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## NON-LANGUAGE MAJORS' STUDY ABROAD LANGUAGE LEARNING EXPERIENCES CAPTURED IN A NARRATIVE FRAME

### Abstract

Study abroad (SA) research involving Croatian students is still in its infancy, with hardly any documentation of systematic research. Thus, the present paper aims to explore the main themes permeating Croatian sojourners' SA experiences and their interrelatedness. The study utilises narrative frames (NFs), i.e. story templates that produce a coherent account of an individual's own experience (Barkhuizen, 2014), to elicit information on participants' perceptions of SA experience. The NF created for the purposes of this study aims at capturing language learning experiences in an SA context. The frames, completed by 33 Croatian students from non-language fields of study who participated in the Erasmus student exchange programme in various European destinations, were analysed using the grounded theory (GT) approach. All stages of the procedure are meticulously detailed in the study. The all-encompassing idea resulting from the analysis is that SA experience provides a ground for students' authentic growth in which language development and personal and professional development are intertwined and mediated by a range of emotions and attitudes that are created, changed or confirmed in the process.

### Key words

study abroad, language development, narrative frame, grounded theory.

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