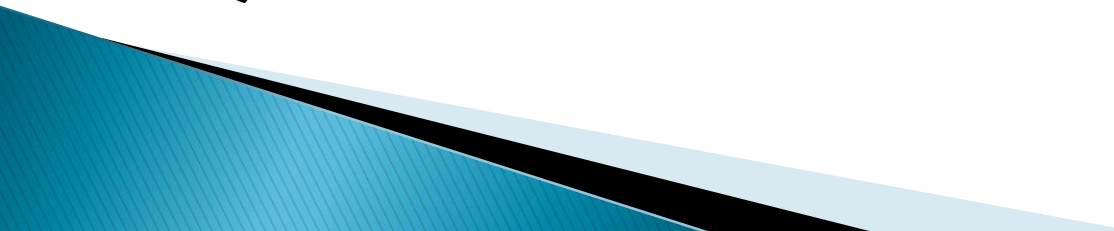


# Systematically evaluating and focusing study abroad activities to best promote intercultural learning

Presenter: Emily Maeckelbergh

# Session Overview

- Introduction
  - Experiential Learning Theory
  - Current Practices
  - Evaluating Practices
  - Research Findings
  - Interesting Activities
  - Questions and Answers
- 

# Introduction

## Emily Maeckelbergh:

- M.S. in Educational Studies
- M.S. in Special Education
- Teaching experience in Kazakhstan & U.S.
- Multiple Study abroad experiences



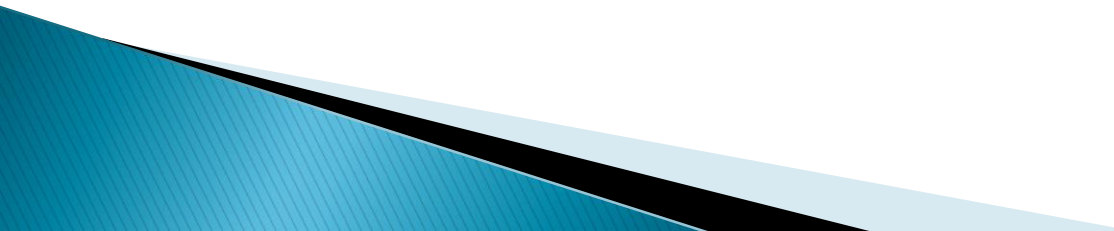
## Harmony Chaikin:

- M.S. in Educational Studies
- Teaching experience in Spain & U.S.
- Study abroad experience in Argentina

