In The Absence of Language
Modeling a Transformative, Short-Term Abroad Experience

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Abstract:
This essay explores models for short-term, faculty-led study abroad in cases where language skills cannot be expected of students, focusing on issues of local immersion and relationship-building. It explicates three models undertaken by the author, detailing the strengths and weaknesses of common trip structures and related course outlines, and offers recommendations for successful trip modelling. It further explores the relationship between short-term abroad trips and cultural tourism, focusing on a model that allows students a pedagogical space to reflect critically on anthropological stereotypes.

Introduction

A great deal of the literature addressing the benefits of semester or yearlong study abroad focuses on language acquisition as perhaps the most important, representing it as a key to students' ability to realize other advantages, including the development of cross-cultural skills, understanding of local worldviews, and the sorts of "immersive" experiences that educators often value (e.g. Dwyer, 2004; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Jackson, 2008)[i]. It is clear that longer-term programs are able to deliver these benefits in a way that short-term programs can never qualitatively match (Rivers, 1998). At the same time, an increasing literature has focused on the long-term benefits of *shorter* abroad experiences, with some claiming that these benefits can in many ways match those of longer programs, particularly in fostering a more global, less ethnocentric worldview (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004; DeLoach, Saliba, Smith, & Tiemann, 2003; Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005; Tarrant, Rubin, & Stoner, 2014). This literature has gained momentum in the face of growing interest in short-term programs among increasingly cost-conscious universities in the United States, which are also seeking to accommodate students who cannot commit to a full semester away (Anderson, Lawton, Rexeisen, & Hubbard, 2006). Among smaller, liberal arts institutions, short-term programs have risen to the fore as a potential avenue to expand study abroad offerings and bring in those students for whom longer-term study is not feasible for a variety of reasons (Kehl & Morris, 2007; Mercer, 2015).

Understandably, however, most of this discussion has been focused on destinations that take advantage of existing language instruction, and which may therefore benefit from students who demonstrate apposite language skills, which are likely the most important factor in realizing desired outcomes. In contrast, relatively little attention has been focused on short-term study abroad in areas of the world that, however populous or influential, are not well represented with regard to language instruction in the U.S. and Europe.

Over the past nine years, I have planned and led five short-term abroad trips for liberal arts students to Indonesia, where my own research and scholarship is focused, and am engaged in a sixth at the time of this writing. For each new trip, I have employed a somewhat different model, with the intention of facilitating an immersive cultural experience despite a relative absence of language skills among my students. As an important side note, I must clarify that my use of the term "immersion" is informed by Neriko Doerr's work, among others, on the discourse associated with study abroad advertising and literature (Doerr, 2012a; 2012b), as well as the power relations that undergird it (Doerr, 2015). It is not

meant to imply a static or exoticized field context, an idealized "other," nor a codified discourse of particular activities and approaches, but rather refers to observed and student-reported engagement with locals and those cultural intersections that prompt students to reflect critically on this discourse (see Doerr, 2014).

This article represents an effort to provide recommendations based on an articulation of the successes and failures of varying models for what may seem like a relatively narrow niche within study abroad, but one which appears to be growing in prevalence (Allen, 2010): short-term, faculty-led abroad programs to destinations for which language skills cannot be expected. For many culturally oriented social scientists such as myself, who wish to give students an opportunity to learn in and about regions for which they have no opportunity to study relevant languages, there have been few models available beyond those that approximate cultural tourism (e.g. Baker-Clark & Sisson, 2011; Cardon, Marshall, & Poddar, 2011). In my case, though Indonesia is the fourth most populous nation in the world, with a widely spoken national language (Smith-Hefner, 2009), Indonesian (*Bahasa Indonesia*) is taught at very few institutions of higher learning outside of Australia and The Netherlands.

In this essay I explicate the three different models I have employed over the course of five trips, with a focus on the final and most successful model, from the perspectives of myself and other involved faculty, as well as those of students who participated. The models, which I have labeled, (1) "Cultural Tourism," (2) "The Mobile Classroom," and (3) "The Extended Semester," were all developed and undertaken between 2007 and 2014, and involved groups between nine and thirty-two students[ii]. Importantly, these models were not formulated in an administrative vacuum, but were instead responses to particular institutional circumstances, many of which will be shared by other liberal arts colleges and smaller universities. These circumstances presented a number of challenges in realizing the aim of long-term study abroad benefits (save language), given a field excursion of approximately three weeks, and without many of the prerequisites that larger institutions might reasonably expect of students.

