

Mendel University in Brno

Faculty of Regional Development and International Studies

The Process of cultural adaptation of AFS exchange students to the Czech culture

Bachelor's thesis

Author: Jasmína Henniová

Supervisor: Ing. Mgr. Jiří Čeněk

Brno 2016

Declaration

I declare that I carried out this thesis independently, and only with the cited sources, literature and other professional sources.

I agree that my work will be published in accordance with Section 47b of Act No. 111/1998 Coll. on Higher Education as amended thereafter and in accordance with the Guidelines on Publishing University Student Theses.

I understand that my work relates to the rights and obligations under the Act No. 121/2000 Coll., the Copyright Act, as amended, in particular the fact that Mendel University in Brno has the right to conclude a license agreement on the use of this work as a school work pursuant to Section 60 paragraph 1 of the Copyright Act.

Before closing a license agreement on the use of my thesis with another person (subject) I undertake to request for a written statement of the university that the license agreement in question is not in conflict with the legitimate interests of the university, and undertake to pay any contribution, if eligible, to the costs associated with the creation of the thesis, up to their actual amount.

Brno May 16th 2016

Jasmína Henniová

Acknowledgement

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my advisor Ing. Mgr. Jiří Čeněk for his guidance and support. His expertise in intercultural psychology was very helpful and valuable.

I would also like to thank the AFS exchange students to fill in the CCAI surveys and the AFS volunteers to guide them through the process at their training event.

Abstract

Henniová, J. *The Process of cultural adaptation of AFS exchange students to the Czech culture* Bachelor Thesis. Brno: Mendel University. Faculty of Regional Development and International Studies, 2016. Advisor: Ing. Mgr. Jiří Čeněk.

The thesis focuses on adaptability of AFS exchange students. It studies their ability to adapt to the Czech culture. In the first part the theoretical background of intercultural psychology, adaptation process and its possible obstacles is presented. It is based on many important authors, especially M. J. Bennett, J. W. Berry, W. Bridges, G. Hofstede, K. Oberg or J. Průcha. In the second part own research of adaptability of AFS students is presented. The data was collected through CCAI surveys. The results are used to compare the adaptability of the students in the beginning and in the end of the exchange programs and also to compare the genders, age groups and nationalities with each other.

Key words: adaptation, AFS, culture, cultural shock, Cross-Cultural Adaptation Inventory, cross-cultural communication, exchange students

Abstrakt

Henniová, J. *Proces adaptace AFS výměnných studentů na českou kulturu* Bakalářská práce. Brno: Mendelova univerzita. Fakulta regionálního rozvoje a mezinárodních studií, 2016. Vedoucí bakalářské práce Ing. Mgr. Jiří Čeněk.

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá adaptabilitou výměnných studentů organizace AFS Mezikulturní programy. Zkoumá zejména jejich schopnost zapojit se plnohodnotně do české kultury a každodenního života v ní. V první části jsou shrnuty dosavadní poznatky týkající se interkulturní psychologie, procesu adaptace a možných překážek v něm. Literární rešerše se opírá o mnoho významných autorů, zejména o M. J. Bennetta, J. W. Berryho, W. Bridgese, G. Hofstedeho, K. Oberga nebo J. Průchu. Ve druhé části je představen vlastní výzkum adaptability AFS studentů. Data byla sbírána pomocí CCAI dotazníků. Výsledky výzkumu slouží k porovnání adaptability na začátku a na konci výměnného programu a také k vzájemnému porovnání mezi pohlavími, věkovými skupinami a národnostmi.

Klíčová slova: adaptace, AFS, Inventář interkulturní adaptability, kultura, kulturní šok, mezikulturní komunikace, výměnní studenti

Table of contents

1.	Introduction	7
2.	Aim and methods	8
I.	LITERATURE RESEARCH	9
3.	Terms and definitions	9
3.1	Culture	9
3.2	Nation, national culture	9
3.3	Ethnic group, ethnicity	10
3.4	Cultural identity	10
3.5	Values	11
3.6	Generalization, stereotypes and prejudices	12
3.7	Enculturation, acculturation, adaptation	12
3.8	Culture shock	13
3.9	Intercultural sensitivity and adaptability	14
3.10	Intercultural communication	14
3.11	Intercultural conflict	16
3.12	Intercultural training	16
4.	Cross-cultural adaptation	17
4.1	The cross-cultural adaptation models	17
4.1.1	The adjustment cycle according to K. Oberg	17
4.1.2	Developmental model of intercultural sensitivity by M. Bennett	18
4.1.3	Stress-Adaptation-Growth Model by Y. Y. Kim	19
4.1.4	Transition Model by W. Bridges	20
4.2	Culture shock	20
5.	Cultural dimensions according to G. Hofstede	22
5.1	The Czech Republic according to the cultural dimensions	23
6.	Exchange program	24

6.1	AFS Intercultural programs	24
6.2	The exchange year	24
II.	EMPIRICAL PART	27
7.	Goal of the research and research questions	27
8.	Methods of research and data collection	28
8.1	Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI).....	28
8.2	Questionnaire.....	30
9.	Research sample	30
10.	The results of the CCAI inventory	32
10.1	Comparison of results according to different variables	32
10.1.1	According to gender.....	32
10.1.2	According to age groups	33
10.1.3	According to continents	33
10.1.4	Results from the beginning and the end of the exchange program.....	34
11.	The verification of the hypotheses	40
12.	Discussion	43
13.	Conclusion.....	45
	References	47
	List of Figures.....	50
	List of Graphs	50
	List of Tables	51

1. Introduction

Nowadays there are many possibilities of traveling, many people travel for work and studies and we face intercultural encounters almost every day. These encounters are not always easy and often we meet some obstacles and difficulties. I've always been interested in cultural differences and in interaction between people from different cultural backgrounds, coming from an intercultural family myself. The need of intercultural learning is now more needed than ever and companies and schools often include these topics in their trainings or education programs.

The field of intercultural psychology exists for decades but it is not yet well known to the non-expert audience. Especially in the Czech Republic people didn't have many possibilities to travel and learn foreign languages. Lack of skills and knowledge in this areas can often lead to fear and prejudices which can become racism. The society is now discovering the field of intercultural learning and communication and young people can apply for many different exchange programs and education projects abroad. This way they can develop the necessary skills and abilities to live in the intercultural world.

This thesis focuses on intercultural differences and the process of adaptation, including its possible obstacles. It explains the basic terms, including culture, cross-cultural adaptation, intercultural communication, stereotypes and prejudices and it shows many adaptation models. It introduces a research of adaptability of a group of exchange students. It compares the adaptability between gender, age groups and nationality and above all it's trying to discover whether a year abroad can increase the skills needed for today's globalized world.

2. Aim and methods

The aim of this thesis is to measure the adaptability of a group of AFS exchange students and to compare the adaptability in the beginning and in the end of the program and to compare the adaptability between genders, age groups and nationalities.

The thesis is divided in two parts, literature research and the empirical part. The literature research part is divided in four more sections: Terms and definitions, Cross-cultural adaptation, Cultural dimensions according to G. Hofstede and Exchange program. The first subsection explains definitions of important terms such as culture, values, adaptation, intercultural communication and culture shock. The second subsection presents several adaptation models according to different authors such as K. Oberg, M. Bennett, Y. Y. Kim and W. Bridges. The third part introduces the research of G. Hofstede and it explains the cultural dimensions he developed. In the last subsection the nature of exchange programs is explained and it also includes a brief presentation of AFS Intercultural programs, an NGO organizing exchange programs in the Czech Republic.

In the empirical part an own research is presented. The data for the research was collected through the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI). The respondents were 40 exchange students from 24 countries participating in AFS exchange program in the Czech Republic. Thanks to the organization and its volunteers the CCAI tool was included in their training event where the volunteers guided the students through the process. In total 60 students were asked for participation, 40 of them filled the surveys in both in the beginning and also in the end of their program. The inventory contains of 50 statements and the respondents have to decide about each of them whether they identify with them or not on a scale from 1 to 6. The whole research is based on this data.

I. LITERATURE RESEARCH

3. Terms and definitions

In this part of the work the basic terminology, definitions and theories are defined and explained. These core concepts and terms are essential to understand the process of cross-cultural adaptation and intercultural encounters.

3.1 Culture

According to Průcha (2007) the word „culture“ has more than one meaning in the English language and it can be found in several disciplines. Basically, we can differentiate two concepts of culture. The first wider concept covers everything that the human civilization produces, both material (e.g. buildings, clothes, industry) and intellectual (e.g. art, law, traditions) outcomes.

The second more specific concept, used in cultural anthropology or intercultural psychology, describes culture as behavioral characteristics of people, thus customs, symbols, communication norms and language rituals, shared values systems, experience passed on or maintained taboos (Průcha, 2007). It is an entire system of meanings, values and social norms, followed by the members of the society, transmitted to the future generations throughout the socialization (Murphy, 1988). According to other definition, the culture is described as “*patterns of thoughts and behavior that are collectively established in each society*” (Hansel, 1993).

Berry (2011, p. 224) claims that the word “culture” was first used by Tylor in 1871. He defines culture as “*that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by a human as a member of society*”.

3.2 Nation, national culture

Nation is not easy to define, especially when it comes to the difference between nation and ethnic group, says Průcha (2007). The modern nations are developed from the ethnic groups and have their own states. If there are members of other ethnic groups living in those states, they are called the ethnic or national minority from the point of view of this state, and in the same time they are members of another nation developed from their own ethnic group.

According to the Great sociological dictionary (1996, i. 1, p. 668-669) the nation is original and conscious cultural and political community, which's creation was mostly influenced by common history and territory. There is three criteria indentifying the nation. First is the culture criterion, including language, religion and history. Second is the politic existence criterion defining whether the nation has its own state or just autonomy within another state. And the last but not least is the psychological criterion which states for the subjective consciousness of its members about being a part of a certain nation.

Hofstede (2010) defines different levels of culture, among others culture characterized by family or religion and also a national culture. The national culture is the behavior patterns and the way of thinking common for most people from one nation or country.

3.3 Ethnic group, ethnicity

The word "ethnic" comes from the Greek "ethnos" which means nation or tribe, a unit based on the same family line. Later the definition changed and the Greeks starter to focus on other aspects, too and an "ethnos" was understood as a group of people with the same habits and cultural patterns (Průcha, 2007). The Great Sociological Dictionary (1996, i. 1, p. 277) defines an ethnic group as "*a community of people with the same race and common language which shares the same culture. We can also say that the ethnic group has its own ethnicity.*"

The ethnicity is defined by the same dictionary as an interconnected system of cultural, racial and territorial factors, language, history and common origin, influencing each other and forming one's consciousness and one's ethnical identity (Great Sociological Dictionary, 1996, i. 1, p. 275).