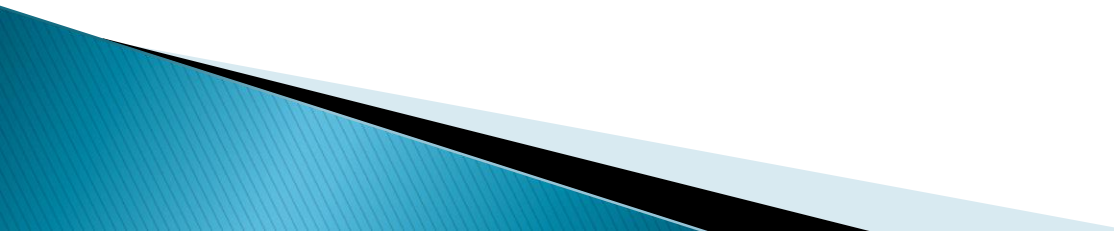


# Introduction

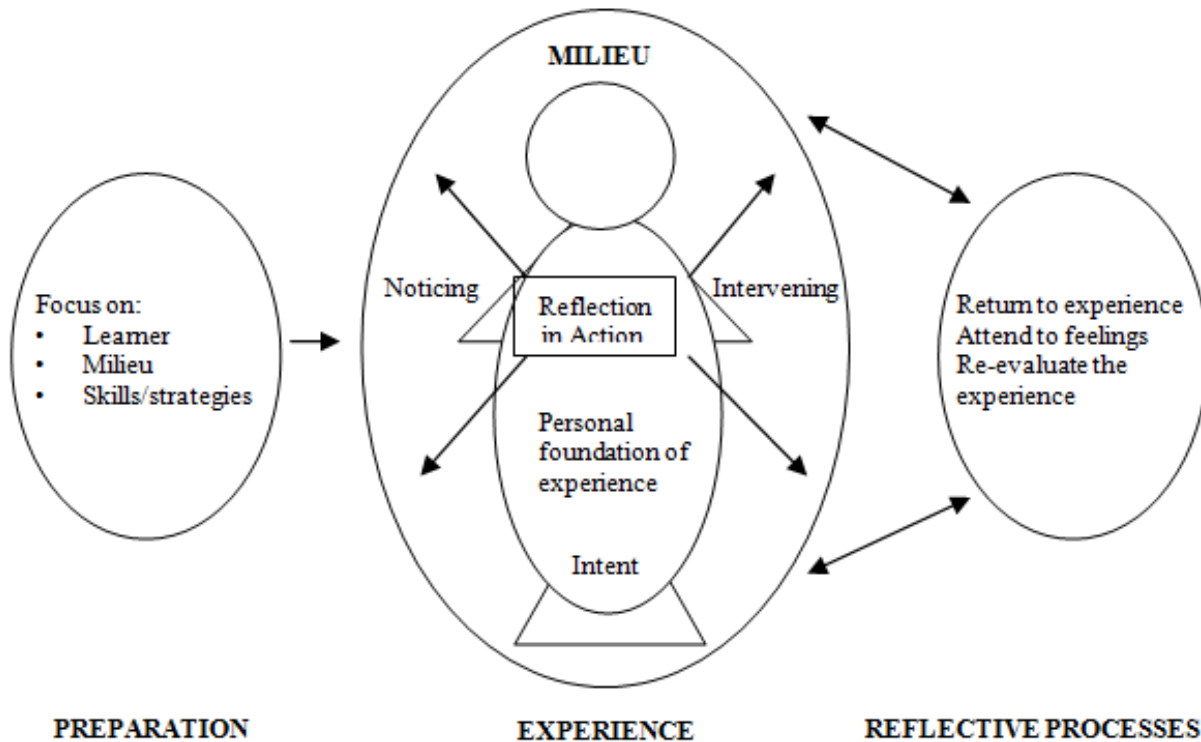
## The Research:

- ▶ Theory meets practice
  - ▶ The theory: Boud's Experiential Learning Theory
  - ▶ The learning goal: Intercultural competencies
  - ▶ The context: Study Abroad programs
- 

# Overview of the theory

- ▶ Ideal learning situations occur when a learner interacts with an environment and reflects over these experiences, resulting in a modification of the learner's behavior, worldview, interpretation, or sense of autonomy (Cell, 1984).
  - ▶ Three stages
    - Preparation
    - Experience
    - Reflective processes
- 

# Visualization of Boud's Theory



- ▶ From "Conceptualising learning from experience. Developing a model for facilitation," by D. Boud, 1994, Proceedings of the 35th Adult Education Research Conference, M. Hyams, J. Armstrong, & E. Anderson (Eds.), p. 51. Copyright 1994 by College of Education at the University of Tennessee.

# Components of the Theory

- ▶ The Experience
  - Personal Foundation
  - Noticing
  - Intervening
  - Intent
- ▶ Reflection
  - Return
  - Attend to Feelings
  - Reflection-in-action
  - Re-evaluate

# Components of the Theory

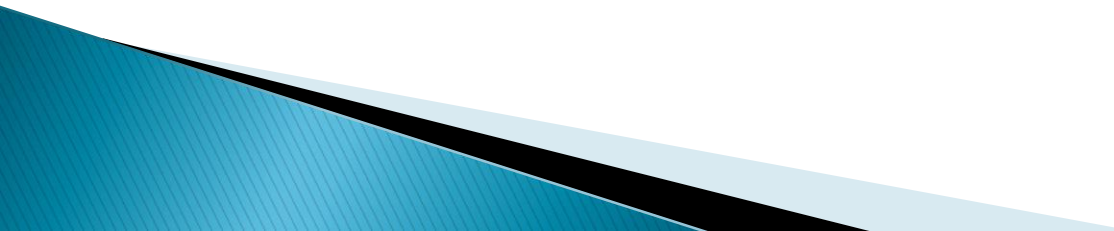
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  - Re-evaluate



