

Fostering Global Competence through Short-Term Study Abroad

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Abstract:

The article summarizes the effects of an eight-week short-term study abroad program (four weeks in the United States and four weeks in Germany) on students' global competence. Students' global competence was measured with the Global Competence Aptitude Assessment (GCAA) before and after the eight-week summer program. Data was collected from three summer programs and a total of 42 students participated in the study. The results indicate that students made statistically significant improvements in several dimensions of global competence but also statistically declined in one area. Suggestions for possible curricular and programmatic changes were made that may be put into place to provide more opportunities for the development of global competence in future iterations of this summer study abroad program.

Introduction

The benefits of study abroad are numerous and more and more students are seizing opportunities for short- or long-term programs abroad. The first year-long U.S. study abroad programs took place in the 1920s and following a break in 1939-1945, more and more programs developed, attracting an increasing number of students to study in another country (Hoffa, 2007). While fewer students participate in long-term study abroad programs today, short-term programs are becoming ever more popular (Open Doors, 2018). Administrators, organizations, and instructors alike recognize the need for a global education that allows immersion in other languages and cultures. There are many reasons to study abroad, and becoming a global citizen is especially important in today's interconnected world (Hoeflinger, 2012). Reasons for study abroad can be to help students experience other cultures, thereby gaining a deeper understanding of the world itself, to increase target language skills, to get to know one's self, to learn from (and with) others, to learn more about a particular field of study, or to trace one's heritage (Goodwin & Nacht, 1988). Other reasons include to enhance job prospects (West, Dimitropoulos, Hind, & Wilkes, 2000), for personal growth (Trower & Lehmann, 2017), to socialize (Kitsantas, 2004), to study things they can't study at home, or to promote world peace (Curtis & Ledgerwood, 2018). Thus, motivations for studying abroad can be cultural, academic, linguistic, as well as personal (Krzaklewska, 2008). Regardless of the individual reasons for study abroad, there is consensus about the importance of study abroad for today's undergraduate students. Language educators especially have long recognized the importance of preparing students for the demands of the 21st century, which include interactions with people from diverse backgrounds (Sercu, 2005). As Hammer puts it, "In today's global environment, study abroad is an essential experience for students in universities and secondary schools" (2012, p. 115).

Research has explored the effects of study abroad programs on language skills, intercultural competence, and other aspects of student learning, and overall the results are positive. All in all, the majority of research emphasizes that the longer students go abroad, the higher their learning benefits will be in the areas of both language proficiency and intercultural awareness (Bennett, 1993; Dwyer, 2004; Gudykunst, 1979; Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004). A recent study summarizes that while short-term programs are beneficial, better overall learning outcomes are achieved by semester-long programs (Coker, Heiser, & Taylor, 2018). In light of the fact that fewer students choose to spend an entire semester or an academic year abroad, a thorough investigation of the affordances of short-term programs abroad is crucial in order to find ways to maximize the learning potential in shorter study abroad contexts. It is true that there is still much to learn about how students can best benefit from short exposures to other cultures because “the profession has barely scratched the surface to discover what impacts these programs really have on students” (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2009, p. 379). The present study aims to contribute to the growing body of research on short-term study abroad by analyzing an intensive short-term study abroad program in Berlin, Germany and its effects on students’ global competence. The study summarizes findings from three summers and, based on the results, discusses curricular changes that could be put into place in order to aid students in reaching higher levels of global competence during short stays abroad.

Literature Review & Definition of Concepts

Previous research has emphasized the positive impact that semester and long-term programs abroad can have on the intercultural competence of participants (Anderson & Lawton, 2011; Engle & Engle, 2004; Ramirez R., 2016; Spenader & Retka, 2015). In spite of the difficulties of assessing intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006b), research has employed a variety of methods to assess outcomes in intercultural competence development and has also worked with a multitude of terms including intercultural competence (Peckenpaugh, 2016; Tompkins, Cook, Miller, & LePeau, 2017), intercultural sensitivity (Jackson, 2009), global competence (Vatalaro, Szente, & Levin, 2015), global awareness (Kurt, Olitsky, & Geis, 2013), cultural competence (Reynolds-Case, 2013), cross-cultural awareness (Kitsantas, 2004), and global readiness (He, He, Lundgren, & Pynes, 2017). These terms are not always clearly defined in studies and at times appear to be used interchangeably. One reason for this is probably the lack of a universally agreed-upon definition of what intercultural competence means (Deardorff, 2004).

The majority of studies are based on either Byram’s model of Intercultural Competence (Byram, 1997) or Bennett’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennett, 1986b). Consequently, many researchers (Anderson, Lawton, Rexeisen, & Hubbard, 2006; Engle & Engle, 2004; He et al., 2017; Jackson, 2009; Medina, 2008; Spenader & Retka, 2015; Terzuolo, 2018; Vande Berg, Connor-Linton, & Paige, 2009; Watson & Wolfel, 2015) have employed the intercultural development inventory (IDI), which is based on Bennett’s model (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003; Hammer, 2012), or Byram’s assessment guidelines (Elola & Oskoz, 2008) for the assessment of study abroad intercultural learning outcomes. Other studies used the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (Liu, 2018; Nguyen, 2015), the Intercultural Sensitivity Index (Bloom & Miranda, 2015) by Olson and Kroeger (Olson & Kroeger, 2001), the Global Perspectives Inventory (Anderson, Hubbard, & Lawton, 2015; Anderson & Lawton, 2011; Gaia, 2015), the Global-Mindedness Scale (Kehl & Morris, 2008), the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (Mapp, 2012), the Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (Palmer, 2013), the Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale (Salisbury, An, &