3.4 Cultural identity

Ward et al. (2001, p. 106) claim that "*identity entails a set of dynamic, complex processes by which individuals define, redefine and construct their own and others' ethnicity*". Morgensternová and Šulová (2007, p. 35) define cultural identity as awareness of affiliation to a concrete culture. "*The cultural identity derives from the group identity, which can be understood as a feeling of belonging to a certain group we share social and cultural characteristics with.*"

Savignon (2002) presented an interesting opinion about intercultural encounters, where participants of this encounter tend to conclude one the two things: 1) people are all the

same and 2) people are different. There is truth in both. Hofstede (2010) thus developed a model of three cultural identity dimensions: human universals, group association and individual personality. He explains what does it depend on whether people are the same regardless the cultural differences and the other way around.

The human universals cover things as biological needs as air or food, fundamental human emotions like sadness or happiness, social constructs as government or family and also values, even though they vary for different cultural groups every group has certain values. The second dimension, group association, refers to what characteristic do people have depending on to which group they belong. Very often we use this to describe the national or ethnic cultural groups but there is many more. These can be non-selected like race, sex or age, or self-selected as profession or some organization membership. All these groups affect us and form our own personal culture. The last but not least is our own individual personality. Hofstede explains that we choose the self-selected groups and assign values to the non-selected groups, we can accept or reject the values of the nation or ethnic group we live in and so on. All these aspects determine our own cultural identity (Hofstede, 1997).

3.5 Values

Values are one of the most studied concepts in psychology and sociology (Průcha, 2007). One of the possible definitions is the following: *“A values is a characteristic associated to a certain subject, situation, event or action connected to fulfilling one’s needs and interests. Values are hierarchically ordered according to their importance in a so called value system. This system defines one’s basic attitudes, life style and ethics”* (Hartl, & Hartlová, 2000).

In intercultural psychology there is an extra dimension of values – the comparison. Furthermore beside individuals values are also characteristic for groups, ethnics and nations. Comparing the group values is one of the key activities in intercultural psychology (Průcha, 2007). The concept of national values was worked out in detail by social psychologist Geert Hofstede (2010). He defined six cultural dimensions based on one’s values. These dimensions will be described in depth in the chapter 5 of this thesis, but in brief they include the power distance, individualism (collectivism), uncertainty avoidance, masculinity (femininity), long-term (short-term) orientation and indulgence (restraint).

3.6 Generalization, stereotypes and prejudices

According to Průcha (2007, p. 67) stereotypes and prejudices have the same roots. They are “*ideas, opinions and attitudes, which individuals or groups adopt in relation to other groups*”. They have quite strong emotional overtone, they aren’t always logical and they are often adopted from other people without verification. As Nakonečný (1997) adds they are often not based on one’s own experience but they are transmitted from generation to generation.

Hnilica (2010) explains stereotyping on a clear example. He encourages the readers to imagine a situation when one person meets few Mongols who are quite tall, around two meters. This person, who never met any other Mongols, will probably think that all Mongols measure around two meters. That is the base for a stereotype. Now in this case the height isn’t provoking much emotion and is rather neutral and some stereotypes can also be positive. But often the stereotypes can evoke negative emotions and then we speak about prejudices (Průcha, 2007).

Berry (2011) explains the three components of prejudices. It is the cognitive one, which is the stereotype itself. It’s a generalization applied to the group as a whole without recognizing individual differences. The second component is the affective one, which is an attitude which also contains an evaluation of the subject and it evokes emotions. And last but not least the behavioral component. This is the phase of discrimination while interacting with individuals or groups from a different culture.

The stereotypes and prejudices are mostly seen as rigid opinions, without space for flexibility (Hartl, & Hartlová, 2000). Whether generalization can be quite useful and can help us to categorize the elements of the multicultural world and even evoke curiosity to discover more about the other culture. Cultural generalization can help us with the process of recognizing and understanding the patterns of cultures to which we belong and provides the basis for understanding other cultures. They are very similar to the stereotypes but unlike them they use a much more inclusive language and allow for individual difference (Bennett, 2013).

3.7 Enculturation, acculturation, adaptation

According to Hartl and Hartlová (2000), enculturation is the process of adopting, formally and informally, cultural norms and experience. Průcha (2007) adds that this process

lasts from the birth during the whole life, so it also includes the enculturation in one's own national culture. Herskovits (1972) completes this definition by saying that during this process, which is almost identical with socialization, an individual gains knowledge, skills and behavioral patterns which are necessary for living in a certain community.

On the other hand, during acculturation, the sustained first-handed contact between two or more cultures causes cultural changes by adopting or excluding other culture's elements or by transformation of these elements (Brouček et al., 1991). It can also be happening during a forced contact of two cultures, as during Germanization in Czech history (Průcha, 2007).

Regarding the adaptation, it is a term not necessarily connected to intercultural encounters. An individual experiences adaptation many times during the life, as for example when he or she changes a job. However, when adaptation to a whole new culture is experienced in a different country, one can meet many difficulties, as for example language barrier and cultural differences, which he or she didn't meet while changing a job back home. This makes the cross-cultural adaptation more challenging (Paige et al., 2009). Bock (1974) specifies three kinds of adjustment: physical, social and internal. The physical adjustment requires getting used to the new food and transportation system, the social adjustment is about understanding and accepting the other culture's values and beliefs and the way of doing things, and last but not least the internal adjustment which let us incorporate both cultures at ease and creating our own intercultural identity.

Some authors distinguish adaptation and adjustment. There is a slight difference, where adjustment is considered the first stage, when an individual overcomes a culture shock and feels more and more comfortable and competent in the host culture whether adaptation is the even more advanced stage when an individual reaches a deep understanding of the host culture and integrates the values, customs and behaviors in his daily life (Lysgaard, 1955).

3.8 Culture shock

Winkelman (1994, p. 121) defines culture shock as a *“multifaceted experience resulting from numerous stressors occurring in a contact with a different culture.”* Oberg (1960) refers to a culture shock as to *“an occupational disease”* of people who had to move abroad for work. It appears when one loses all familiar signs and symbols of social behavior, for example what to do when meeting people or when to give tips. These cues are usually

subconscious and they differentiate throughout cultures. One can feel anxious when he or she doesn't understand the patterns of the host culture.

Another important term is a reverse culture shock. Storti (2001) explains that people can (and they often do) find more difficult to readapt in their own culture than going abroad in the first place. It's often caused by our expectations that the reentry will be easy and we will find our "sweet home" again. When the reality is different, we find ourselves surprised and confused. The process and phases of reverse culture shock are very similar to the ones of culture shock which will be discussed in chapter 4.

Berry (2011) rather uses the term "acculturative stress" because he is convinced that the word "stress" describes better the situations in which people react on negative experiences and the word "acculturative" is more accurate to define an interaction between more than just one culture.

3.9 Intercultural sensitivity and adaptability

Intercultural sensitivity is when "*one feels effective in the host culture and others see him or her as effective,*" write Paige et al. (2009, p. 107). They further explain that intercultural sensitive individual can achieve the same feeling of being comfortable as in his or her own culture and can build a life similar to the one he or she had at home.

Bennett (1993) worked out a model of intercultural sensitivity. According to the model an individual goes through six stages: denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation and integration. The first three are ethnocentric and the last three are ethnorelative. The higher the stage, the easier functioning in the host culture. This model is further discussed in the chapter 4.

Paige et al. (2009) add that we are not born with the sensitivity but that we gain it through experience and following reflection upon cultural differences. It's the way how one becomes more adaptable and can enjoy the cultural differences by seeing them as interesting and even desirable.

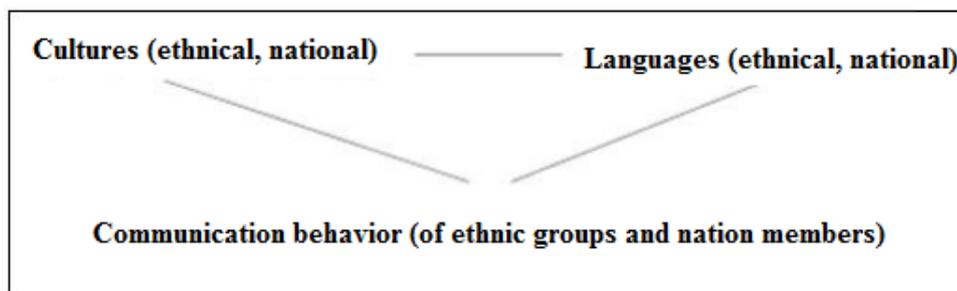
3.10 Intercultural communication

Intercultural communication happens during an interaction between individuals from different national or ethnic groups, often speaking different languages. A good knowledge of

the other one's language can significantly ease the communication process. Průcha (2010, p. 107) explains that knowing a common language is the core skill the two communication partners need to have (even if they had to use help of an interpreter). “*Without language, there is no communication,*” he claims.

However language is not the only important factor. The other important components of intercultural communication are the psychological and culture ones (Průcha, 2010). See a simple scheme below. Also Paige et al. (2009) support this opinion by saying that communication isn't only about language and that it's also necessary to be aware of different communication styles. Together with this we can gain a meaningful intercultural communication competence.

Figure 1: Intercultural communication scheme



Source: Interkulturní komunikace, Průcha, 2010

Hall (1976) worked out a concept of low and high context communication. He claims that some cultures tend to communicate in a low context, which means that the message is mostly transmitted directly through words, all the important information is explicitly spoken out loud. Western Europe, United States and Canada are a typical example of cultures using this communication style. On the contrary in the high context communication, most information is taken from the social and physical surroundings and not much of verbal background information is needed. We can find cultures using the high context communication in some Asian countries or South America and others.

Beside the high and low context, there are other communication styles used throughout different cultures. We can speak about the proxemics, term describing the use of space during communication (Hall, 1966), or the understanding of time as polychronic and monochronic (Hall, 1990). Průcha (2010) shows this concept on a scheme below.

3.11 Intercultural conflict

According to Turner (2005, p. 87) an intercultural conflict is caused by “*differences in cultural values and beliefs that place people at odds with one another.*” Ting-Toomey and Goetzl (2001) add that such a conflict is usually due to bad communication, misunderstanding or ignorance of the cultural differences.

3.12 Intercultural training

Intercultural training is one’s preparation to interact with a different culture. It can often be for people who will work or study abroad (Bhawuk, & Brislin, 2000). One of the mostly used methods is the Intercultural Sensitizer or the Cultural Assimilator training (Bhawuk, 2001). This assimilator can be culturally specific, if one is preparing to meet one concrete culture, and also culturally general, if the goal is to learn about cultural differences and communication as a whole (Kolman, 2011).

4. Cross-cultural adaptation

The term adaptation describes the ability of an individual to learn and to change. “More precisely, in the case of migration, the term refers to the changes brought about in the newcomer and the host country in order to reduce conflict and increase psychological and social well-being.” (Bolaffi, 2002, p. 3).