Rationale for Short-Term, Faculty-Led Study Abroad

Some colleagues have asked me, in the face of the many challenges that arise in developing such programs, and the central role of language in facilitating cultural engagement, why I would bother to develop short-term study abroad opportunities in Indonesia at all. The reasons I cite will come as no surprise to cultural anthropologists and other academics who share these relatively common circumstances: (1) I desire to teach on my own geographic specialty, and have an obligation to do so, despite being committed to the holistic approach of the liberal arts university at which I am a faculty member; (2) I feel a moral imperative to countervail the tendency of important, culturally rich regions to become understudied because their languages are underrepresented in Western higher education; (3) in these same areas, long-term study abroad options also tend to be fewer, meaning that my program may be students' only option to study in the region; (4) because, as noted above, short-term programs have been shown to have the potential to be as transformative for students as long-term study abroad, along some metrics (Anderson et al., 2006; DeLoach et al., 2003; cf. Barkin, 2015). The issue is, how to realize as many of these benefits described by Anderson et al. (2006) as possible, particularly the reduction of ethnocentrism, given the added challenges imposed by the absence of opportunity to develop language skills at smaller universities[iii].

As a cultural anthropologist, my goal for short-term study abroad in Indonesia has been student engagement in ethnographic exercises of various kinds, ideally informed by a familiarity with literature related to the topics under investigation. Anthropology as a discipline (particularly in the United States, where Boas's four-fields approach has proved surprisingly durable) has historically distinguished itself from other social sciences through its fieldwork ethic (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997), which historically includes long-term immersion of some sort (Sluka & Robben, 2007), and even more, a focus on the cultural import of language, and a corresponding taboo against the use of interpreters or other methods

that create distance between anthropologist and local community (Ardener, 2004). This ethic is far from disciplinary chest-thumping, integral as it is to the corresponding focus on holistic and contextual understandings that are best revealed through participant observation and other qualitative methods that depend on fluency of communication, as well as the close relationship between linguistic and cultural understandings that is foundational to the field (Robbins & Rumsey, 2008).

For those leading abroad trips to areas where Spanish, French, Japanese, Mandarin, or even Korean are spoken, most universities in Britain and the U.S. of even modest size and means are able to offer language instruction that will help facilitate such projects, however short-term. Faculty might be able to demand prerequisite courses, and undertake an abroad trip with a group of students who demonstrate at least elementary competence in the language; this is not the case with Indonesian, or indeed most languages. It is unreasonable to expect institutions of higher learning to embrace a broader range of languages, and indeed the recent trend has been just the opposite (Bugeja, 2008). Under these circumstances, the absence of language skills among students must be considered the principal challenge of promoting an immersive abroad experience, particularly (though not exclusively) in the qualitative social sciences.

Further, at smaller colleges and universities where students are actively discouraged from specializing too narrowly in their educational choices, and where interest in abroad trips may not be so great that instructors can set a number of academic prerequisites, I have found that trips and related coursework must be accessible to students from a wide variety of academic backgrounds, rather than exclusively anthropology students. The challenge thus expands to providing students with an appropriate level of expertise that they can genuinely take advantage of their time abroad, given that they may have a slim grasp on the discipline itself, let alone the geographic region and cultural groups in question. This is of particular concern in cultural anthropology, where cultural representation is itself "inescapably contingent…and contestable" (Clifford & Marcus, 1986: 11).