Pascarella, 2013), or the Intercultural Adjustment Potential Scale (Savicki, Binder, & Heller, 2008). Some of these assessments are commercial products that are not free of charge. Studies have also used their own surveys (Reynolds-Case, 2013; Shiri, 2015) and questionnaires (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004), as well as student journals (Dressler & Tweedie, 2016; Hsu, 2014; Palmer & Menard-Warwick, 2012), reflective essays or course papers (Peckenpaugh, 2016; Root & Ngampornchai, 2013), and interviews (Blood & Ludewig, 2016; Czerwionka, Artamonova, & Barbosa, 2015; Jackson, 2009; Palmer & Menard-Warwick, 2012) to assess the impact of study abroad on students' intercultural competence. In the current study, intercultural competence is defined as "competence that can be applied to dealing with cross-cultural contact in general, not just skills useful for dealing with a particular other culture" (Bennett, 2012, p. 91). The present study uses the Global Competence Aptitude Model for the assessment of student learning, which will be explained in more detail in the methods section.

Several studies have analyzed different lengths of programs and some research has suggested that short-term study abroad programs do not provide students with enough opportunities to develop their intercultural competence. A short stay abroad, argues Gudykunst (1979), provides only an incomplete experience with not enough time for changed attitudes. This could be due to a lack of meaningful interactions with representatives of the target community, because of what Lemmons (2015) calls *the path of least resistance*: students seem to prefer interactions with other members of their own culture—especially in short-term programs. Students who interact more with members of the target community have been shown to make stronger gains in intercultural competence (IC) during their time abroad (Vande Berg et al., 2009). In fact, several studies point to the fact that longer stays abroad lead to stronger developments in intercultural competence (Kehl & Morris, 2008), and one study concludes that 13-18 weeks abroad is the ideal time-frame for the development of IC (Vande Berg et al., 2009). A study by Medina-López-Portillo (2004), for example, compared the development of intercultural sensitivity as measured by the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (Hammer et al., 2003) of two groups of students, one of which studied in Mexico for seven weeks, and the other for 16 weeks. The results showed that the longer program resulted in greater gains in intercultural sensitivity. Another large-scale study, which included over 1000 undergraduates, at a large university in the US, showed similar results (Ingraham & Peterson, 2004). While all programs ranging from three weeks to a whole year seem to show significant achievements in intercultural competence, the longer students had studied abroad, the more their intercultural competence had developed. Dwyer (2004) suggests that full-year programs have the strongest effect on students' development of IC and another study suggests that a stay of at least two years abroad may be necessary for students to significantly change their view of the world (Bennett, 1993). Nonetheless, research on short-term study abroad programs generally reveal that students increase their intercultural competence or sensitivity even in programs that are less than one semester long (Carley & Tudor, 2006; Jackson, 2011; Mapp, 2012; Reynolds-Case, 2013). Studies that explore students' self-perceived intercultural learning gains report similarly positive results (Boye, 2016).

In spite of the generally positive voices about intercultural development in education abroad, there are also a few studies that point to the challenges of developing intercultural competence. One study analyzed reflective papers by 18 students who participated in different SA programs ranging from one week to six months and found that international experiences do not necessarily lead to improved intercultural competence (Root & Ngampornchai, 2013). In several other studies,

researchers carefully indicate that *some* students showed gains in intercultural sensitivity (Anderson, Lorenz, & White, 2016), that others made only little changes (Bloom & Miranda, 2015), or that several concepts of intercultural competence did not see any improvements (Anderson et al., 2006). Some studies focused only on a few aspects of intercultural competence and found positive effects there (Czerwionka et al., 2015). In Gaia's (2015) study on short-term programs, positive changes were found in several areas of interpersonal development, such as willingness to interact with others and cognitive considerations of the cultural context. However, interpersonal social responsibility did not show significant increases.

Pilon (2017) points out that some study abroad programs are more successful than others but that not all programs have a positive effect on students. We must keep in mind that "intercultural learning does not happen automatically" (Bennett, 2012, p. 90). Careful interventions and well-planned SA programs may be needed to provide students with opportunities for intercultural learning. Immersion alone is not sufficient and an explicit focus on culture and what intercultural learning means is important for the success of short-term SA programs (Brubaker, 2007; Paige & Berg, 2012).

The Global Competence Aptitude Assessment

The Global Competence Aptitude Assessment (Global Competence Associates, 2018) or GCAA was introduced in 2009 and is based on a model of global competence that was established through a year-long collaborative effort by a Delphi Panel of experts from different fields. The GCAA defines global competence as "the ability to interact positively and effectively with anyone in the world" (Global Competence Associates, 2018). In more detail, global competence here means "having an open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others, leveraging this gained knowledge to interact, communicate and work effectively outside one's environment" (Hunter, 2004) or as their website states: "Having flexible, respectful attitudes, including self-perspective, and applying knowledge of the historical, geographic, and societal factors that influence cultures in order to effectively interact and build relationships with people around the world" (Global Competence Associates, 2018). The model consists of eight dimensions that are grouped into external readiness and internal readiness. External readiness refers to "a person's acquired knowledge through education or life experience" (Global Competence Associates, 2018) and includes the dimensions of intercultural capability, collaboration across cultures, global awareness, and historical perspective. Internal readiness refers to "self-perspective and attitudinal drivers of Global Competence" (Global Competence Associates, 2018) and includes the four dimensions of risk-taking, open-mindedness, attentiveness to diversity, and at the core of the model, self-awareness.