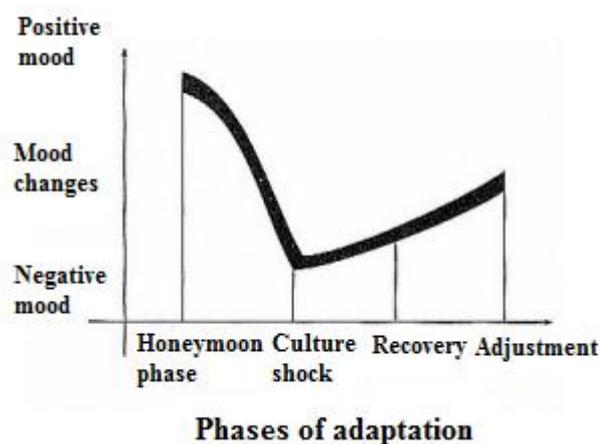
4.1 The cross-cultural adaptation models

The cross-cultural adaptation process is very personal and individual. However, there are varied theories and models suggesting different phases of adaptation process. These models are discussed below.

4.1.1 The adjustment cycle according to K. Oberg

Oberg proposes 4 stages of adaptation. The first one is the *honeymoon stage*, the second one is the *culture shock*, the third one is called *recovery* and the final one is the *adjustment* stage (Marx, 1999).

Figure 2: Adjustment cycle



Source: *Breaking through Culture Shock: What You Need to Succeed in International Business*, Marx, 1999

Marx (1999) is describing Oberg’s model as following: in the first, honeymoon, stage, all the new things and surroundings are seen as positive, the individual is curious and excited and willing to accept whatever is coming. The judgment is often suppressed. The second phase, the culture shock, is defined with feelings such as confusion, irritation, disorientation

and so on. It can also have negative symptoms such as stress and lack of sleep. In the next stage, the recovery, the individual needs to realize that he or she has a problem and needs to compromise between exaggerated expectations and reality. And eventually the individual comes to the last phase of adjustment, where he or she is more flexible and accept new ways of doing things. You can see the adjustment cycle graphic above.

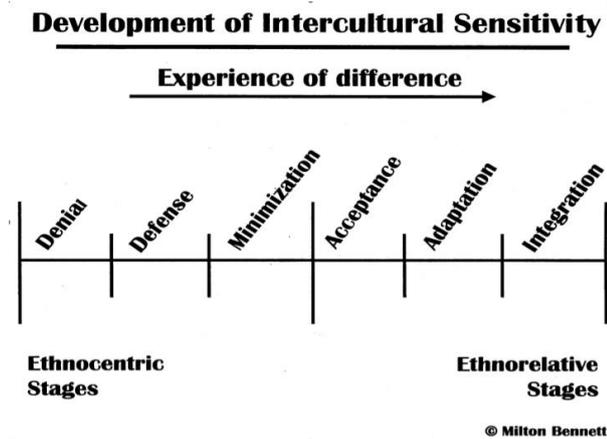
4.1.2 Developmental model of intercultural sensitivity by M. Bennett

According to Bennett's (1993) Developmental model of intercultural sensitivity, adaptation has 6 stages also in time. The first three stages are so called *ethnocentric stages* and the last three are *ethnorelative stages*. Bennett calls them denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation and integration.

In the *denial* phase the individual is not aware of culture differences. He or she expects that other cultures are more or less organized in the same way like his or her own. In the *defense* phase one starts to realize the differences and strictly divides the world to "us" and "them". He or she often judges which culture is better. In case one finds the other culture better, Bennett also calls this stage *reversal* instead of defense. The third and the last ethnocentric phase is the *minimization* phase. In this stage the individual accentuates that even though there are differences between his or her culture and the other culture, it doesn't matter so much, because we are all humans after all, and that's the most important. One minimizes the importance of the differences in customs or behavioral patterns between the two cultures.

In the fourth phase, called *acceptance*, one can see the differences and is able to accept them, but still feels insecure about how to deal with them. In the next phase, *adaptation*, the individual is competent to effectively deal with the differences. He or she even incorporate some of the values and beliefs from the other culture and feels completely comfortable to interact with the local people. The last stage of *integration* is related to one's cultural identity. At this point the person feels comfortable with cultural relativity, thus being part of two or more different cultures is ok for him or her. You can see the development of intercultural sensitivity according to Bennett at the scheme below.

Figure 3: Developmental model of intercultural sensitivity

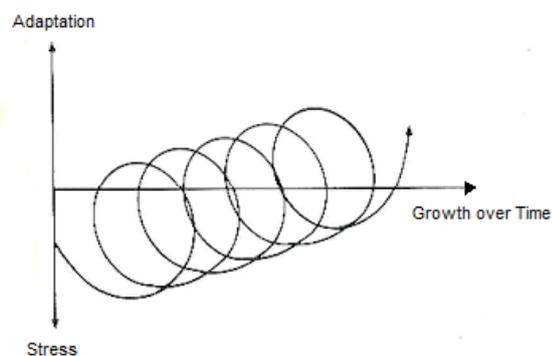


Source: *Towards a Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity*, Bennett, 1993

4.1.3 Stress-Adaptation-Growth Model by Y. Y. Kim

Kim (2001) uses a spiral to show how one adapts in time. She explains that the negative experience is a challenge and it helps us to learn and to grow. Each successive stressful situation takes us less stress than before. With the learning we adapt more and more every time. Eventually we feel less stressed and more comfortable in different situations in the host culture and it contributes to our personal growth. You can see this model in the figure below.

Figure 4: Stress-Adaptation-Growth Model

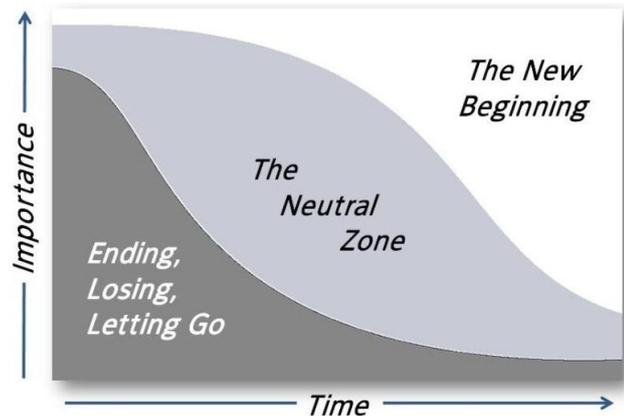


Source: *Becoming Intercultural: An Integrative Theory of Communication and Cross-cultural Adaptation*, Kim, 2001

4.1.4 Transition Model by W. Bridges

Bridges (1980) defined a model that is applicable for all kind of transitions or changes in one's life. It is also well applicable for the case of cultural adjustment. Bridges specified three phases which one goes through: *letting go*, *neutral zone* and *new beginning*.

Figure 5: Transition Model



Source: *Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes*, Bridges, 1980

This model, unlike the others, is not defined in time. Thus all the three phases are happening in the same time, but one of them is always in majority. Bridges claims that more one lets go of the familiar more space there is for the new beginning, and in case of cultural adaptation more space there is for learning and for discovering and accepting cultural differences. In the neutral zone one is emotionally disconnected from the past.

4.2 Culture shock

Oberg (1960, p. 177) is the first author who used the term of culture shock. He defines it as “*anxiety that results from losing all of our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse*”. This anxiety can result from not knowing how to react to the new environment and ignorance of local values and beliefs (Winkelman, 1994). One can therefore feel depressed or demotivated and even doesn't feel like learning the host culture's language (Oberg, 1960). The language barrier can often cause even more misunderstandings and eventually one feels even more lost (Průcha, 2010).

According to Bennett (1998) the symptoms of a culture shock can be different from person to person and there is a whole range of demonstration of a culture shock. Marx (1999)

explains some possible demonstrations, for example uncertainty about ourselves, our surroundings and our future or the feeling of not knowing who we are without our familiar social context. Bennett (1998) quotes various authors like Oberg, Foster or Adler who add more possible symptoms: excessive concern over cleanliness and health; feelings of helplessness and withdrawal; irritability; and desire for home and old friends.

All these processes causes stress and stress can also have physical consequences. Among the physical symptoms we can find lack of sleep, gaining or losing weight or even being sick more often (Štrach 2009). One is usually very tired and every activity requires more energy than normal. Barna (1976) also explain that there are physiological aspects, too: “culture shock is an emotional and physiological reaction of high activation that is brought about a sudden immersion in a new and different culture.” According to Oberg (1960) excessive washing of one’s hands and fear of physical contact with local people are other possible physical symptoms of a culture shock.

Culture shock doesn’t only have the negative symptoms though. According to Adler (1987, p. 29), culture shock also contents a *„profound learning experience that leads to a higher degree of self-awareness and personal growth.“* This was also explained by Kim (2001), who claims that every negative experience includes some learning and only in that way we can achieve personal growth. She shows this at her Stress-Adaptation-Growth Model, that was discussed above in the chapter 4.1.3.

Bennett (1998) has in interesting point of view regarding culture-shock. She claims that the biggest problem of dealing with the culture shock is in the perception of it. She says that we understand it as something strange and exotic. She compares culture shock with other “shocks” that can be provoked by whatever change in our lives.

5. Cultural dimensions according to G. Hofstede

Hofstede (2001) brought a large theory, supported by an extensive research, to explain why people in different countries think, behave and communicate differently. He first defined four cultural dimensions: *power distance*, *individualism vs. collectivism*, *uncertainty avoidance* and *masculinity vs. femininity*. Later two more dimensions were discovered: *long-term vs. short-term orientation* and *indulgence vs. restraint* (The Hofstede Centre, 2016).

Power distance: Regarding the power distance, Hofstede distinguished cultures with large and small power distance. The cultures with large power distance have high dependence need and more powerful members of the society are expected to give directions to the others. They are often not accessible to the member of the lower society and have certain privileges. Inequality is usually accepted and hierarchy is a necessity. Whereas in small power distance societies members tend to be more equal and they can access the superiors, who normally have the same rights like the rest of the society.

Individualism vs. Collectivism: In the individualistic cultures its members make decisions independently and regarding their own preferences. They will probably also consider their closest family, which means the parents or the wife/husband and children. The personal choice is emphasized whereas in the collectivist culture the group ties are strong and decision making include the opinion of the group, e. g. large family (cousins, aunts, uncles...). The harmony and good relationship in the group are above personal choices and preferences.

Uncertainty avoidance: The cultures with weak uncertainty avoidance accept uncertainty as a part of life and it doesn't cause them much stress. In general they don't need many rules and they don't mind to take risks. On the other hand in the strong uncertainty avoidance cultures the members need much more rules and laws and they don't like to take risks. Every unknown situation causes them a lot of stress and they need to avoid failure.

