The Global Product Pitch: raising intercultural competence awareness and enhancing workplace skills via an online simulation scenario

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Outline

The Global Product Pitch
OIL (Online International Learning) Project

- Aims
- Interactions
- Feedback
- Future directions
Your view please!

- On your mobile device go to: https://kahoot.it/#/

- Then enter the game pin on the screen
Internationalising the Curriculum

HEA (2016)

To “prepare graduates to live in and contribute responsibly to a globally interconnected society”

Orsini-Jones et al (2015: 225)

MexCo project: student-driven - ‘sense of ownership in the knowledge-sharing process.’
Developing Intercultural Competence

Deardoff (2006: 247-48)

‘The ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes’.

Villar-Onrubia and Rajpal (2016: 81)

‘Virtual mobility initiatives such as OIL are one of the most flexible, versatile and inclusive approaches in the provision of experiential learning opportunities aimed at facilitating students’ intercultural competence development.’
Developing workplace skills > employability

**Bhatia and Bremner (2012: 436)**

‘....a widening gap between classroom activities and the professional practices in which the corporate world has been engaged.’

**Evans (2013: 291)**

Narrowing the gap with tasks that offer meaningful, practical engagement
'the need for a simulation-based approach'
The Project

- **Stage 1:**
  - Establish contact/find out about different cultural contexts

- **Stage 2:**
  - Pitch a product/service from your country to a new global market
  - Respond to other presentations

- **Stage 3:**
  - Comments/feedback provided by subject experts
  - Reflect on feedback and experience
The participants

Team China

Team Finland

Team Malaysia

Team Belgium
Methods/tools have you used to establish links and build rapport between participants?
Open Moodle Interface
Samples of Interaction – Malaysia and Finland

Can you tell something about student free time activities in Malaysia?

In my city Kuala Lumpur, the majority of local student's free time are usually spent hanging out in mamak stalls (a common 24 hours restaurant in Malaysia) where the foods are cheap... Other common trends include visiting hipster coffee shops, shisha joints, night clubs, karaoke and cinemas.

What local Finnish dishes would you recommend to foreigners?

My favourite Finnish food is "rye bread" or a candy called "salmiakki".
Synchronous interaction

‘The first skype session was a little bit stiff but next time in a similar situation it will be more fluent. So that’s also something that I’ve learnt.’

(Belgian student)
BS: Can you give us a rare fact about your home country?
IS: Probably our traffic jams...it’s really bad so if you come to our country you’ll be like, what’s going on, it’s traffic jams everywhere...and also we have lots of islands....maybe thousands, if you know Bali....?
BS: Have you been to Bali?
IS: Yeah....numerous times
BS: I’m jealous..........laughter

How is intercultural awareness being raised?
What tools and strategies can be used to assess intercultural awareness?

- Existing model/framework
e.g. Intercultural Knowledge and Competence VALUE rubric
See ETS report: Assessing ICC in HE (Griffith et al 2016)

- Bespoke framework

- Comments grid

- Self-reporting
Pre-task

Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS)

9.8.a I respect the values of people from different cultures

- 5 Strongly agree: 9 (69.2%)
- 4 Agree: 4 (30.8%)
- 3 Neither: 0
- 2 Disagree: 0
- 1 Strongly disagree: 0

9.19.a I am sensitive to the subtle meanings expressed by people from different cultures during our interaction

- 5 Strongly agree: 2 (15.4%)
- 4 Agree: 4 (30.8%)
- 3 Neither: 5 (38.5%)
- 2 Disagree: 1 (7.7%)
- 1 Strongly disagree: 1 (7.7%)
Online simulation scenario

Pitch a product/service from your country to a new global market
Global product pitch sample 1

As you watch, make notes on the handout
Sample comments/responses

• Promotion in China via social media

‘I assume you are aware of the fact that Facebook and Twitter are not available in Chinese mainland without VPN. Will this situation be a problem for your promotion?’

(comment by Chinese student)
Global product pitch sample 2

How does it work?
Sample questions/comments

• We would like to congratulate you on your presentation. It is a very interesting product and you all did an amazing job explaining and promoting it. Thank you very much for your appreciation : )

• Since you have such an exotic product, it might indeed be scary to purchase this product let alone use it...Would you consider selling these products at events where people can first get to know the product better?