The GCAA is a self-assessment tool that assesses students' level of global competence based on their answers to "specific historical, geographical, and situational/ hypothetical questions" (Niehaus, 2012, p. 118). Niehaus (2012) argues that the assessment is more accurate because it does not rely on self-reporting, which can lead students to be overly confident in their skills. Indeed, the GCAA aims to avoid bias in self-reporting by using a triangulated evaluation approach. The assessment therefore includes scenario-based, behavioral-based, and Likert-scale self-appraisal items (Global Leadership Excellence, 2015). The assessment is furthermore non-culture specific. It can be used in any context and does not assess a student's specific knowledge about one target culture;

instead it “measures the cultural knowledge, interpersonal skills, attitudes and self-awareness necessary for global competence” (Global Competence Associates, 2018). Thus, the GCAA “reports on an individual's ability to fit and function within a global environment” (Kaushik, Raisinghani, Gibson, & Assis, 2017, p. 83).

According to Niehaus (2012), employing the GCAA can help students in identifying their weaknesses and strengths, which can be the basis for finding ways to improve their own global competence. As other studies have suggested, using the GCAA can help develop a more accurate picture of students' global competence, especially when used as a pre- and post-assessment (Morgan & King, 2013). One university used the GCAA to assess incoming freshmen's level of global competence and to re-assess them as seniors (Kaushik et al., 2017). In that way, the tool can be an indicator of students' progress throughout their undergraduate education. The university also used the GCAA to assess summer study abroad and at-home students and found that the study abroad students scored significantly higher on internal and external readiness after their time abroad than the at-home students. Similarly, they noted that students with more international travel or study experience scored higher in all dimensions.

Once students have taken the GCAA, an assessment fully administered online, they get immediate results about their levels of global competence on the eight dimensions being measured. It shows students where they are, and where and how they could develop to reach higher levels of global competence. The individualized reports for students provide immediate suggestions for developmental opportunities to enhance global competence along with reading recommendations. Results are shown by scores from 0-100 on the eight dimensions, as well as on overall internal and external readiness.

Methods

The current study analyses the results from an eight-week intensive German program of three summers (2015-2017) and its effects on students' global competence. The study aims to answer the following research question:

RQ1: What are the effects of short-term study abroad on students' global competence?

Based on the quantitative results, the article will analyze and discuss possible curricular changes that could be put into place in future summer programs in order to promote intercultural learning, especially in the dimensions where more development may be needed.

Background

This study investigates the effects of an intensive short-term study abroad program on students' global competence. Data was collected in the summer programs 2015-2017. The eight-week long study abroad program consisted of two parts: the first part took place on the campus of the U.S. college (four weeks) and the second part took students to Berlin, Germany (four weeks) where they stayed with host families. Students covered the material for second-year college German during the entire eight-week summer program. The same textbook and assignments were used as during the regular on-campus second-year German courses during the semester, though some assignments were slightly modified to better match the study abroad context. During the eight-week program students had three hours of class each day. The instructor for the at-home component was

different every year and was also different from the instructor for Berlin, who was the same instructor in the summers 2015-2017. At the home institution, students did not have any extracurricular activities outside of daily class as part of the program. In Berlin, students participated in numerous extracurricular events, such as museum tours, visits of historical sights, trips to nearby cities, etc. The cultural program during the four weeks in Berlin was carefully planned to allow students to get a better sense of the target culture while at the same time providing opportunities for practicing the target language. As part of their classwork, students were also asked to keep a daily blog in which they discussed assigned topics that were intended to encourage them to reflect more deeply about their cultural experiences. The goal of the daily blogging assignment in which students alternated between a spoken and a written blog post was to increase students' intercultural awareness.

Participants

The students enrolled in the summer program in 2015, 2016, and 2017 were the participants of the study. Altogether, 42 students participated, and 23 were male and 19 female. In the summer of 2015, eight female and nine male students participated in the program; in the summer of 2016, four female and seven male students participated; and in the summer of 2017, seven male and seven female students participated. All students were between 18 and 22 years of age. One student was a graduate student and all other students were undergraduates with varying majors. Many students had not declared a major yet. The participants in the German summer program came from different backgrounds and spoke a variety of L1s. While the majority were U.S. Americans and spoke English as their L1, there were ten students with different L1s, including Portuguese (3), Polish, Turkish, Japanese, Spanish, Chinese, Burmese, and Nepali, and five students who were bilingual in English and another language. The bilingual students had grown up in the United States. The students at this university typically have spent time traveling, studying, or living in other countries. Therefore, L1 background or country of origin were not used as exclusion criteria for the study. All students had taken one year of college German prior to enrolling in the summer course or they had completed the equivalent of first-year college German elsewhere and placed at this level on the departmental placement test.

