for academic development and for improving their language skills while doctoral students applied for academic as well as personal development. Therefore, while the level of education increases the students concentrated more on academic development than improving foreign language skills. Another reason of that could be, until post-graduate level they have improved their foreign language skills. So, their expectations move to academic direction.

This result is consistent with the findings of Demir and Demir (2009)'s study. According to Demir & Demir (2009) Turkish students attend Erasmus programme mainly to learn foreign language and to live in a foreign culture. Learning a different culture is a reason for exchange not only for Turkish students but also for foreign Erasmus students who come to Turkey (Mirici et al., 2009).

EU Education and Training (2011b) states that the studies about Erasmus show that a period spent abroad improves students' foreign language and intercultural skills, self-awareness and self-reliance as well as academic and professional development. It is also mentioned that many employers appreciated a period abroad and this helps students in their job prospects.

The Good Practices at Host Universities

The opinions of the students were asked about the good practices at host Erasmus universities. Findings about good practices were grouped into two main themes; school environment and out of school environment (see Figure 2). School environment or school climate includes physical, social and academic dimensions. According to Loukas (2007) academic dimension includes the quality of instruction, teacher expectations for student achievement and monitoring student progress. Social dimension includes quality of interpersonal relationships between and among

students, teachers, and staff; equitable and fair treatment of students by teachers and staff; degree of competition and social comparison between students; and degree to which students, teachers, and staff contribute to decision-making at the school. The appearance of the school building and its classrooms, school size and ratio of students to teachers in the classroom, order and organization of classrooms in the school, availability of resources and safety and comfort are the elements of physical dimension.

Some of the indicated good practices are not directly related to students' university or facilities and we grouped these features in "out of school environment" dimension.

In figure 2, good practices at Erasmus universities are summarized. Students stated their satisfaction about flexible bureaucracy, positive attitudes, social activities and tutoring at their host universities in general.

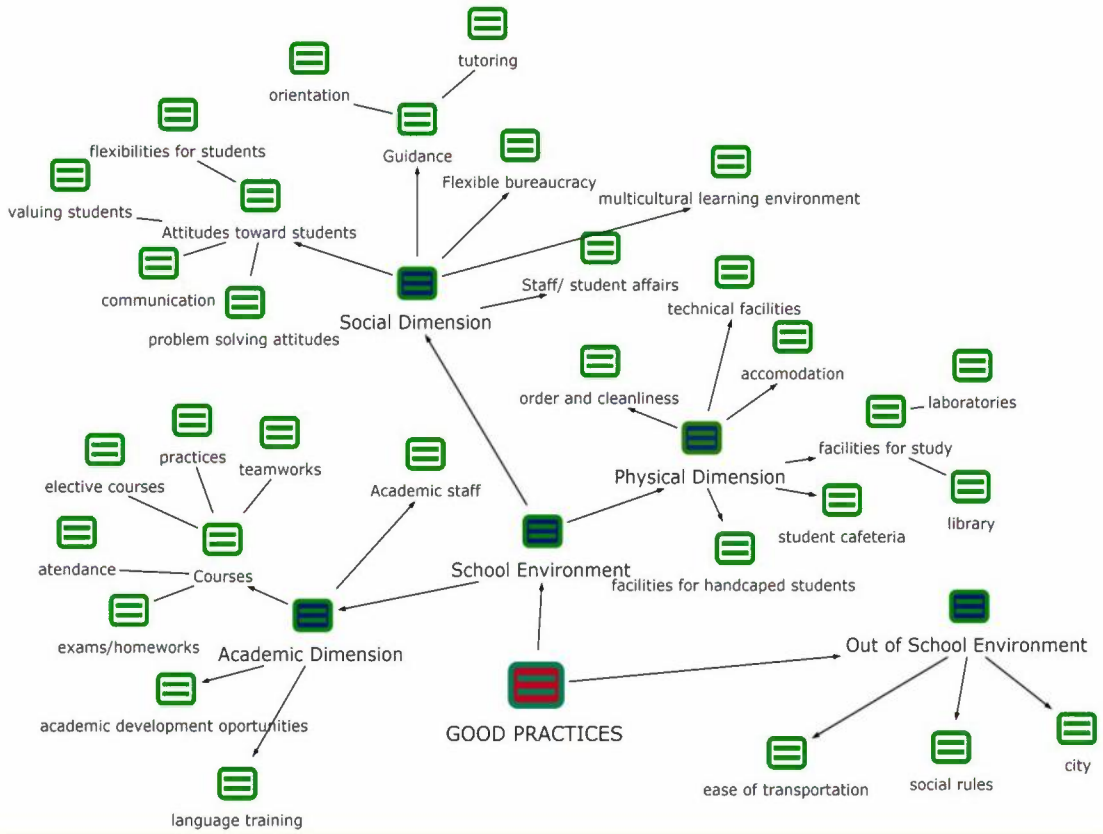


Figure 2. Good practices in Erasmus Universities

1) Academic Dimension

Within academic dimension we will discuss courses, academic staff, academic development opportunities and language training.

