International Symposium "Internationalisation and Intercultural Competence in Higher Education: Quality and Innovation"

Making intercultural competence meaningful in the classroom and in international mobility programmes

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The following project has been carried out in the Economics and Business Faculty of the University of Barcelona during the 2019/2020 academic year, and it is focused on the teaching-learning of intercultural competence in students of the Bachelor and Master in International Business, in close collaboration with various institutional representatives, such as the Vice-Rectorate of Teaching and Academic Organisation and Quality and the International Relations Office (IRO).

As for the teaching activity, the subject involved has been Second Language for Business II (German), where students need to be trained with an international profile and therefore be competent in terms of interculturality. A project orientation has been designed and materials from the InCrit (Intercultural Critical Incidents) and Connect project have been adapted as the experiences of mobility students published on the ExperienceMap platform as case studies. Likewise, the staff of the IRO has been involved in the design and evaluation of the subject, being at the same time participant and recipient of the contents generated by the students themselves. For the master's degree, sessions have been organised to promote and raise awareness of intercultural issues.

From this experience, it is worth noting that for the first time specific training in intercultural competence has been brought into both for staff and for international academic tutors, outgoing students and students participating in the Buddy-Programme.

With the implementation of this project it has been possible to explicitly introduce the teaching-learning of intercultural competence through collaborative and reflective learning, while improving the quality of teaching (Panadés & Fernández-Villanueva, 2019) and boosting international mobility.

Keywords: intercultural competence, international mobility students, German as a foreign Language, project-based-learning, collaborative learning.

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