Data Collection and Analysis

Global competence was measured through the GCAA assessment at the beginning and at the end of the eight-week program. Students took the assessment at home and the researcher had immediate access to the results through GCAA's online portal. Students also received their results right away and obtained information about their strengths and weakness in global competence with suggestions on how to improve in any of the eight dimensions. In addition to the GCAA pre- and post-summer assessment, the students' blogs were also collected in order to triangulate data. The blogs were analyzed for instances of global awareness in the eight dimensions of the GCAA model. Based on the quantitative results of the GCAA pre- and post-assessment, the existing curriculum was re-analyzed to identify where and how changes should be made in order to promote stronger learning in global competence areas that were not well developed in the current program.

Results

The GCAA pre-summer results showed average scores between 73.1 and 81.4 for the dimensions of internal readiness, and between 68.4 and 81.29 for the external readiness dimensions.

The post-summer GCAA results showed average scores between 77.76 and 83.02 on the dimensions of internal readiness, while the external readiness dimensions showed average scores between 73.86 and 83.38. The tables below summarize the pre- and post-summer GCAA results for internal and external readiness.

Table 1. Internal readiness results (N=42).

	Internal Readiness	Self-Awareness	Risk-Taking	Open-Mindedness	Attentiveness to Diversity
Pre-Summer	76.29 <i>SD. 6.03</i>	81.40 <i>SD. 7.19</i>	76.24 <i>SD. 8.47</i>	76.17 <i>SD. 9.22</i>	73.10 <i>SD. 8.91</i>
Post-Summer	79.43 <i>SD. 5.92</i>	83.02 <i>SD. 7.36</i>	77.76 <i>SD. 7.74</i>	79.69 <i>SD. 8.80</i>	78.33 <i>SD. 8.05</i>

Table 2. External readiness (N=42).

	External Readiness	Historical Perspective	Global Awareness	Intercultural Capability	Collaboration Across Cultures
Pre-Summer	77.43 <i>SD. 6.65</i>	68.40 <i>SD. 17.74</i>	81.29 <i>SD. 13.83</i>	80.52 <i>SD. 10.99</i>	79.10 <i>SD. 10.07</i>
Post-Summer	79.38 <i>SD. 7.15</i>	78.93 <i>SD. 13.78</i>	73.86 <i>SD. 13.99</i>	83.38 <i>SD. 6.74</i>	82.48 <i>SD. 9.71</i>

A paired-samples t-test was used to compare the results from the beginning and end of summer on the eight dimensions of internal and external readiness as well as for internal and external readiness overall. The results were mixed and showed statistically significant increases in some but not all areas. The statistical analysis showed a significant increase in internal readiness overall ($t = -3.494, p = .001, df = 41, d = 0.53$). Two dimensions of internal readiness also showed a statistically significant improvement from pre- to post-assessment. On average, students reached higher levels in open-mindedness ($t = -2.649, p = .011, df = 41, d = 0.39$) as well as in attentiveness to diversity ($t = -3.656, p = .001, df = 41, d = 0.62$). Although students on average scored higher in self-awareness ($t = -1.678, p = .101, df = 41, d = 0.22$) and risk-taking ($t = -1.270, p = .211, df = 41, d = 0.19$), these increases were not statistically significant.

Students did not show statistically significant increases in external readiness overall ($t = -1.877, p = .068, df = 41, d = 0.28$) although they did reach higher levels on the post-assessments. In external readiness, the dimension of historical perspective shows a significant increase ($t = -4.238, p = .000, df = 41, d = 0.66$). It must be noted that the standard deviation for historical perspective is quite large, indicating that there is large variation between students in this dimension. There is also a statistically significant difference for global awareness. Students, on average, reached higher levels before the summer ($t = 2.482, p = .017, df = 40, d = 0.53$). Here, too, the standard deviation indicates that students vary a lot in their global awareness. There were no statistically significant changes in intercultural capability ($t = -1.582, p = .121, df = 40, d = 0.31$) or collaborations across cultures ($t = -1.554, p = .128, df = 40, d = 0.34$).

The charts below summarize the findings visually. It appears that larger gains were made in internal readiness than in external readiness.

Figure 1. Internal readiness.