Masculinity vs. Femininity: The masculine societies focus on ambition and work, they admire success and they enjoy competition. They tend to resolve conflicts by letting the stronger one win whereas the feminine societies tend to negotiate and compromise. The feminine cultures also feel more compassion for the less fortunate than admiring the successful and the rather focus on the quality of life for all. They build good relationship and try to maintain harmony.

Long-term vs. Short-term orientation: In the long-term oriented societies people tend to be more careful with the resources, whether it's the money or natural resources, and they also treasure relationships. They expect results but they can wait for them. They don't mind to postpone their desires for greater causes. In the short-term oriented societies members expect results quickly and they only see relationships as important if they can gain something from them. They are encouraged to spend more and they don't tend to save resources for the far future.

Indulgence vs. Restraint: Cultures with a high rate of indulgence focus on present moment and they satisfy all their needs and desires. They like to enjoy life and have fun and free behavior is encouraged. People in these cultures are often more optimistic, positive and out-going, they value leisure time and friends. People in the countries with high restraint scores behave often more moderately and reservedly. Discipline and moral norms are very important for them. They also tend to be more negative and introverted. Material objects are not so much for enjoying as for status and they are reward for hard work.

Hofstede (2001) claims that these dimensions are measurable in numbers for each society, country or culture. He held his research in the 1970's when he questioned a large number of IBM employees throughout the subsidiaries. Later he held the research again in 50 different countries, including the Czech Republic (Lukášková, 2010).

5.1 The Czech Republic according to the cultural dimensions

The Czech Republic has a slightly larger power distance with number 57, rather strong uncertainty avoidance with number 74, it is slightly more individualistic with number 58 and slightly more masculine with number 57. Regarding the long-term vs. short-term orientation, the Czech score is 70, so it is rather long-term oriented. And last but not least the Czech society is rather restrained.

6. Exchange program

By exchange program we mean study abroad program. Those programs are provided by a large number of companies and organizations around the world. For the needs of this thesis we will focus on the AFS Intercultural Programs exchanges.

6.1 AFS Intercultural programs

AFS is a worldwide non-profit non-governmental volunteer organization which operates in almost 60 countries. Its aim is to spread the idea of intercultural learning and to increase tolerance and understanding between different people and cultures. It's achieving this goal throughout experience learning, especially study abroad programs and host families program.

In general AFS focuses on high school students exchange programs. These programs can last from 3 to 10 months. The important parts of the AFS programs are host families, in which all the exchange students live. Another important aspect is the host schools, where all the students are going to every day. Those two aspects, the school and the host family, are very important in order to discover the local culture and become a part of it.

Its origins date back until 1914, when the Great War started. AFS was based on volunteer ambulance drivers by then. Since 1947 AFS started to focus on exchange programs and it sent 400 000 students since then. Now AFS sends abroad around 13 000 students every year (AFS Intercultural Programs, 2016).

AFS in Czech Republic was founded in 1966. It is based in Prague, it sends abroad around 60 students from all around Czech Republic and it hosts around 60 students from all around the world every year. Its volunteer base counts around 100 active volunteers (AFS Mezikulturní programy, 2016).

6.2 The exchange year

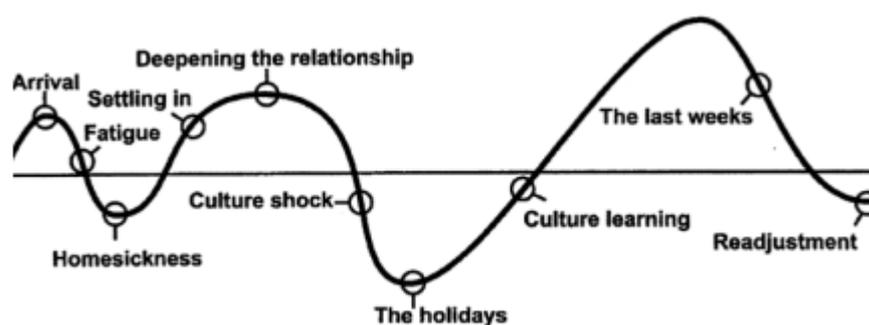
During the 10 months programs, the students participate on six intercultural learning trainings, which are also very important aspects of the year. Those trainings are designed to help the students understand the cross-cultural adaptation process and to get maximum out of the experience. One, the preparation training, takes place before they leave their home country, it's organized to learn basics of intercultural differences and intercultural

communication. Then they take part in four more trainings during their stay in the host country. On these weekend camps they discuss their feelings, they reflect upon their experience, share their stories and learn more about the host culture. They can also bring in some problems and conflicts they have and they are looking for solutions. Last but not least they set up their personal goals they would like to achieve during their exchange, like learning the local language or learn how to deal with the cultural differences. When they come back home they have one more weekend training to help them to re-adapt in their home culture and deal with the possible reverse culture shock.

Every student has his or her own mentor who supports them during the year, help them to deal with urgent problems that can't wait to the trainings. This mentor can also help the student to integrate in the society, get to know the town or find leisure time activities and friends.

Hansel (1993), a former exchange student, worked for AFS International for 29 years and developed a global education framework. Among other she also worked out an exchange student curve. This curve suggests different phases which the student goes through during the year. According to Hansel the participant is first excited about the new surroundings and people and wants to discover everything. This is the *arrival* phase. After, in the *fatigue* phase, the participant gets tired and needs more sleep than usual. In the *homesickness* phase, the student misses his family, friends and well known places and the curve is going down together with the mood. But later, in the *settling in* phase, he or she gets used to the “new home” and feels more comfortable. Also he or she is *deepening the relationships* and the mood is better. The curve is up again.

Figure 6: Exchange student curve



Source: *The Exchange Student Survival Kit*, Hansel, 1993

After certain months and knowing the culture better, the *culture shock* can occur. And the period of Christmas *Holidays* can make the bad feelings even worse. But after all the participant starts to learn the culture better, in the *cultural learning* phase, and understands more about what is happening around. He or she can successfully overcome the culture shock and the curve goes up again. Eventually, in the *last weeks*, the mood is going worse again because the participant is already adjusted in the new culture and feels good there and can even be sad about going back home. After, when the student really goes home, he usually goes through a reverse culture shock or *readjustment*, as Hansel calls it.

II. EMPIRICAL PART

7. Goal of the research and research questions

The second part of this thesis looks into the process of adaptation of exchange students living for one year in the Czech Republic. These students are part of AFS exchange program. First, the aim of the research and the research questions will be presented. These questions will be answered in the end of the empirical part. Then the research sample will be defined and the methods will be described.

In the first part of this thesis we could see the theoretical knowledge about how individuals react to intercultural encounters and possibly adapt on other cultures. The main aim of the research is to discover how able the AFS exchange students are to adapt on the Czech culture and other cultures in general.

The basic research questions are the following:

- 1) Does the adaptability depend on the gender, age and nationality of the exchange students?
- 2) Are the students more adaptable after the exchange program than before it?

Hypotheses:

1₁ Let's assume that there is no reciprocal relation between the respondents' gender and their adaptability.

1₀ Let's assume that there is a reciprocal relation between the respondents' gender and their adaptability.

2₁ Let's assume that there is no reciprocal relation between the respondents' age and their adaptability.

2₀ Let's assume that there is a reciprocal relation between the respondents' age and their adaptability.

3₁ Let's assume that there is a reciprocal relation between the respondents' nationality and their adaptability.

3₀ Let's assume that there is no reciprocal relation between the respondents' nationality and their adaptability.

4₁ Let's assume that the respondents are more adaptable after their exchange program.

4₀ Let's assume that the respondents are not more adaptable after their exchange program.

8. Methods of research and data collection

The data were collected through paper surveys. The survey used was the CCAI survey described below. All the respondents filled those surveys in twice. First after one month of sojourn in the Czech Republic and then after nine more months in the end of their exchange programme. The data were processed in IBM SPSS 23, a statistics computer programme.

8.1 Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI)

The CCAI tool was developed by Colleen Kelley, PhD and Judith Meyers, PsyD, two Americans working for NCS Pearson in Minneapolis. It's an instrument that can help individuals to discover their own skills, behavior, knowledge and specific aspects of their personality. They can define their strenghts and weaknesses in the field of intercultural encounters and sojourns in different cultures. It can be used both as a stand-alone tool and as a training event tool. It doesn't predict success or failure. On the contrary it develops self-understanding and it's useful as a stepping stone for further learning (Kelley, & Meyers, 1995).

The inventory contains 50 statements. All the statements are connected to the area of cross-cultural interaction. They are divided in 4 dimensions: *Emotional Resilience*, *Flexibility/Openness*, *Perceptual Acuity* and *Personal Autonomy*. The individuals have to decide about each statement whether it's true or not true for them on a scale from 1-6. Each response has its value in points and the individuals can count their total score and a score for each dimension. The profile can be also put graphically. See the stanine equivalents for scores in the table below as well as the graphic form (Kelley, & Meyers, 1995).

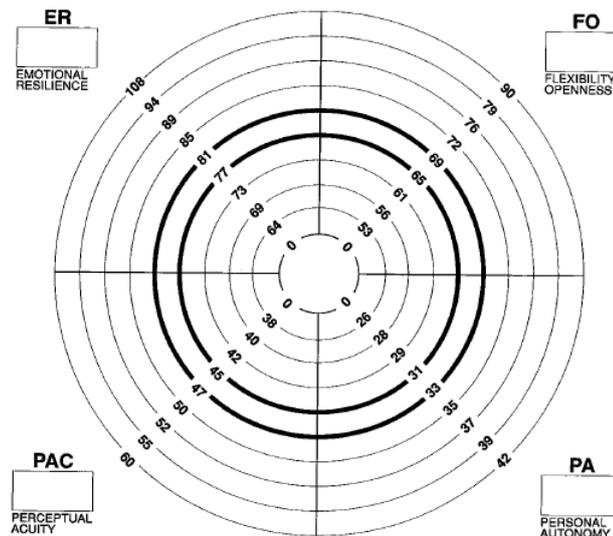
Table 1: Stanine Equivalents for Raw Scale Scores

Stanine	ER Score	FO Score	PAC Score	PA Score	Total Score
9	95–108	80–90	56–60	40–42	261–300
8	90–94	77–79	53–55	38–39	251–260
7	86–89	73–76	51–52	36–37	241–250
6	82–85	70–72	48–50	34–35	231–240
5	78–81	66–69	46–47	32–33	221–230
4	74–77	62–65	43–45	30–31	212–220
3	70–73	57–61	41–42	29	202–211
2	65–69	54–56	39–40	27–28	192–201
1	0–64	0–53	0–38	0–26	0–191

Note. ER = Emotional Resilience, FO = Flexibility/Openness, PAC = Perceptual Acuity, PA = Personal Autonomy.