Great advice! It will be wonderful if we can take this product and procedure to local events and show people how it works.
Constructive collaborative exchanges

• ‘Perhaps there is an extra product you could sell (like an additional oil treatment) to rehydrate the skin? This solution could end up increasing profits.’

  (Team Belgium)

• ‘We found your advice very thoughtful. We think it would be great to cooperate with skin care brand to promote new product bundles.’

  (Team China)
Global product pitch sample 3:

‘It seems most of students in Belgium study hard and party hard………’

‘Drink your pain away’
Samples of Interaction – Indonesia and Belgium
Tutor feedback (i)

Business / Marketing

- I particularly appreciated your thorough explanation of the product mix and its functionalities.

Areas to work on

The target market that you suggested is rather broad and only defined in terms of demographic characteristics....
Tutor Feedback (ii)

Intercultural
- Particularly impressive was the research you did on tea products in Finland which shows a higher understanding of why intercultural awareness is a key quality in business pitching.

Areas to work on
Perhaps some additional thoughts on how collaborative arrangements with local businesses or organisations might support the successful adoption of the product in Indonesia.
Tutor Feedback (iii)

Delivery and language skills
The pitch is delivered fluently and enthusiasm for the product is clearly demonstrated.

Areas to work on
- Consider other ways to engage the audience in a pitch e.g. product 'demo', alternatives to the 'traditional' PPT presentation....
Global product pitch sample 4

KUNG FU AND CULTURE CLUB

Bringing Chinese Martial Arts And Cultures To Belgium

How is intercultural awareness being raised?
Identify 5 workplace skills that can result from COIL collaborations.
Identify 5 workplace skills that could result from this COIL project

• Establishing links with international partners
• Teamwork
• Planning a pitch
• Delivering a pitch
• Collaborative problem solving
• Sustaining links with international partners
• Self reflection
Student Feedback

Language Skills and cultural awareness

‘It is interesting to see that they have sometimes different perspectives on particular subjects. Through this contact with students from other countries I also improved my English.’

'.....provided an exclusive opportunity for us to interact with students from another country and cultural background. It definitely raised my cultural awareness on our own culture and the differences between others.’

Students from China

‘It was the first time for me to be in contact with students from another country and that was very exciting for me.’
‘I learnt differences that I didn’t know about..............You have to take your time and search much deeper to find the differences.’

Students from Belgium
Student Feedback

Employability Skills

‘The most useful part which I taking in this project is presentation..... because it helps me to improve myself confidence in a professional context which I will face in my further career.’ (Student from Malaysia)

‘The skill I developed... group working skills with other students and also innovating the new product and preparing the business pitch was really fascinating, and in fact I believe that experience could really help me in the business life.’ (Student from Finland)

(Student from Belgium)
Oil partner Feedback

• This online contact is definitely more valuable and makes students more conscious than just reading and studying about cultural differences.

• They [Finnish students] like meeting foreign students and going abroad, but they’re often very shy when making face-to-face conversation with people. The project topic itself required them to think with a more global view and to communicate with other students online, which allowed them to interact without feeling embarrassed.

• Presenting a strong domestic product or service and thus increasing some pride of a community/company you are part of

• Raising the international spirit which they might need in a global world.
Concluding comments and pedagogical impact

Participants are:

• Interacting with peers from other countries
• Integrating business/marketing knowledge and English language skills
• Improving workplace communication skills and teamwork
• Engaging in digitalised learning
• Enhancing employability profile

Development of an innovative, internationalised curriculum
OIL → other international activities

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Future developments

• Consider other methods to measure intercultural competence (pre/post-project)
• Expand focus of the project – PG/home students, different partners?
• Develop a clearer, more structured timescale
• Keep up with advances in digital technology

‘The OIL project is an excellent way to communicate... but I think it would be great if people who take part in this project also meet each other in real life.’

(Comment from a Belgian student)
Team Belgium signing off to Team Indonesia
Your feedback/comments

• What was the most interesting and useful element of this OIL project?

• What changes would you suggest?
Thank you.

Any questions?

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Higher Education Academy (2016). Framework for internationalising higher education. Available at: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/enhancement/frameworks/framework-internationalising-higher-education