Students were asked to evaluate the courses at their host universities and most of them found the courses adequate (see Table 3). 54.73% of students (f=52) stated some good practices about courses. They mainly underlined five good points of courses; practicing opportunities, flexible exams, teamwork, flexible attendance and elective course opportunities.

Practicing opportunities are most liked attribute of the courses and 10% of students indicate its good effect on their learning process.

> "*Proper and accurate practicing opportunities in courses, contribution of each student to practices and evaluation of these practices are the biggest contribution of Erasmus experience to me*" (Student 2- female, UG*)

> "*Not only theory but also practice highlighted in education and I liked this. Although I may not say for all courses, in general, I learned too much from laboratory courses and they reinforced the theoretical topics learned in the courses.*" (Student 3-female, UG).

About the courses another good point is their integration with social projects. Some students indicated their satisfaction with practicing opportunities of some theoretical knowledge with social projects.

Exam types are another good point stated about courses. Some students mentioned project or homework studies as good implications. Large number of elective courses is underlined, too.

In this dimension (academic dimension) another important point is academic staff. 28.42 % of students (f=27) pointed up the positive attitudes of academic staff in academic dimension. Most of them especially mentioned instructors' polite and friendly attitudes towards them.

> "*Qualified academic staff, their professional attitudes in courses and ability to behave professionally (without personal beliefs), their helpful and problem solving attitudes although they are busy with at least one project except for their courses, is one of good practice at my Erasmus university*" (Student 1- male, PG**)

In general 80% of the students evaluated academic staff as good or very good (f=76) (see Table 2).

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* UG: Undergraduate

** PG: Post-graduate

Table 2. General evaluation of Erasmus experience

	Very Good		**Good**		**Fair**		**Poor**		**Very Poor**		**Total**	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Courses	22	23.2	**50**	**52.6**	16	16.8	5	5.3	2	2.1	95	100
Academic staff	35	36.8	**41**	**43.2**	15	15.8	4	4.2			95	100
Academic organizations (conference, seminar etc.)	20	21.1	**41**	**43.2**	22	23.2	9	9.5	3	3.2	95	100
Language courses at university	23	24.2	**28**	**29.5**	21	22.1	19	20	4	4.2	95	100
Social activities in host university	32	33.7	**47**	**49.5**	9	9.5	5	5.3	2	2.1	95	100
City and general atmosphere at university	**43**	**45.3**	36	37.9	11	11.6	3	3.2	2	2.1	95	100

Some students mentioned the academic development opportunities at their host university. One student indicated:

> *"My host university has bilateral agreement with Chicago Kent University Law School and Erasmus students could have certificate from that university if they succeed 360 hours courses with free of charge although their students can get this certificate with a fee."* (Student 9, male, UG)

Moreover many of the students indicate that they have learned to do academic research and gain independent research skills during their stay.

Erasmus programme is a good opportunity for improving language skills and knowledge (Bogain, 2012). Commission provides language learning opportunities of less taught languages for selected Erasmus students. The Erasmus Intensive Language Courses (EILC) are specialised courses in less widely used and less taught languages organised in the countries where these languages are used as language of instruction at higher education institutions. The languages of English, German, French and Spanish (Castilian) are not eligible for EILC (EU Education and Training, 2013b).

Erasmus students have opportunity to study the EILC for two to six weeks (with a minimum of 60 teaching hours in total, and at least 15 teaching hours a week) with the aim of being prepared for the Erasmus mobility period abroad (EU Education and Training, 2013b). Aim of this preparation is to continue education at host university in their teaching languages. Although in Erasmus programme students are expected to attend regular courses at their host university in their languages, in practice there are English taught courses for Erasmus students. This is a very common practice at EU universities for mobility students.

In this study students asked about the language of instruction at their host universities. It is found that although the language of instruction at host universities are different than English (16 different languages), for Erasmus students courses were offered mostly in English (54.7 %, f= 52) or German languages (22.1 %, f= 21) (See figure 3).