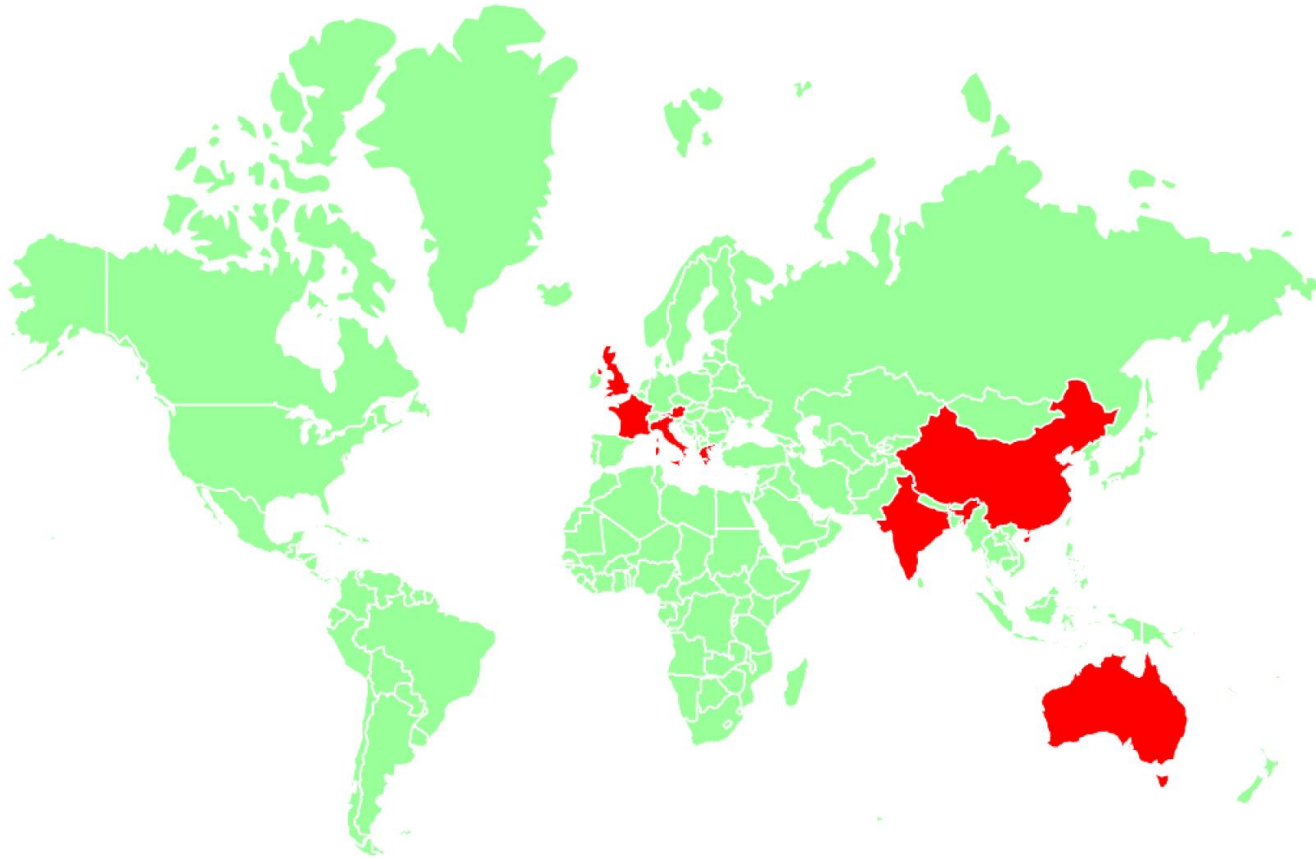
# Component Definitions

| Component           | Criteria   |
|---------------------|--|
| Personal foundation | Activity prompt must encourage students to reflect over their own past experiences, beliefs, and notions of identity.  |
| Noticing            | Activity prompt must encourage students awareness of the new experience and relate to the students' <i>personal foundation</i>   |
| Intervening         | Activity prompts must encourage the personal involvement and initiative of the learner.  |
| Intent              | Activity prompts must encourage students to make their own goals and decisions in the local, sociocultural environment.  |
| Return              | Activity prompts must encourage students to reminisce over or retell either whole or parts of their experience.  |
| Re-evaluate         | Activity prompts must encourage students go one step beyond returning to the experience by taking into account the state of the learner at the beginning of the experience and new knowledge gained. This involves a more critical assessment or judgment of the experience. |