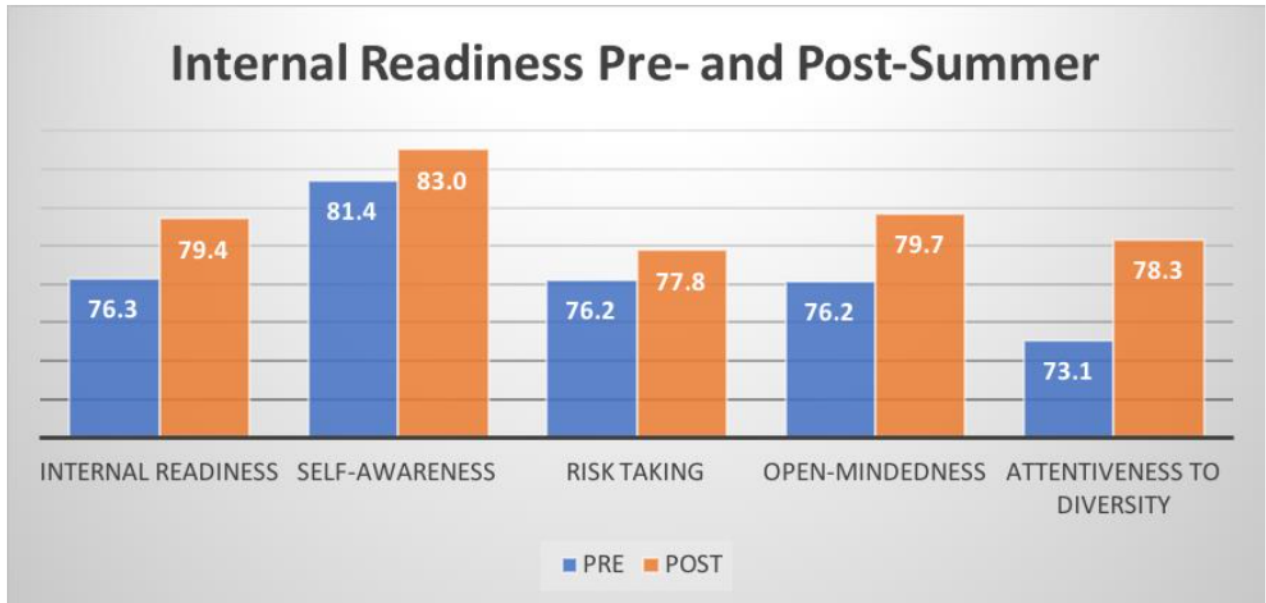
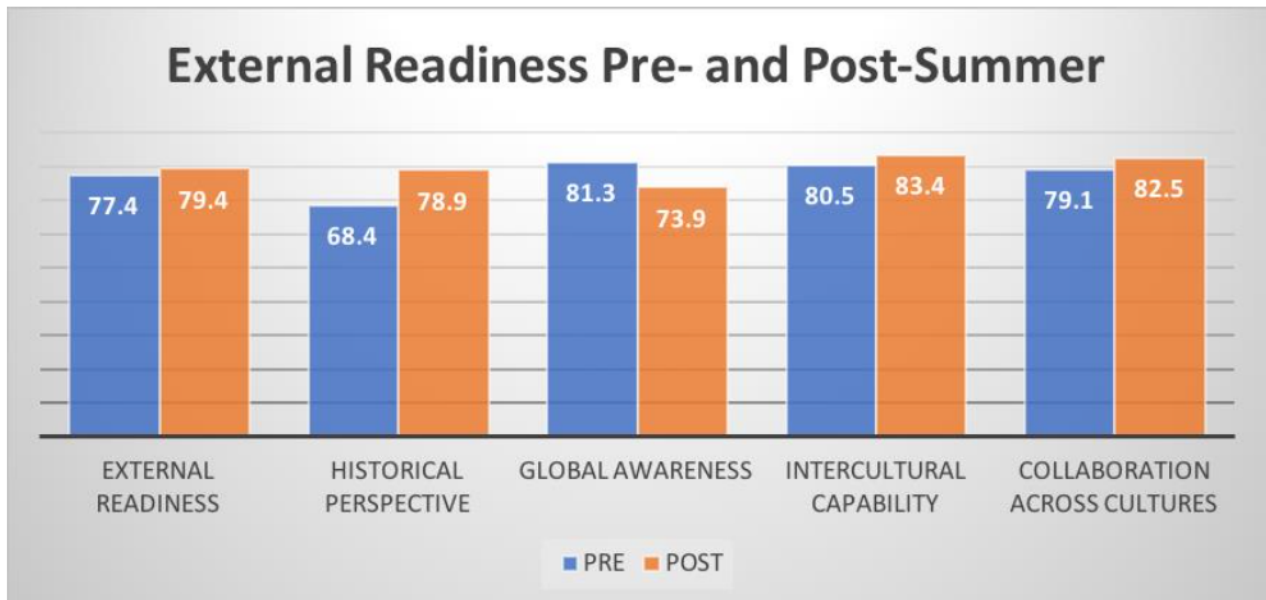


Figure 2. External readiness.



Looking at individual student results from pre- and post-summer GCAA shows no clear developmental pattern. Instead, students developed differently in the various areas. For example, some students made strong gains in internal readiness, but not very strong gains in external readiness. Student S16A5, for example, increased by 53 total points on the internal readiness dimensions combined, but decreased by 13 on external readiness. Student 15A16, on the other hand increased on the dimensions of external readiness combined by 61 points, but decreased by 5 for internal readiness. Other students decreased or increased in both areas. When combining the scores

for the four dimensions on internal and external readiness, and comparing the sum from pre- and post-assessment, altogether, four students decreased their score in both internal and external readiness. Eighteen students, however, increased in both internal and external readiness. Six students decreased their total score for internal readiness while they increased their external readiness, and thirteen students increased their internal readiness while decreasing their external readiness scores. One student showed no change in internal readiness (although the scores within the dimensions differed from pre- to post-assessment) but showed an increase in external readiness. A correlation analysis did not reveal a relationship between the development in internal and external readiness ($r = .129, p > .05$) as measured by sum of dimensions of internal/external readiness post-GCAA minus sum of dimensions of internal/external readiness pre-GCAA.

To answer research question 1 (what are the effects of short-term study abroad on students' global competence?) the results show that short-term study abroad can have positive effects on several dimensions of global competence, namely internal readiness overall, open-mindedness, attentiveness to diversity, as well as historical perspective. The results indicate that not all dimensions saw statistically significant improvements over the course of the eight-week program and that one dimension—global awareness—even saw a decrease in aptitude. Additionally, the descriptive results point to the variety of aptitudes among the participants. The level of global competence was neither the same before the summer nor was its development the same for all students.