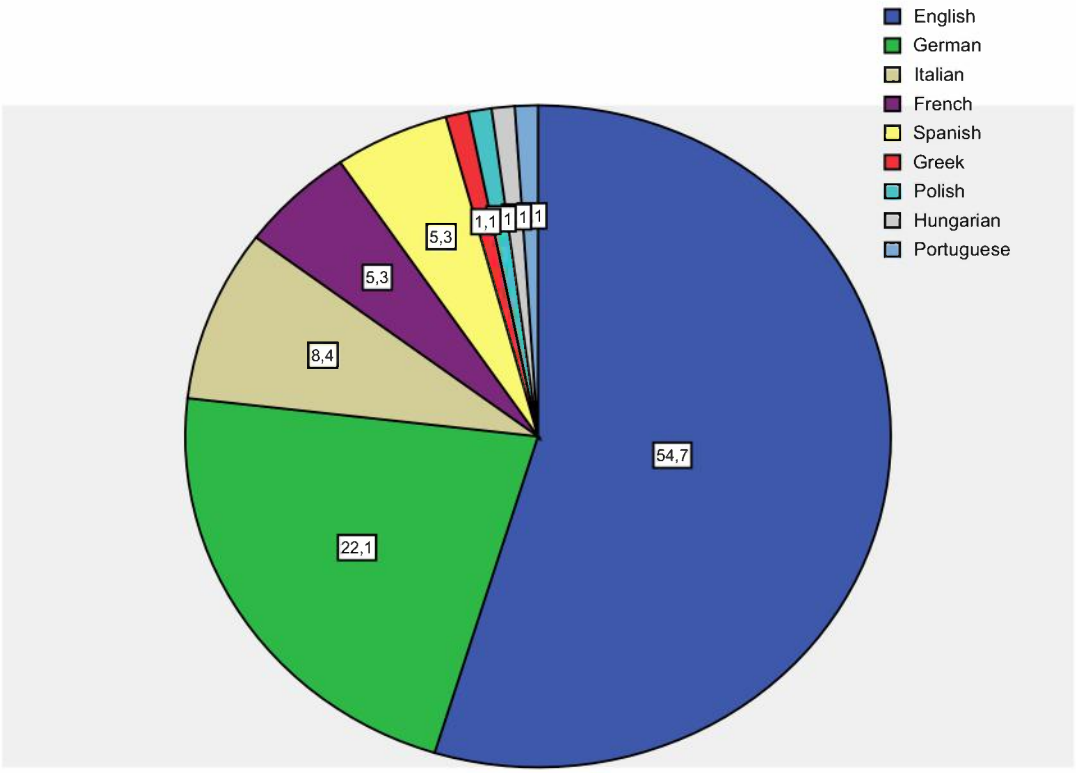


Figure 3. Language of Instruction for Erasmus Students

When they were asked to evaluate language courses in general, approximately half of the students evaluated language courses positively while 24.2% of them find them inadequate (see Table 2).

2) Social Dimension

Social dimension includes social activities at the university, guidance, staff/ student affairs, attitudes towards students and flexible bureaucracy and multicultural education environment.

Students were asked about the adequacy of guidance before and during their Erasmus experience. 80% of them (f: 76) stated their satisfaction about the guidance processes at their Erasmus host university. On the other hand, only 42.1% of them (f: 40) stated they got enough guidance before going to host university.

About guidance there are two important implications as tutoring and orientation. In some universities there are tutors who help students during their courses.

One student stated that;

> "*There were tutors for helping us during the courses and it was very helpful for me*" (Student 6- female, UG)

Also an effective orientation programme helps students to get information about institution, facilities, rules and opportunities. 11 students (11,58 %) mentioned orientation programs as good practice at host university.

"*Orientation programme was really useful*" (Student 7- male, UG)

"*Orientation programme was good planned*" (Student 8- female, UG)

Social activities are one of the liked attributes in this dimension. Another liked attributes of host universities are attitudes towards students. Problem solving, valuing students, flexibilities for students and openness to communication are some positive implications at host universities.

Multicultural education environment is also liked by students for communicating with different people to learn from different culture.

Social benefits of Erasmus programme are one of the most important and emphasized features of the programme in all Bologna Process documents (Önder & Balcı, 2010). Findings indicated that the participants seem to achieve the main aims of Erasmus programme.

3) Physical Dimension

Accommodation: Related to accommodation, four students mentioned positive experiences while many of others (27.36 %, n= 26) stated problems. One of the Erasmus students stated:

> "*The only problem I faced is accommodation problem. I settled in the university dormitory two months later than my arrival and I had to stay in a dormitory which is very far away, during the two months. I used public transportation to go to university"* (Student 2- female, UG)

Most of the students settled in dormitories (55.8 %, n= 53) while some of them preferred renting a house (35.8, n=34) or living in a room in a house of local people (8.4 %, n= 8).

The problems about accommodation were also mentioned in the study of Bracht et al. (2006). In their study it is reported that Erasmus students had problems mostly related to accommodation.