# Research Programs

- ▶ Home universities in the U.S.
  - ▶ Semester-long
  - ▶ Undergraduate
  - ▶ Faculty-led
- 

# Participant Programs



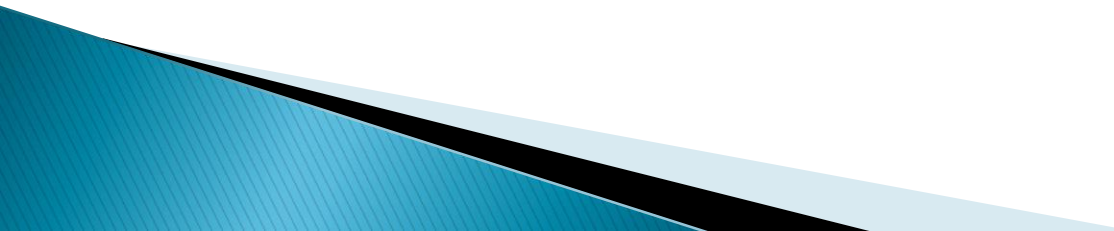
- ▶ Austria (2), Australia, Britain, China, France (2), India, Italy, and Greece, Italy

# Participant overview

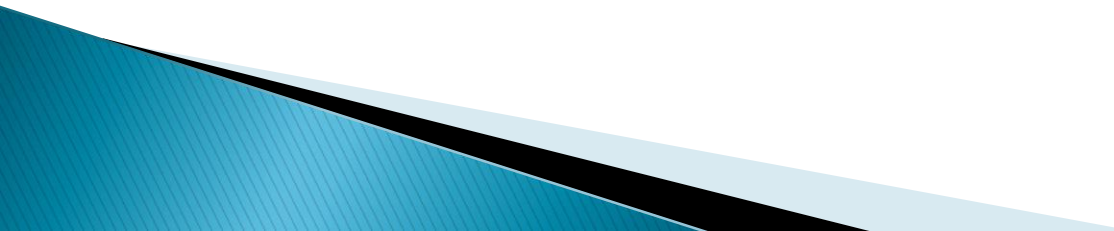
## *Case Studies*

| Case | Host location    | Number of students | Academic Focus  |
|------|------------------|--------------------|---|
| A    | Austria          | 11                 | German language, European history, culture, art, and politics |
| B    | Austria          | 15                 | humanities  |
| C    | Australia        | 21                 | environmental science   |
| D    | Britain          | 27                 | unreported  |
| E    | China            | 17                 | Chinese history, culture, literature, language, and art       |
| F    | France           | 14                 | French language   |
| G    | France           | 12                 | French language   |
| H    | India            | 15                 | social justice (social science)                               |
| I    | Italy and Greece | 30                 | classical art, history, religion, and literature              |
| J    | Italy            | 49                 | unreported  |

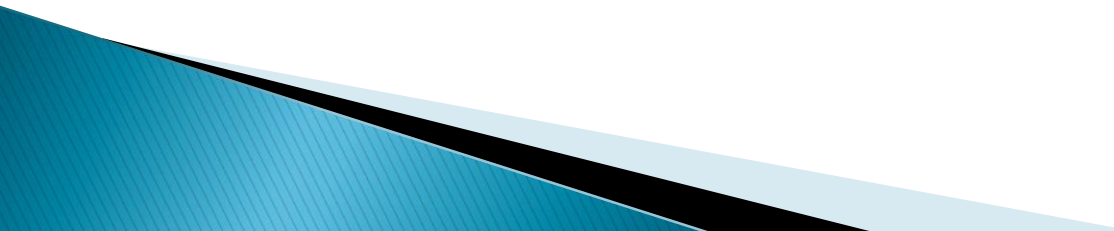
# Activity Types

- ▶ Acting
  - ▶ Discussing
  - ▶ Interviewing
  - ▶ Observing
  - ▶ Presenting
  - ▶ Exploring
  - ▶ Reading
  - ▶ Writing
  - ▶ Selecting
- 