Source: Kelley, & Meyers, *Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory*, 1995, p. 23

Figure 7: Self-Assessment Profile



Source: Kelley, & Meyers, *Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory*, 1995, p. 24

The *Emotional Resilience (ER)* dimension describes how is an individual able to cope with the feelings of frustration, confusion and loneliness while being in a different culture. If the individual is able to maintain a positive attitude and to tolerate stress he will probably reach high score in this dimension.

The *Flexibility/Openness (FO)* defines how open is one to intercultural differences and to what extent can he or she develop intercultural relationships.

The *Perceptual Acuity (PAC)* is about intercultural communication, verbal and non-verbal, it defines how much is one able to pay attention at these communication differences and communicate effectively.

And last but not least the *Personal Autonomy (PA)* focusses on how much one knows oneself. It's about self-knowledge and identity, ability to keep one's own values and believes and taking own decisions while respecting the decisions of others (Kelley, & Meyers, 1995).

8.2 Questionnaire

A short questionnaire was added to the CCAI tool itself. This questionnaire was there in order to find out the respondents' personal information. Specifically their gender, age and nationality was asked.

9. Research sample

The research sample consists exclusively of AFS exchange students, aged between 15 and 19 years old. They spent 10 months in the Czech Republic, living in a host family and attending a local school. The students filled the surveys in during their weekend trainings with AFS. They used the survey as a tool to learn more about adaptation and their own adaptability.

The research sample consists of 26 women and 14 men, which accordingly in percents is 65% and 35%. You can see this division in Table 1 and Graph 1.

Table 2: Division of respondents according to gender (own research)

Gender	Number	Percentage %
Female	26	65
Male	14	35

For the purposes of the research the respondents were divided in two age groups, younger and older. The younger group is aged between 15 and 17 years old and the older group is aged between 18 and 19 years old. There is exactly 20 respondents in each group.

Table 3: Division of respondents according to age group (own research)

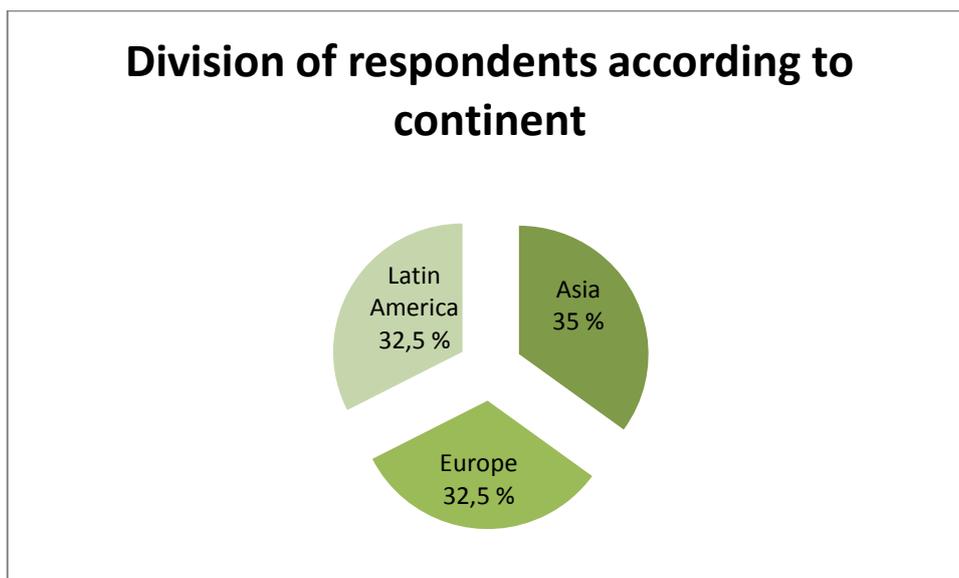
Age group	Number	Percentage %
Younger (15-17)	20	50
Older (18-19)	20	50

The respondents are from 26 different countries and 3 continents. In the following table you can see the heterogeneity of countries and in the graph you can see a percentage division according to continents. The respondents are divided approximately into thirds according to continents.

Table 4: Division of respondents according to country (own research)

Country	Number of men	Number of women
Argentina	0	2
Brazil	0	1
Costa Rica	0	1
Denmark	1	0
Dominican Republic	1	0
France	0	1
Germany	1	0
Honduras	0	1
Hong Kong	0	1
Hungary	1	0
Chile	0	1
China/Taiwan	0	1
Indonesia	1	0
Italy	1	3
Japan	1	1
Mexico	1	1
Paraguay	2	0
Portugal	0	1
Russia	0	1
Spain	1	0
Sweden	0	1
Thailand	1	8
Turkey	1	0
Venezuela	1	1

Graph 1: Division of respondents according to continent (own research)



10. The results of the CCAI inventory

10.1 Comparison of results according to different variables

The variables are the gender, the age and the nationality. Also the results from the beginning and from the end of the program are compared.

10.1.1 According to gender

In the table below we can see how gender influences the adaptability in different categories of the CCAI inventory. In the Emotional Resilience category men have higher score than women. In the Flexibility/Openness and Perceptual Acuity women have higher scores than men. And again in the Personal Autonomy category men have higher score than women. Therefore we can claim that in the Emotional Resilience and Personal Autonomy categories men adapt easier whereas in the Flexibility/Openness and Perceptual Acuity categories women adapt easier. In the total score men have a slightly higher result.

Table 5: Comparison of the CCAI categories according to gender (own research)

Gender	ER	FO	PAC	PA	TOTAL
Male					
Average	84,00	65,36	46,64	32,07	228,07
Deviation	7,74	5,03	4,29	4,23	13,01
Female					
Average	80,54	67,27	47,39	30,89	226,07
Deviation	7,99	7,48	4,45	3,18	17,58

10.1.2 According to age groups

In the table below we can see how age influences adaptability in different categories of the CCAI inventory. According to the results there is no big difference between Emotional Resilience scores of younger and older respondents. In the Flexibility/Openness dimension the older group reached a higher score. In the last two dimensions, Perceptual Acuity and Personal Autonomy, the older group has only slightly higher score. Regarding the total score the older group reached higher number. Therefore we can say that respondents between 18 and 19 years old adapt easier than respondents aged between 15 and 17 years old.

Table 6: Comparison of the CCAI categories according to age (own research)

Age group	ER	FO	PAC	PA	TOTAL
Older					
Average	81,55	68,40	47,50	31,60	229,05
Deviation	7,62	5,67	3,53	3,03	14,92
Younger					
Average	81,95	64,80	46,75	31,00	224,50
Deviation	8,51	7,32	5,12	4,10	17,05

10.1.3 According to continents

In the table below we can see how nationality influences adaptability in different categories of the CCAI inventory. For the research purposes the respondents were divided in three groups according to continents. There are respondents from Asia, Europe and Latin America. In the Emotional Resilience category respondents from Europe scored the highest score. Latin America is on the second place and Asia on the third. In the Flexibility/Openness category European respondents reached the highest scores again, with Latin America on the

second and Asia on the third place. In the Perceptual Acuity category Europe is the first again, but Asia took the second place and Latin America the third one. In the Personal Autonomy category Latin American respondents scored the highest number, with Europe on the second place and Asia on the third. Regarding the total score Europe is on the first place, Latin America on the second and Asia on the third. Therefore we can say that respondents from Europe adapt the easiest and the respondents from Asia with the biggest difficulty. According to the stanines from Kelley and Meyers Europe lies in the stanine 6, Latin America in the stanine 5 and Asia in the stanine 4. We can say that there are quite big differences between the adaptability of respondents from different continents.

Table 7: Comparison of the CCAI categories according to continents (own research)

Continent	ER	FO	PAC	PA	TOTAL
Asia					
Average	77,29	62,57	46,64	30,07	216,57
Deviation	5,53	4,64	3,27	3,83	12,82
Europe					
Average	86,46	69,85	48,85	31,39	236,54
Deviation	7,99	6,67	3,85	3,33	14,48
Latin America					
Average	81,85	67,69	45,92	32,54	228,00
Deviation	7,93	6,87	5,50	3,33	14,70

10.1.4 Comparison of results from the beginning and the end of the exchange program

In the tables below we can see number of respondents in particular stanines for each dimension. We will work further with these values to compare the number of students in each stanine in the beginning and in the end of the exchange program. We will do the comparison for each dimension separately.

Table 8: Number of respondents in particular stanines– 1st measurement (own research)

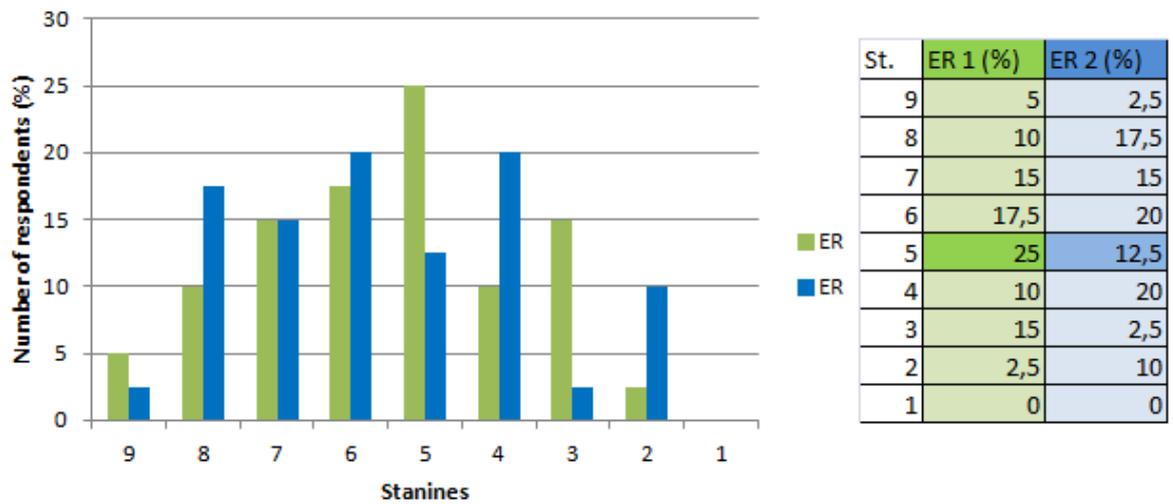
Stanine	ER 1	FO 1	PAC 1	PA 1	TOTAL 1
9	2	2	0	0	1
8	4	2	6	0	2
7	6	6	4	5	4
6	7	3	10	7	9
5	10	8	6	9	10
4	4	9	8	7	6
3	6	10	4	5	6
2	1	0	0	3	2
1	0	0	2	4	0

Table 9: Number of respondents in particular stanines – 2nd measurement (own research)