Discussion

The results of the study were mixed and indicate that short-term study abroad can have positive effects on some aspects of global competence, such as open-mindedness, attentiveness to diversity, and historical perspective. These findings corroborate previous studies, which emphasized beneficial effects of short-term abroad opportunities in some areas of IC (Anderson et al., 2016; Anderson et al., 2006; Bloom & Miranda, 2015; Gaia, 2015). Gaia (2015) notes that while there are many positive outcomes in short study abroad programs, short-term “programs may need to address more fully the value of living in complex situations, respect and acceptance of varying cultural perspectives, and a greater sense of responsibility to others” (p. 28). Based on the results of the present study, an analysis of the existing curriculum was undertaken and concrete suggestions for possible curricular and programmatic changes were sought that could help strengthen students' development in the dimensions of global competence that did not see a statistically significant change.

Self-Awareness

The results showed a slight increase, on average, in self-awareness from pre- to post-assessment but it was not statistically significant. The average for self-awareness was nonetheless fairly high both on the pre- and post-assessment. Both averages were over 80 and thus in the range of high aptitude for global competence. Nonetheless, there are always ways in which self-awareness could be fostered even more in the short-term SA program. The self-awareness dimension of internal readiness is at the core of the global competence model. It pertains to “the ability to know yourself and how you fit into your own culture, including personal preference gaps compared with norms and mores” (Global Competence Associates, 2018). Self-awareness is a critical component of global and intercultural competence because students have to first understand their own cultural background before trying to understand another culture. Many intercultural competence models include self-awareness or awareness of one's background or culture or knowledge of one's self (Bennett, 1986a;

Byram, 1997; Dearsdorff, 2006a; Fantini, 2000; Howard Hamilton, Richardson, & Shuford, 1998) thereby underlining the importance of this aspect. Hunter et al. (2006) suggest that “self-reflective activities that focus on one’s cultural barriers and boundaries” (p. 279) can be used to help students increase their self-awareness. For future summer programs, one way to foster students’ development of their self-awareness would be to start the program with an essay on students’ own cultural and linguistic background. This could take the form of a linguistic and cultural autobiography that prompts students to discuss their language background both in the context of world language learning and their language(s), along with their cultural background and how the two intersect. As part of this particular summer course, which starts immediately after the end of only one year of German, one should consider assigning this assignment in English so that students can truly discuss the topics in-depth. One option would be to have this as a homework assignment to be completed before the first day of class. The first class session could then be used for small group discussions about students’ cultural backgrounds, which should then be done in the target language to allow students to practice the language right away. A class discussion can follow that analyzes similarities and differences in students’ cultural and lingual backgrounds. As suggested by Rigamonti and Scott-Monkhouse (2016), this type of awareness-raising can become “a starting point for reflecting on sensitivity to differences, appreciation and respect of diversity, openness to novelty as an enriching experience, acceptance and flexibility” (2016, p. 35).

The GCAA individual report for students, which includes suggestions for improving in the eight dimensions of global competence, recommends journaling as one way to foster internal readiness and thus also self-awareness. The blogging assignment is already a fixed feature of the summer short-term SA program, but perhaps the daily discussion topics for the blog could be modified in order to promote more self-reflection. This could be especially useful at the beginning of the program, when students start at the home college, and at the beginning of the second part when students first arrive in Berlin, Germany. Students could be asked to discuss their own perceptions of cultural similarities and differences both before going to Germany and once there to see if their own perceptions have changed.

Other suggestions for improving in the area of self-awareness made by the GCAA include the *Jobari Window* (<https://kevan.org/johari>), an online tool for personality awareness activity. This is something students could also be asked to complete before the summer program begins. Throughout the summer course, small activities could be incorporated both as homework and during in-class time to promote students’ self-awareness. For example, students could be put into groups and discuss questions about themselves that target thinking more about their backgrounds, preferences, values, and beliefs. This should be done in the target language thereby combining language practice with intercultural learning. Questions can include things like *What is important to me? What am I grateful for? What events in the past have shaped me? What values in my society do I feel strongly about and which are my personal values?* These types of questions push students to think about themselves and could be a means of fostering their self-awareness.

Risk-Taking

Risk-taking refers to “maintaining a willingness to extend beyond your cultural framework by trying new experiences” (Global Competence Associates, 2018). The GCAA background information explains in more detail that this dimension refers to “Being willing to try something

unfamiliar, as it might lead to personal growth; having the courage to tackle challenging goals or problems that lack obvious solutions, and recognizing that making and learning from mistakes is an inevitable step to personal development; advocating worthwhile positions that might be unconventional or unpopular” (Global Leadership Excellence, 2015).

In other models, this dimension is included by terms such as a willingness to seek out opportunities for engaging with others and a readiness to interact with another culture (Byram, 1997), an appreciation of risk taking (Howard Hamilton et al., 1998), a willingness to interact with divergent others (King & Magolda, 2005), and even attitudes of openness and curiosity play a role in one’s willingness to try new things (Deardorff, 2006a). In the present study, students were on average at a developing aptitude for risk-taking. Though the average increased slightly over the short-term SA program, students did not reach the high aptitude level.