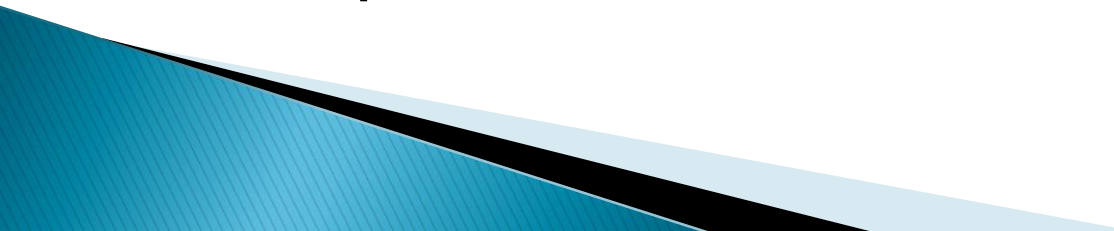
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- 

# Applying the Theory

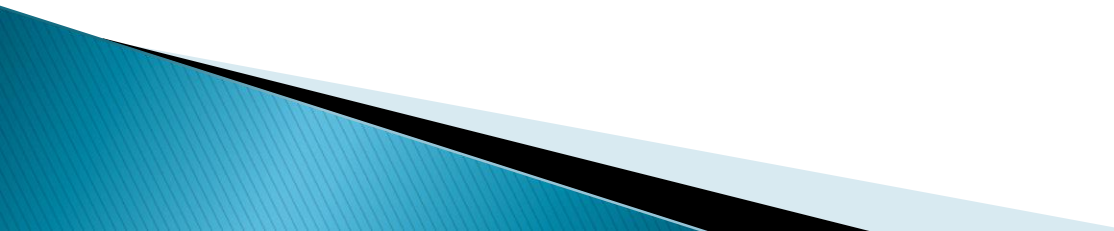
- ▶ Example 1: Students given the amount of money a local worker would have to eat for the day. Students were then taken to different neighborhoods and asked to buy lunch. Students compared and contrasted the cost of buying lunch in different areas catering to people with different economic statuses.
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# Applying the Theory

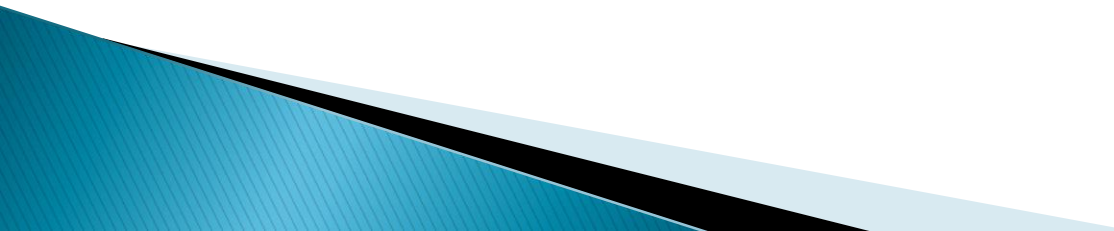
- ▶ Example 1: Students given the amount of money a local worker would have to eat for the day. Students were then taken to different neighborhoods and asked to buy lunch. Students compared and contrasted the cost of buying lunch in different areas catering to people with different economic statuses.
  - ▶ Findings:
  - ▶ Activity = Exploring
  - ▶ Components = Intent and Intervening
- 