Stanine	ER 2	FO 2	PAC 2	PA 2	TOTAL 2
9	1	1	1	3	0
8	7	2	2	1	3
7	6	7	7	3	6
6	8	1	11	10	11
5	5	9	7	12	5
4	8	5	10	6	8
3	1	10	0	1	5
2	4	3	2	2	1
1	0	2	0	2	1

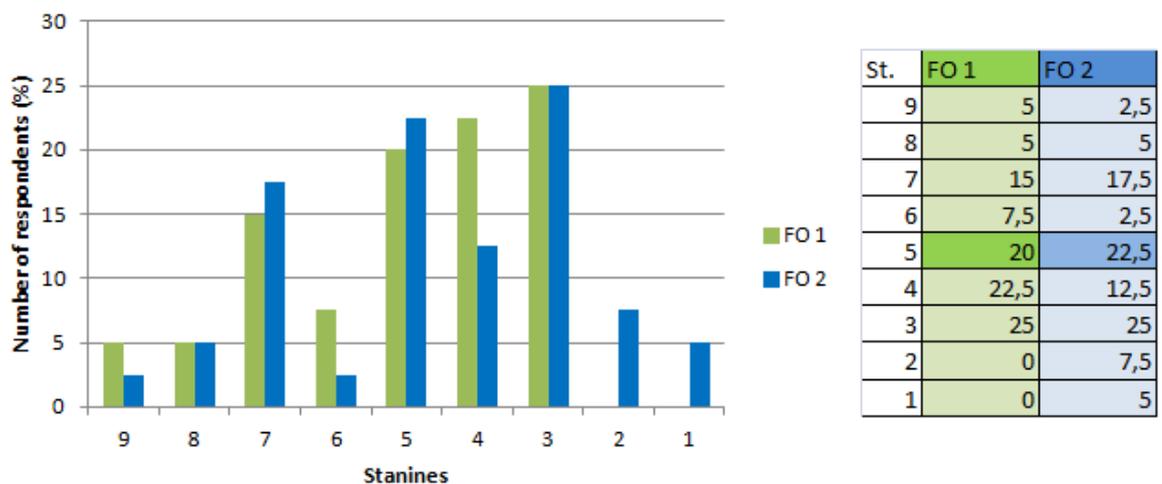
In the graph below we can see that in the first measurement there were 25 % of respondents in the average category in the Emotional Resilience dimension, which is also the most significant value there. Only 12,5 % of respondents lie in the average during the second measurement, and the most significant values are 20 % in stanine 6 and stanine 4. In the first measurement there are 47,5 % of respondents above average and 27,5 % below the average. In the second measurement 55 % are above average and 32,5 % below average. Therefore we can say that after the exchange program some of the respondents improved their skills and some on the contrary decreased them.

Graph 2: Percentage of respondents in different stanines – ER (own research)



In the graph below we can see that during the first measurement 20 % of respondents were situated in the average stanine and the most significant value is 22,5 % in the 4th stanine. 47,5 % of respondents are below average and 32,5 % are above average. Whereas in the second measurement the most significant value is the average in the same time and it's 22,5 % of respondents. 50 % of respondents are below average and 27,5 % of respondents are above average. We can say that the skills of respondents in the area of Flexibility/Openness decreased.

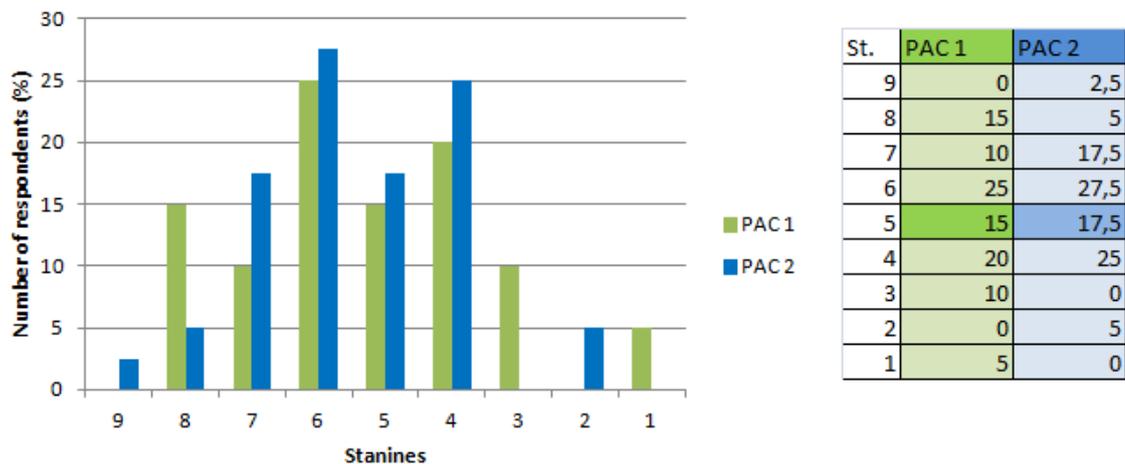
Graph 3: Percentage of respondents in different stanines - FO (own research)



Regarding the Perceptual Acuity, there were 15 % of respondents in the average during the first measurement. The most significant value is 25 % in the 6th stanine. 35 % of

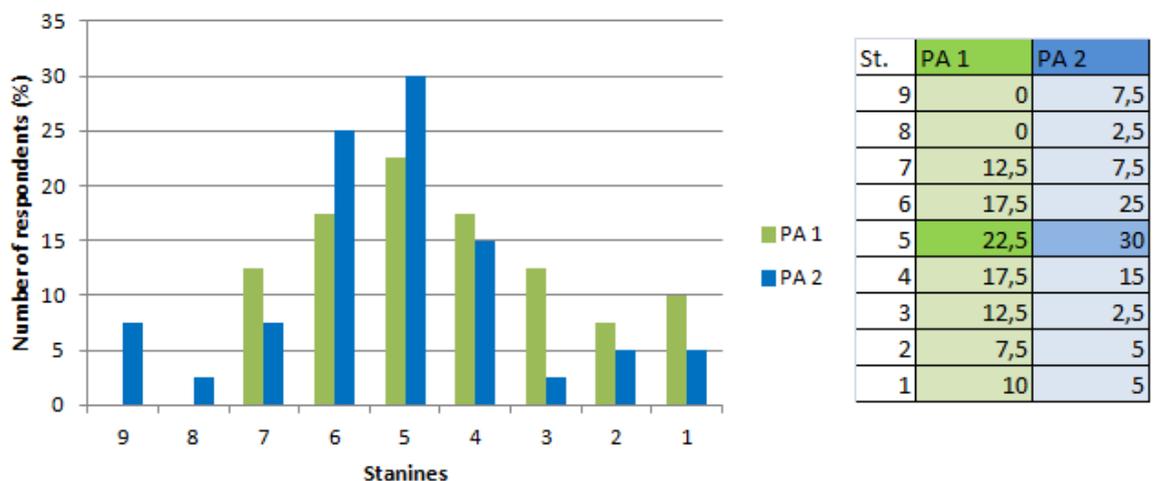
respondents are below the average and 50% is above the average. In the second measurement 17,5 % of respondents are in the average and the most significant 27,5 % of respondents iare in the 6th stanine. 30 % of respondents is below average and 52,5 % are above the average. We can say that the respondents' skills increased in the area of Perceptual Acuity.

Graph 4: Percentage of respondents in different stanines - PAC (own research)



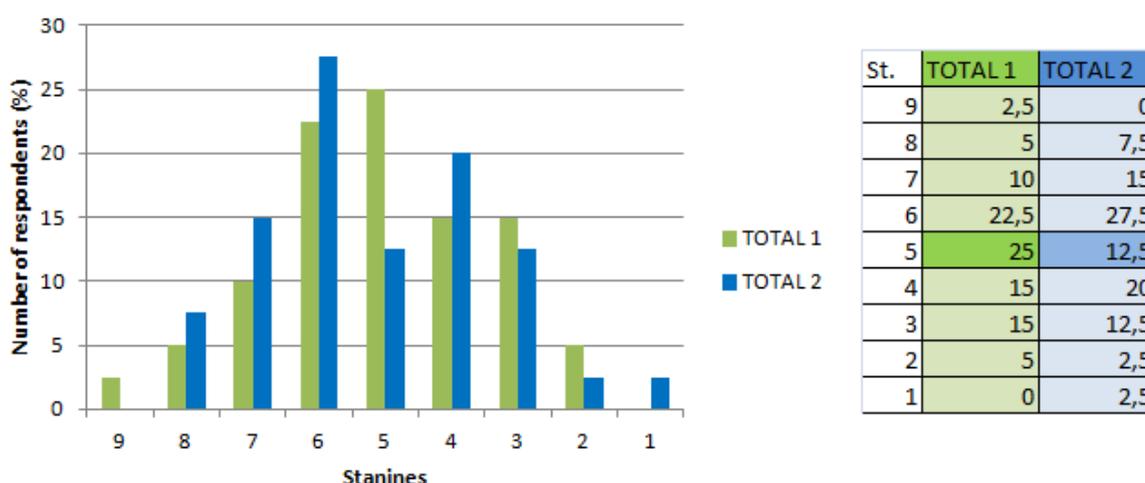
In the graph comparing the first and second measurement of Personal Autonomy we can see that in the first measurement 22,5 % of respondents are in average which is also the most significant value. 30 % of respondents are above the average and 47,5 % is below average. In the second measurement 30% of respondents are in average, which is also the msot significant value. 42,5 % of respondents are above the average and only 27,5 % are below the average. We can tehrefore say that the skills of participants increased in the field of Personal Autonomy.

Graph 5: Percentage of respondents in different stanines - PA (own research)



And last but not least it's important to compare the total score results. Here the 25 % of respondents are in the average in the first measurement and only 12,5 % in the second measurement. The most significant value in the first measurement is the 25 % but in the second measurement it's 27,5 % in the 6th stanine. In the first measurement 40 % of respondents are above the average whereas in the second one 50 % are above the average. 35 % of respondents are below average in the first measurement and 37,5 % in the second measurement. We can say that in general the skills of the exchange program participants increased.

Graph 6: Percentage of respondents in different stanines - TOTAL SCORE (own research)



Here you can see the CCAI Self-Assessment Profile of all the students in the beginning and in the end of the exchange according to the data in the table below.

Table 10: The results from the beginning and from the end of the program (own research)

Time	ER	FO	PAC	PA	TOTAL
In the beginning					
Average	81,75	66,60	47,13	31,30	226,78
Deviation	7,98	6,72	4,3571	3,57	15,98
In the end					
Average	81,90	65,10	47,65	33,05	227,70
Deviation	8,15	7,74	3,91	3,70	16,72

We can see that the Emotional Resilience, Perceptual Acuity and Personal Autonomy skills slightly increased whereas the Flexibility/Openness slightly decreased.

