

Abstract

The thesis is focused on culture shock and adaptation of Erasmus students based on a research conducted with Erasmus students at Irish university. The method of the research was biographical interview with nine students participating in Erasmus programme. The research indicated absence of culture shock and adaptation was usually tied to personal changes and challenges that the sojourn brought about. The thesis presents main topics through which the respondents constructed the notion of adaptation – language, academic, practical, social adaptation and adaptation on the absence of relatives, friends and partners. The tendency of each of those dimensions of adaptation is growing until the exams start which disrupts this process. In the next section, the thesis compares the course of the sojourn to rite of passage, dividing it into three main phases – before departure (pre-liminal), during the sojourn (liminal) and after return (post-liminal). Rite of passage is also one of the ways how it is possible to explain the definition of the meaning of the sojourn for the students themselves. Other ways are adventure and development of self and better understanding of self (the concept of existential authenticity is used to explain this fact). The thesis marginally touches the subject of the meaning of culture for the students during the sojourn. This issue showed to be very individual. However, it is possible to observe an effort to get to know Irish culture through constructive authenticity, i.e. through their constructions of what is and is not typically Irish.