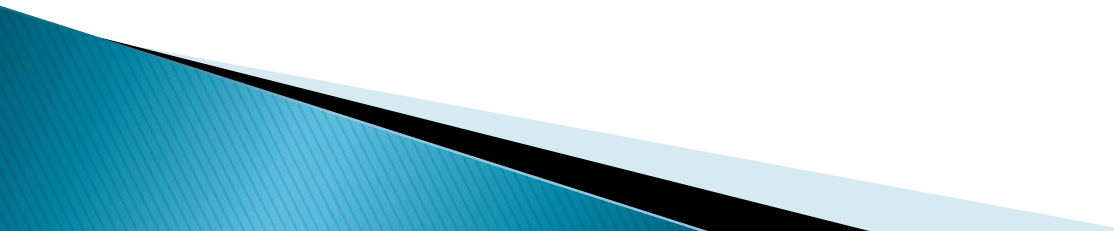
# Applying the Theory

- ▶ Example 2: Students were asked to reflect on their own ethnocentricity by giving examples of aspects of the new, sociocultural environment they found strange, didn't understand, or made them feel uncomfortable upon arriving in the new environment. Students were asked to write about why they felt the way they did and how those aspects of the host culture actually made sense in the host country's sociocultural context.
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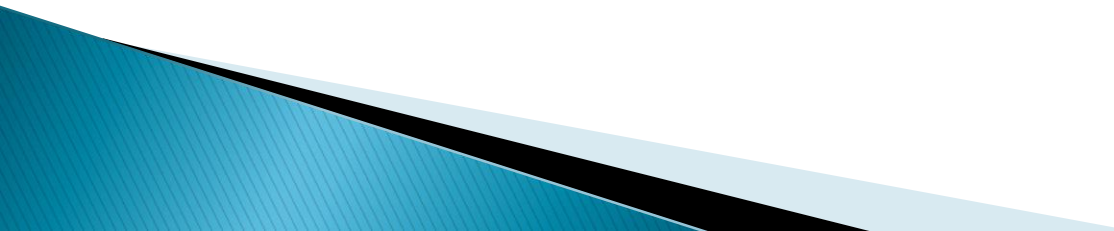
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  - ▶ Findings:
  - ▶ Activity: Writing
  - ▶ Components: Personal Foundation, Return, and Re-evaluate
- 


# Group Practice

- ▶ Identify the Activity Type
  - ▶ Identify the Components
  - ▶ Discuss possible inclusion of other components or modification to prompts to better focus components
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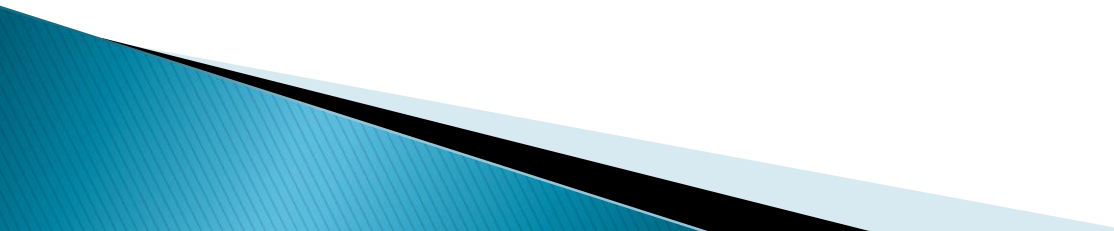
# Overall Findings

- ▶ 230 prompts were identified
  - ▶ Most common components: Intent and Return
  - ▶ Least found components: Noticing and Re-evaluate
  - ▶ Instructors gave individual students prompts (not collected in this study)
  - ▶ Most common Activities: Writing, Exploring, and Discussing
- 

# Interesting Activities

- ▶ Requiring students to join a university or local club of their choice (reflection assignments given)
  - ▶ Scavenger hunts (on first and last days)
  - ▶ Collaborating Photo project
  - ▶ Using food as a gateway to culture
  - ▶ Grid mapping an area multiple times
  - ▶ Students choose a personal space to return to each week
  - ▶ Capstone projects
  - ▶ Highs and Lows
- 

# Suggestions

- ▶ Encourage students to intervene more
  - ▶ Reflection is more than just recalling what happened
  - ▶ Prompt Personal Foundation
  - ▶ Formalize Noticing
- 

# Antidotal Findings

- ▶ Validating student experience while challenging them to acknowledge the limits to this understanding is difficult
- ▶ Technology is useful but also a crutch
- ▶ Faculty have differ in philosophy between student responsibility vs. student care

# Questions