Spending time in another country and culture provides an excellent opportunity for students to step outside their comfort zones, try new activities and experiences, and thereby enhance their willingness and openness to encounter unfamiliar situations. A consideration of how this aspect of global competence could be increased for students in short-term SA leads to the problem of student diversity in terms of backgrounds, prior experiences with the target and other cultures, and their own comfort zones. What might be a new experience for one student, such as taking a public bus, might be very familiar to another student. Thus, when designing a curriculum and SA program, it is important to build in options for students that allow everyone to try out something they have not had an opportunity to try before. For example, the program could include one afternoon where students have to choose from a list of activities one they have never done before. This could include attending a lecture with discussion at the local library, purchasing food at a farmer’s market, attending a religious service different from one’s own, or other activities that may be common in the target culture. Giving students the choice between a few activities pushes them to try something new without forcing them completely out of their comfort zone by mandating one activity for everyone.

Another consideration is that the more students interact with their own American peers, the less likely they might be to engage in new activities. Therefore, providing enough time for students to be with their host families, as well as incorporating activities with other members of the target community, could be another way to encourage students to experience new things. The program could include planned outings with university students abroad who could show the SA students activities typically done by peers in the target country. In Germany, this could include a BBQ in the park, a hike in the woods, a sports event, and others.

Overall, it may be difficult to increase the dimension of risk-taking in short-term study abroad through curricular changes because this dimension of global competence is very personal and depends on each student’s individual background and motivations (Rep, 2014). Being immersed in another culture is already a big step outside of many students’ comfort zones and it is possible that the best way to increase students’ risk-taking dimension of internal readiness is to extend the length of the SA program. If students got to spend more time abroad, they inevitably would have more opportunities for trying unfamiliar activities, engaging with people from different backgrounds, and expanding beyond their own cultural frameworks.

Intercultural Capability

Intercultural capability refers to a “person’s ability to modify outward behavior to show respect for different cultural preferences” (Global Competence Associates, 2018). It includes flexibility and openness in interacting with other cultures and their members and an ability to interact effectively and appropriately in cross-cultural encounters. Intercultural capability is an important component of many models of intercultural competence (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006a; Fantini, 2006; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). Fantini’s (2006) definition of intercultural competence as “. . . a complex of abilities needed to perform effectively and appropriately when interacting with others who are linguistically and culturally different from oneself” (p. 12) mirrors the dimension of intercultural capability on the global competence model. Students score highly in this area of internal readiness, reaching a high aptitude level both before and after the short-term SA program. In fact, the average for this dimension was the highest average reached across all eight dimensions. Due to students’ strong skills in this area, curricular changes may not be needed even if the change from beginning to end of program were not statistically significant.

If the program wanted to foster the development of intercultural capability more, increasing the length of the stay abroad is one option. Additionally, intercultural learning activities could be incorporated into the curriculum prior to the summer program. In this particular language program, activities that foster cross-cultural collaboration and learning are already an integral part of all beginning and intermediate language classes. Students regularly engage in telecollaborative exchanges with native speakers to enhance their cultural awareness and to be in contact with students who speak the target language and live in the target culture. Increasing these types of exchanges could be another way to both prepare students for study abroad and enhance their intercultural capabilities.

Collaboration Across Cultures

Collaboration across cultures refers to “an ability to work effectively in diverse teams” (Global Competence Associates, 2018). This dimension is intended for the workplace and not to be applicable to the university student context. Nonetheless, students have to work in diverse teams within the university as well, especially at a university that attracts students from all over the world, like the one where this study took place. Even though the increase in this dimension of external readiness was non-significant, the average did shift from developing aptitude to high aptitude. This indicates that the short-term program did have a positive effect on students’ ability to collaborate cross-culturally.

In order to promote stronger development in this area, a stronger connection to local university students in Berlin, Germany could be incorporated into the program. By including activities such as team challenges, group discussions, and team projects, students would be given more opportunities to work with and learn from people with a different cultural background. This could give them a chance to enhance their “understanding of intercultural dynamics and the teamwork skills to respect, transcend, and utilize specific cultural contexts, perspectives, traditions, and practices when multiple people interact” (Global Leadership Excellence, 2015). Furthermore, even during the first four weeks of the intensive program, which takes place on the home campus, some activities with other international students could be a valuable program addition.

Global Awareness

The only dimension of global competence that saw a statistically negative development was global awareness in external readiness. With an average of over 81, students demonstrated high aptitude for global awareness prior to the summer SA program, but this declined to an average of 73.9, which is only developing aptitude. Since this is a statistically significant decrease in this skill, it is important to consider how future summer programs can be designed to allow students to make improvements in this area. Global awareness on the GCAA refers to “having breadth of knowledge about nations and regions of the world, including their geographies, languages, religions, currencies, and cultures, as well as the world’s growing interconnectedness” (Global Leadership Excellence, 2015). The difficulty of this dimension of global competence is that it refers to world knowledge, not just knowledge about the specific target country in which the study abroad program takes place. The current summer program in German teaches students about German-speaking countries, though the focus is on Germany itself. One way to help students increase their global awareness is to include more units on countries other than German, such as Switzerland and Austria. Sessions on German-speaking minorities across the world could also be incorporated to allow students to expand their cultural knowledge, thereby helping them learn more about other world regions. The textbook used in the course already includes one chapter on Austria and Switzerland, so the instructor could build on this and expand the information provided. Additionally, some topics that are part of the definition of global awareness are not currently targeted in the SA program, such as religions and geographies. In addition to expanding the focus from teaching only about Germany to teaching about other German-speaking countries and minorities across the world, a specific focus on more diverse cultural topics such as religion could be included to foster students’ global awareness.