Figure 8: CCAI Self-Assessment Profile in the beginning of the program (own research)

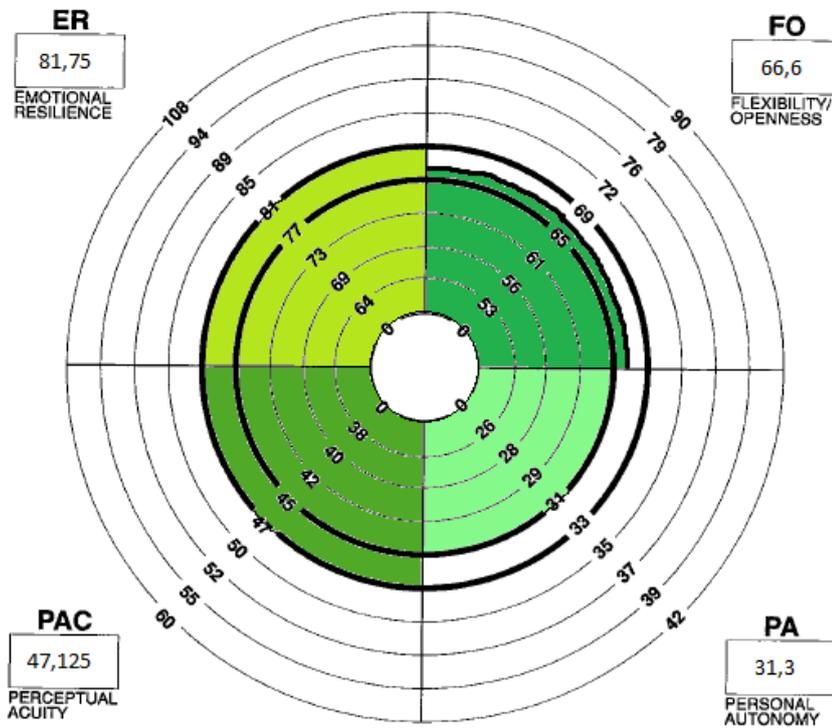
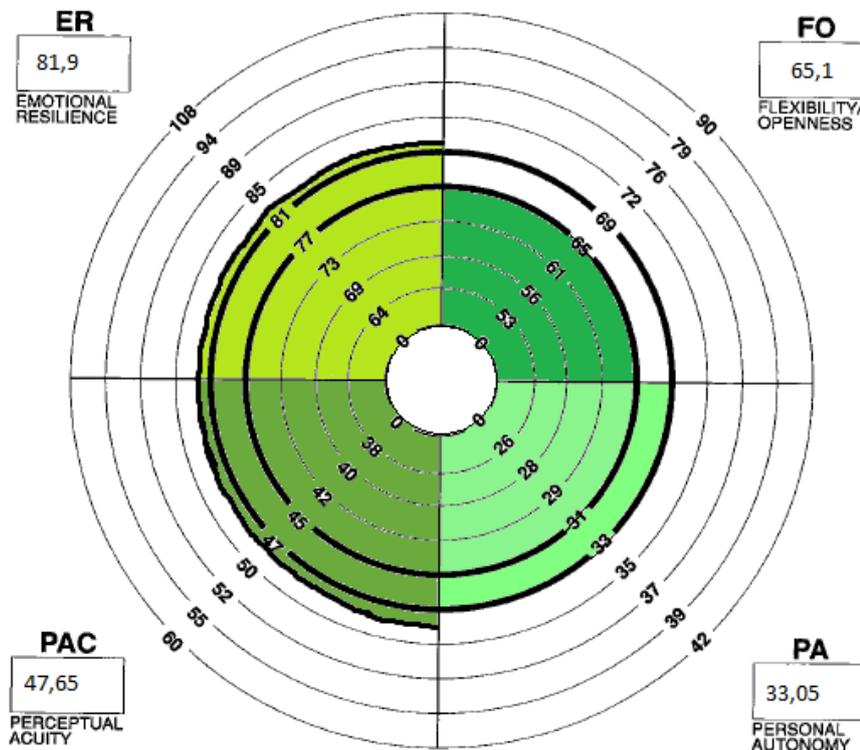


Figure 9: CCAI Self-Assessment Profile in the end of the program (own reserach)



11. The verification of the hypotheses

Hypothesis 1₁: Let's assume that there is no reciprocal relation between the respondents' gender and their adaptability.

Hypothesis 1₀: Let's assume that there is a reciprocal relation between the respondents' gender and their adaptability.

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare adaptability of men and women. Based on the level of significance 0,05 a t-test was held to define the dependence of adaptability on gender. There was no significant difference in the scores for men (M=228,071, SD=13,0057) and women (M=226,077, SD=17,5816); $t(38)=0,372$, $p = 0,712$. This means that there is no statistically significant difference between the adaptability of men and women. Therefore we will refuse the null hypothesis.

The t-test was also held to compare the difference in each adaptability dimension but no significant difference was proved.

Hypothesis 2₁: Let's assume that there is no reciprocal relation between the respondents' age and their adaptability.

Hypothesis 2₀: Let's assume that there is a reciprocal relation between the respondents' age and their adaptability.

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare adaptability of men older and younger participants. Based on the level of significance 0,05 a t-test was held to define the dependence of adaptability on age. There was no significant difference in the scores for older (M=229,050, SD=14,9225) and younger (M=224,500, SD=17,0526) respondents; $t(38)=0,898$, $p = 0,375$. This means that there is no big difference between the adaptability of younger and older respondents. Therefore we will refuse the null hypothesis.

The t-test was also held to compare the difference in each adaptability dimension but no significant difference was found.

Hypothesis 3₁: Let's assume that there is a reciprocal relation between the respondents' nationality and their adaptability.

Hypothesis 3₀: Let's assume that there is no reciprocal relation between the respondents' nationality and their adaptability.

A one way ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of nationality on adaptability. More specifically the adaptability of respondents from Asia, Europe and Latin America was compared. The level of significance is 0,05. There was a significant effect of nationality on adaptability at the $p < 0.05$ level for the three conditions [$F(2, 37) = 6,934$, $p = 0.003$]. This means that there is a significant difference between the adaptability scores of Asian, European and Latin American respondents. Therefore we will refuse the null hypothesis and we will accept the hypothesis claiming the dependence of adaptability on nationality. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey test indicated that the mean score for the Asia condition ($M = 216,571$, $SD = 12,8225$) was significantly different to the Europe condition ($M = 236,538$, $SD = 14,4777$). However, the Latin America condition ($M = 228$, $SD = 14,7026$) did not significantly differ from the Europe and Asia conditions. Taken together, these results suggest that there is a certain dependence of adaptability on nationality. However, some nationalities differ more from each other than other ones.

According to the one way ANOVA test there is a significant difference between nationalities only in some of the adaptability dimensions, particularly in the Emotional Resilience and Flexibility/Openness. There was a significant effect of nationality on the Emotional Resilience dimension at the $p < 0.05$ level for the three conditions [$F(2, 37) = 5,482$, $p = 0.008$]. This means that there is a significant difference between the Emotional Resilience scores of Asian, European and Latin American respondents. According to the Post hoc Tukey test, this difference is significant only between Asian and European respondents.

There was also a significant effect of nationality on the Flexibility/Openness dimension at the $p < 0.05$ level for the three conditions [$F(2, 37) = 5,091$, $p = 0.011$]. This means that there is a significant difference between the Flexibility/Openness scores of Asian, European and Latin American respondents. According to the Post hoc Tukey test, this difference is significant only between Asian and European respondents.

There was no significant difference in the Perceptual Acuity and Personal Autonomy dimension.

Hypothesis 4₁: Let's assume that the respondents are more adaptable after their exchange program.

Hypothesis 4₀: Let's assume that the respondents are not more adaptable after their exchange program.

A paired sample t-test was conducted to compare the adaptability of respondents in the beginning (Total scores 1) and in the end (Total scores 2) of their exchange program. There was no significant difference between the Total scores 1 (M=226,775, SD=15,9831) and the Total scores 2 (M=227,700, SD=16,7151) conditions; $t(39)=-0,412$, $p = 0.683$. These results suggest that the adaptability of the students didn't change throughout the year abroad. Therefore we accept the null hypothesis.

The paired sample t-test was held for each adaptability dimension. There was a significant difference between the Personal autonomy 1 (M=31,300, SD=3,5748) and the Personal autonomy 2 (M=33,050, SD=3,7000) conditions; $t(39)=-2,472$, $p = 0.018$. These results suggest that the respondents' Personal Autonomy skills changed (increased) throughout the year abroad.

The paired sample t-test was also conducted for all the other adaptability dimensions but no significant difference was proved.

12. Discussion

The aim of this thesis was to prove the adaptability skills of AFS exchange students. The data was collected through the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) which was filled in by 40 respondents from 24 different countries.

The representation of men and women wasn't equal. There were 26 respondents of female gender and only 14 were male. This could have slightly deformed the results. Regarding the age groups they were equal. 20 respondents were in the younger (15-16) and 20 in the older group (17-19). However the age range is very small and the results can't be applied on other age groups. Regarding the nationality, the respondents were from 24 different countries and 3 continents. The representation of the continents was equal, around one third each. But the heterogeneity of the countries is very big. Different countries in one continent have many differences among each other so this could have also affected the results.

However it wasn't possible to influence these defects of the research because the group of exchange students is limited and it wasn't possible to have enough respondents from each gender, age and nationality in equal proportions. It also depended on the willingness of the students to cooperate and fill in the surveys twice, in the beginning and in the end of their program.

As already mentioned, the data was collected through the CCAI tool. The data was then processed in Microsoft Office Excel 2007 and IBM SPSS 23. Most of the students' results were around the standardized average, some were slightly above. We can therefore say that the students were well prepared for the intercultural encounter. This can be due to the intercultural training events which are held before the students' departure to prepare them for the intercultural experience.

Also the results from the end of the program were slightly higher than the ones from the beginning. That brings us to the conclusion that the exchange program helped to further develop the adaptability skills of the students. Most of the results were not statistically significant, so there was only a small difference. The only dimension that showed a statistically significant difference was the Personal autonomy. The respondents' skills in this dimension increased. The reason why the skills in the other dimensions didn't show statistically significant difference can be seen the length of the program, which might be

insufficient to increase the skills even more. We can suppose that with a longer time spent abroad the skills would increase even more.

Regarding the comparison of gender, we can see that the total results of men and women were almost equal. Therefore the men and women adapt mostly the same, in some dimension men have an advantage and the other way around. However we already know that the representation of men and women in the sample wasn't equal so the results can be negatively influenced by this disproportion.

The age groups also had similar scores. The older respondents had a slightly higher scores. This can be caused by more experience and higher self-awareness growing with age but the difference wasn't very big and it wasn't statistically significant so it can also be a coincidence. The difference could be more credible if the research sample was bigger.