Facilities for study: Students indicated the good conditions of host universities related to physical dimension. Libraries and laboratories are liked attributes of these Erasmus universities. One student indicated:

> *"I liked the library which is the second biggest one of Germany. It is open until 2 a.m. at midnight."* (Student 10- female, UG)

Also good laboratory facilities are liked by many students from applied sciences.

Technical facilities: Students indicated good technical facilities at their host universities. Some of the good technical facilities are smart cards which students

used while entering faculty; board systems where all announcements, course notes and contexts can be found on the internet; electronic billboards where courses, instructors and places indicated during a semester. At universities where smartcard used students' attendance to course could be checked easily.

One of the students indicated the importance of fast communication;

> "*Having a special account on website and sharing all course notes and announcements via website is handy. This provides students freedom and opportunity for individual study. Students could be mobile while getting informed about all developments at faculty*" (Student 11, female, UG)

Different Good Practices in Different Countries

95 students have different experiences in 20 different European countries (see Figure 1). We tried to synthesize different experiences and make a collective analyse from their Erasmus experiences.

Most of the students have studied at German universities (24,2 %, f= 23). Poland (9,5%, f= 9) and Spain (9,5%, f= 9) are the other preferred countries following Germany. In all countries, the most stated good practice in academic dimension is about academic staff. As the most satisfactory part, the students stated that the teachers were kind, tolerant, precise and working according to a plan. The Erasmus mobility students in Germany highlighted much about the kind attitudes of teachers. Students who have been in Spain, Poland, the Netherlands and the UK stated positive opinions about the academic staff, too. Except Poland, all the other mentioned countries are old members of European Union and have a rich history in higher education.

In social dimension, the most stated good practices are good and different kind of social activities. The students who went to Germany, Poland, Belgium, France, England, Estonia, and Italy mentioned about different kind of social activities.

In physical dimension, technical facilities are the most mentioned positive attributes of European universities. This was mostly stated by students who have been in Germany, England, Finland and Spain. Sharing course materials online, using digital platforms for announcements and messages, using electronic card for entrance of school facilities and courses are some of the appreciated technical facilities of these universities.

CONCLUSION

Several studies showed that Erasmus student mobility has a significant effect on the host country language competence of students (Sigalas, 2009; Otero & McCoshan, 2006; Maiworm & Teichler, 2002). The findings of this study confirmed the above mentioned finding of previous studies. Improving the language competency is one of the most mentioned good practices in host universities.

We can conclude that Erasmus programme achieves its objectives of learning the languages of EU and learning other cultures. Students mostly prefer a host country whose language is widely known and which they have learned (Maiworm &

Teichler, 1996). The study in another country and culture helped Erasmus students to familiarise themselves with another European culture. Also they had chance to practise their foreign language skills.

In general, students indicated the positive effects of Erasmus experience on their personal and professional developments. They underlined the positive improvement on their self-responsibility and feeling of freedom after Erasmus experience which was helpful for their self-reliance.

Another good practice students mentioned is using technology actively for communication, for classes and for management purposes. We are living in the age of technology. Nowadays everybody has their own mobile telephones, tablets or computers. It is a part of our life checking e-mails everyday, surfing on internet or using search motors on internet to find address, telephone number, train/bus schedule or a map of a place we want to go. Thus it is the easy way of communication for mobility students.

Erasmus provides various opportunities for students but it is found that application and bureaucratic procedures take time and students complained mainly about them.

> *"I faced with many bureaucratic problems and this decrease my motivation"* (Student 5, female, PG).

> *"Although it was mentioned in the invitation letter of Host University that my study period there will be 13 September – 29 January, the embassy gave the visa for 13 August – 13 September."* (Student 12, male, UG)

Although they faced with many problems, all of them underlined that they liked the programme and suggest it strongly to other students. One of them mentioned that:

> *"If a man from Thailand who lived in Scandinavian countries, says that the best salad in the world is çoban salad (a kind of Turkish salad); an Italian prefers to have a Turkish breakfast instead of scone and cappuccino; a Brazilian says you dance like a Latin women with admire, you organize a theatre performance with people from different nations and perform it successfully, it means that you are successful. Fears and timidities take root from taboos. Break down your taboos, feel that you are a world citizen but don't miss your identity, then you can be remembered..."* (Student 4, female, UG)

In brief Ankara University Erasmus students indicated numerous good implications at their host universities and the programme seems to achieve its goal. Although the programme seems to achieve its goal further researches are needed to analyse its effect on students' future life. Some researchers have underlined the positive impact of Erasmus experience on finding job opportunities (Gozalez, Mesanza and Mariel, 2011). However, there is no research about the impact of the programme on the Turkish Erasmus students' job prospect. Therefore researches are needed about it.

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