Sisk (2010) suggests that global awareness can be fostered with specific instructional methods, including “cooperative learning, concept-based learning, project-based learning, thematic learning, and role playing” (p. 11). She also highlights the potential benefits of technology-enhanced projects for increasing global awareness. The curriculum for the short-term SA program outlined in this study includes several group projects as well as technology-enhanced activities. Students engage in Webquests, group presentations, and final video projects. In order to allow them to develop their global awareness more strongly, it may be necessary to investigate the topics of the group projects and embed a more explicit focus on cultural comparisons and global issues in the assignments.

Another activity that could be included in the program to foster global awareness is an adaptation of the one suggested by Gareis (2008) which makes use of international statistics to sharpen awareness as well as encourage political participation. She suggests students locate comparative data for the United States and other countries, conduct research into identified differences, and prepare a presentation with suggestions for improvements. In Gareis’s activity, the students focus on areas where the United States underperforms in comparison to other countries, but the activity can be adapted to the language learning context by focusing on cultural themes, issues related to language policies, immigration, and other topics that lend themselves to a cultural comparison. Using statistics to compare different countries and their policies or approaches to these themes can allow students to develop their own ideas and insights and lead them to more global awareness.

Another consideration should be whether more intense pre-departure preparation could aid students in the development of their global awareness. The importance of pre-departure training on the success of study abroad has been emphasized in research on SA (He et al., 2017; Hepple; Pilon, 2017). Hammer (2012), for example, found that pre-departure preparation has positive overall effects on students' development of intercultural competence in study abroad. Jackson (2010) summarizes a few ways in which preparation at the home campus can foster global awareness for students participating in SA. These include a course on intercultural communication, increased intercultural contact with international students on campus, an intercultural reflections journal, working with critical incidents, or home ethnography projects. While the current program discussed in this article cannot implement an entire course, a one-day preparation could be planned before the course begins, which would discuss some of the issues of intercultural learning. This daylong orientation could also include critical incidents as part of the program. Additionally, activities with international students on campus could be planned for the first part of the program that takes place on the U.S. campus. Since there are currently no afternoon activities as part of the first four weeks, it would be possible to include intercultural encounters through joint activities, such as sports games, potlucks, and others. This would give students an opportunity to learn about other cultures and might lead to enhanced global awareness. Jackson (2010) also recommends regular debriefing sessions during study abroad as a way of stimulating "deeper, critical reflection and [to] promote sustained intercultural contact" (p. 210). Debriefing sessions are not currently part of the short-term SA in Germany but they could be incorporated in future programs as a way for the instructor to help students share their experiences and concerns as well as to support them in thinking reflectively about their time abroad.

In line with the last recommendation, mentoring students during their time in Berlin is another crucial change that can be undertaken for the short-term SA program to better guide students through their intercultural learning. Since it cannot be assumed that merely being in the target culture and interacting with others leads to increased intercultural competence or global awareness (Bennett, 2008), mentorship of students is an important aspect of SA that has not been emphasized in the program described in this study thus far. The mentoring could take the form of one-on-one meetings with students outside of class to discuss their individual situations and encounters in Berlin, but it could also take the form of e-mentoring, where the instructor engages in conversation with students around their blog journals, for example. In combination with group debriefing sessions, the individual mentoring can provide a valuable experience for the instructor to intervene in cases of misunderstandings and confusions, and to guide students on their path to global awareness and competence. Engaging students in critical reflection through mentoring and debriefing sessions may avoid reaching only superficial intercultural learning outcomes (Root & Ngampornchai, 2013).

Conclusion

The present study summarized the findings of a research project investigating the effects of an intensive summer program with a short-term SA component in Berlin, Germany on students' global competence. The results showed that students made significant improvements in several dimensions of global aptitude as measured by the global competence aptitude assessment (GCAA). They increased their open-mindedness, attentiveness to diversity, and historical perspective, as well as internal readiness overall. There was also an increase, though not statistically significant, in self-

awareness, risk taking, collaboration across cultures, and intercultural capability. The only area that saw a negative development was global awareness. Overall the findings are positive and support previous studies that suggest positive effects on intercultural competence can be achieved through short-term programs abroad (He et al., 2017; Reynolds-Case, 2013). The findings are also in line with studies that show that not all components of intercultural competence may increase in short SA programs (Anderson et al., 2006; Gaia, 2015; Jackson, 2009). As previous studies have pointed out, a longer time period abroad might be needed for students to have an opportunity to develop in all dimensions of global competence (Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Kehl & Morris, 2008; Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004; Vande Berg et al., 2009). In line with the results obtained by Vande Berg et al. (2009), 13-18 weeks abroad would be the ideal timeframe for students to develop interculturality.

The study also analysed potential curricular changes that can be put into effect in future summer programs in order to provide students with more opportunities for advancing their global competence. These suggestions included, for example, pre-departure training through a workshop, increased opportunities for intercultural contact through planned activities with international students at the home campus as well as with German university students while abroad, debriefing sessions and stronger mentoring while abroad, offering opportunities for engaging in new and unfamiliar activities while abroad, and including content units on other German-speaking countries and minorities across the world. A re-assessment of learning outcomes will be conducted in future summer programs to ascertain whether these curricular changes will lead to stronger development in all areas of global competence.

In light of the fact that an increasing number of U.S. undergraduates is opting for short-term study abroad programs, the findings of the present study are promising. Carefully designed intensive summer programs have the potential of making a significant impact on students and can foster their development of global competence.

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