We could see the biggest differences in the comparison of the nationalities. The European respondents had the highest scores. This could be explained by the smaller cultural difference between the European respondents' countries and the Czech Republic compared to the other continents. We can assume that the difference between the Czech Republic and other European countries is smaller than the difference between the Czech Republic and other countries in Asia and Latin America. Therefore it could have been easier for the European respondents to adapt.

Another important aspect that could have influenced the results is the subjectivity of the CCAI tool. I see this subjectivity as a big inconvenience. Every respondent assess each of the 50 statements subjectively. The data isn't objective because the answers aren't objective neither. It depends on what the respondents think about themselves and on their level of self-criticism. However it is a very complex tool which embraces different areas of adaptability and of the life in a foreign culture. There isn't any other tool which would be more objective so it was the best possible tool to use.

13. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to measure the adaptability of a group of AFS exchange students and to compare the adaptability in the beginning and in the end of the program and also to compare the adaptability between genders, age groups and nationalities.

In the first part of the thesis the theoretical background was presented. It was explained what it is a culture and a cultural identity to understand that every individual perceives and experiences other cultures differently. Every individual has his or her own values through which he or she judges other cultural patterns. To judge these patterns generalization, stereotypes and even prejudices can be used. When exposed to a different cultural environment one eventually starts adapting and can experience a culture shock. By the time he or she can become more interculturally sensitive and he or she can develop intercultural communication skills. As a help to develop skills needed for this process an intercultural training can be used.

Beside all these terms several adaptation models were presented. In particular it was the Adjustment Cycle by K. Oberg, the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity by M. Bennett, the Stress-Adaptation-Growth in time model by Y. Y. Kim and last but not least the transition model by W. Bridges.

Also the cultural dimensions of Hofstede were described in detail to understand the different aspects of cultural behavior and communication and to see how big the differences between countries can be.

The end of the literature research part explained the nature of the exchange programs, the highlights and important moments. It also presents the AFS Intercultural programs organization, its mission and goals and its role in the exchange year and the adaptation process.

The second part of the thesis was dedicated to the research. The research was based on data collected by CCAI tool which was filled in by 40 AFS students from 24 different countries. This data was then processed in Microsoft Office Excel and IBM SPSS 23. It was proved that there is no relation between the gender and adaptability and neither between the age and adaptability. On the other hand, there is a relation between the nationality and adaptability. Regarding the comparison of the results from the beginning and the end of the program, no statistically significant difference was proved between the total scores and the

null hypothesis was accepted. However in one of the four dimensions, the Personal Autonomy, the statistically significant difference was proved. As mentioned in the Discussion, that could be due to the insufficient length of the program.

This thesis brings interesting data and results, that can be used in various ways. It can be useful feedback for the students themselves. They can see in which dimensions they are well prepared and on which aspects they still need to work. They can set up their goals and try to reach them and if needed they can fill the surveys in again to control if they achieved the goals. It can also be used by the organization and its volunteers who work with the students and prepare training events for them. They can also use these results to be prepared for the future exchange students. It can also be an interesting tool for the host families and the teachers in the hosting schools.

References

ADLER, Peter. Culture Shock and the Cross-cultural Learning Experience. In L. Luce and E. Smith. *Toward Internationalism*, 24-35. Cambridge, MA: Newbury, 1987. ISBN 0838426891.

AFS Intercultural Programs [online]. [cit. 2016-04-14]. Dostupné z: <http://www.afs.org>

AFS Mezikulturní programy [online]. [cit. 2016-04-14]. Dostupné z: <http://www.afs.cz>

BARNA, LaRay M. How Culture Shock Affects Communication. *Journal of the Communication Association of the Pacific*, 5 (1), 1-18. 1976.

BENNETT, Janet M. *Transition Shock: Putting Culture Shock in Perspective*. Intercultural Press, Inc., 1998. ISBN: 978-877894-62-9.

BENNETT, Milton J. Encyclopedia entry: "stereotypes/generalizations". In C. Cortes. *Multicultural America: A multimedia encyclopedia*. New York: Sage, 2013. ISBN 1452216835.

BENNETT, Milton J. *Towards a Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity* In R. Michael Paige. *Education for the Intercultural Experience*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1993. ISBN 1877864250.

BERRY, John W. *Cross-cultural Psychology: Research and Applications* (3rd ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011. ISBN 05-217-4520-9.

BHAWUK, Dharm and Richard BRISLIN. Cross-cultural Training: A Review. *Applied psychology*, 49 (1), 162-191. 2000.

BHAWUK, Dharm. Evolution of Culture Assimilators: Toward Theory-based Assimilators. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 25 (2), 141-163. 2001.

BOCK, Philip K., *Modern Cultural Anthropology: An Introduction* (2nd ed.). New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974. ISBN 0394322185.

BOLAFFI, Guido. *Dictionary of Race, Ethnicity and Culture*. SAGE Publications Ltd., 2002. ISBN 0761969004.

BRIDGES, Williams. Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1980. ISBN: 073820904X.

BROUČEK S., et al. Základní pojmy etnické teorie. *Český lid*, 78(4), 237-257. 1991

HALL, Edward T. Beyond Culture. New York, NY: Anchor Books, 1976. ISBN 0385124740.

HANSEL, B. The Exchange Student Survival Kit. Intercultural Press, Inc., 1993. ISBN: 1-877864-17-X.

HARTL Pavel and Helena HARTLOVÁ. Psychologický slovník. Praha: Portál, 2000. ISBN 807178303X.

HERSKOVITS, Melville J. Cultural Relativism. New York: Random House, 1972. ISBN 978-0394481548.

HNILICA, Karel. Stereotypy, předsudky, diskriminace. Praha: Karolinum, 2010. ISBN 978-80-246-1776-3

HOFSTEDE, Geert, et al. Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind (3rd ed.) New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2010. ISBN 0071664181

HOFSTEDE, Geert. Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations across Nations (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001. ISBN 08-039-7323-3.

KELLEY, Colleen and Judith MEYERS. CCAI cross-cultural adaptability inventory. Minneapolis, MN: National Computer Systems, c1995.

KIM, Young Y. Becoming Intercultural: An Integrative Theory of Communication and Cross-cultural Adaptation. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001. ISBN 978-0803944886.

KOLMAN, Luděk. Komunikace mezi kulturami: psychologie interkulturních rozdílů. Praha: ČZU PEF Praha ve vydavatelství Credit, 2011. ISBN 978-80-213-0735-3.

LUKÁŠKOVÁ, Růžena. Organizační kultura a její změna. Praha: Grada, 2010. ISBN 978-80-247-2951-0.

LYSGAARD, Sverre. Adjustment in a Foreign Society: Norwegian Fulbright Grantee Visiting United States. *International Social Science Bulletin*, 7 (1), 45-51. 1955.

MARX, Elisabeth. Breaking through Culture Shock: What You Need to Succeed in International Business. Nicolas Brealey Publishing, 1999. ISBN 1-85788-220-2.

MORGENSTERNOVÁ, Monika and Lenka ŠUŠLOVÁ, et al. Interkulturní psychologie: Rozvoj interkulturní sensitivity. Praha: Karolinum, 2009. ISBN 978-80-246-1361-1.

MURPHY, Robert F. Cultural and Social Anthropology (3rd ed.). Pearson, 1988. ISBN: 0131952730.

NAKONEČNÝ, Milan. Encyklopedie obecné psychologie. Praha: Academia, 1997. ISBN 80-200-0625-7.

OBERG, Kalervo. Culture Shock: Adjustment to New Cultural Environments. *Practical anthropology*, 7, 177-182. 1960.

PAIGE, Michael R., et al. Maximizing Study Abroad: A Student's Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning Use (2nd ed.). Minneapolis, MN: Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, 2009. ISBN 0-9722545-5-2.

PRŮCHA, Jan. Interkulturní komunikace. Praha: Grada, 2010. ISBN 978-80-247-3069-1.

PRŮCHA, Jan. Interkulturní psychologie: Sociopsychologické zkoumání kultur, etnik, ras a národů (2nd ed.). Praha: Portál, 2007. ISBN 978-80-7367-280-5.

SAVIGNON, S. Communicative English Teaching in Asian Contexts: The Challenge for Teacher Education. In Katchen, J. and Leung, Y. Selected papers from the eleventh international symposium on English teaching / fourth PanAsian conference, 162-174. Taipei: Crane, 2002.

ŠTRACH, Pavel. Mezinárodní management. Praha: Grada, 2009. ISBN 978-80-247-2987-9.

THE HOFSTEDE CENTRE. Cultural dimension: National culture [online]. [cit. 2016-04-13]. Dostupné z: <http://geert-hofstede.com/cultural-dimensions.html>

TING-TOOMEY, Stella and John G. OETZEL. Managing intercultural conflict effectively. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2001. ISBN 08-039-4843-3.

TURNER, Jonathan H. *Sociology*. Pearson, 2005. ISBN 978-0-13-113496-6.

Velký sociologický slovník. Issue 1, Volume A-O. Praha: Karolinum, 1996. ISBN 80-718-4164-1.

WARD, Coleen, et al. *The Psychology Of Culture Shock* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge, 2001. ISBN 978-0-415-16235-7

WINKELMAN, Michael. Cultural shock and adaptation. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 73 (2), 121-126. 1994.

List of Figures

Figure 1: Intercultural communication scheme	15
Figure 2: Adjustment cycle	17
Figure 3: Developmental model of intercultural sensitivity	19
Figure 4: Stress-Adaptation-Growth Model	19
Figure 5: Transition Model.....	20
Figure 6: Exchange student curve	25
Figure 7: Self-Assessment Profile	29
Figure 8: CCAI Self-Assesment Profile in the beginning of the program	39
Figure 9: CCAI Self-Assesment Profile in the end of the program	39

List of Graphs

Graph 1: Division of respondents according to continent	32
Graph 3: Percentage of respondents in different stanines – ER	36
Graph 4: Percentage of respondents in different stanines - FO	36
Graph 5: Percentage of respondents in different stanines - PAC	37
Graph 6: Percentage of respondents in different stanines - PA.....	37
Graph 7: Percentage of respondents in different stanines - TOTAL SCORE.....	38

List of Tables

Table 1: Stanine Equivalents for Raw Scale Scores.....	29
Table 2: Division of respondents according to gender	30
Table 3: Division of respondents according to age group	31
Table 4: Division of respondents according to country.....	31
Table 6: Comparison of the CCAI categories according to gender.....	33
Table 7: Comparison of the CCAI categories according to age	33
Table 8: Comparison of the CCAI categories according to continents	34
Table 9: Number of respondents in particular stanines– 1st measurement	35
Table 10: Number of respondents in particular stanines – 2nd measurement.....	35
Table 11: The results from the beginning and from the end of the program.....	38