Other challenges we have encountered in developing study-abroad models include the issue of allowing students the time to appreciate and process their experiences, mentally and emotionally. Some students arrive with the sorts of narratives in mind that Doerr has recently critiqued (Doerr, 2012a; 2012b), imagining study abroad to be a grand adventure of which they are the protagonist, of locals as unchanging embodiments of a homogenized, essentialized culture (which they will ideally "absorb"), and generally conceiving of the journey in a manner that reproduces entrenched power differences. Whereas Doerr was focused on representation rather than lived experience, there are fewer opportunities for these sorts of culturally charged narratives to be challenged during short-term programs, where the pace can be brisk and academic concerns are necessarily alloyed with experiential learning. In these circumstances, students have reported a desire for more opportunities to absorb and integrate both their travel experiences and the scholarship they were expected to read and discuss. Some of these challenges reflect general problems with university-level courses being taught on a compressed timeline (Scott, 2003), but are compounded by the difficulties presented by itinerant teaching in new and sometimes unexpected circumstances (Biles & Lindley, 2009).

Another concept I use to explore the challenges of short-term abroad trips is what Hofstede et al. (1991) called "power distance" between student and professor. This is characterized as the degree to which people within a given institutional framework understand and accept variation in the distribution of power. Lower power distance is associated with a more informal environment where authority is derived more socially than institutionally, whereas higher power distance reflects a more formalized separation of roles, and the acceptance thereof. I discuss this concern because the pedagogical frame of the abroad trip, and instructors' ability to manage student expectations, demands a degree of power distance that some trip models may swiftly undermine. This can encourage more superficial engagements between students and locals, and weaker contextualization of culturally inflected experience.

Short-term, Faculty-led Abroad Trip Models

Below I detail the three models I have undertaken in response to these challenges. The first two were largely inherited institutionally, and the third, which I focus on disproportionately due to its relative success, I developed with the help of student feedback, a review of similar programs, and an assessment of related pedagogical literature.

Model 1: Cultural Tourism

In this model, the abroad trip is disconnected from academic course credit. Rather than a course itself, or a trip connected to a previously completed course, the model is essentially an opportunity for interested, motivated students to travel along with academics to an area of their expertise, engaging in a schedule of activities chosen by the organizer. These sorts of trips are not uncommon at smaller institutions, sometimes offering internship credit (Steinberg, 2002), but this model is an unlikely first choice for an academic, given its significant limitations. I bring it up here because it (1) may be the only option available for taking students to some areas, or in the face of reluctant administrators, and (2) compares favorably in a number of ways, I argue, to the alternative of not taking students at all. I would not suggest that it be considered if either of the models detailed subsequently are possible.

My discussion of this approach is based in part on a trip organized and undertaken by myself and a colleague in the summer of 2009, in which we brought twelve students from the University of Puget Sound to Yogyakarta, Ubud, and Mangsit, Indonesia. The trip lasted three weeks, with a somewhat disproportionate amount of time spent in Yogyakarta. The trip was advertised to students in our anthropology and sociology department, through Asian Studies, and to a lesser extent, to the entire campus community. We used an application and brief interviews to help determine which students were best prepared for such travel, and would benefit the most from it[iv]. Although we received more applications than we had available positions, we were still compelled to accept some students with no background in either Asian Studies or the social sciences. Most, however, were anthropology/sociology students, but none had completed any coursework focused explicitly on Indonesia or Southeast Asia[v]. The trip itself was built around activities that I organized and designed to familiarize the group with Indonesian history and cultural diversity, including visits to historic temples and other religious sites, but with a greater focus on "culture in the making" (Fox, 1991), including local industries, rural village visits, development sites and NGOs, and limited ethnographic excursions.

"Temple Blur" and Other Difficulties

The inherent constraints of the Cultural Tourism model make it challenging to develop an itinerary and agenda that go significantly beyond the model's namesake and associated concerns (Chambers, 2011; Picard, Hitchcock, King, & Parnwell, 1993). Because students cannot be expected to have any significant background in the region or disciplinary approaches to understanding it, and because assignments such as readings are by necessity optional, students' ability to contextualize activities is inevitably lower than it could be. Particularly when focusing on standard "cultural tourism" fare, students on the 2009 trip retrospectively coined the term "temple blur" to describe the experience of visiting temples and related sites of ostensibly great import, but without adequate, contextual understanding of history and culture to engage with them productively. As with Model 2 below, a tight schedule marked by an effort to take advantage of the location abroad (rather than spending time indoors in conventional classroom activities) tend to make provision of this background a challenge. On the 2009 trip, even when students were able to read an article, attend a lecture, or speak with someone knowledgeable enough to provide some background on a site or activity, the extent to which they were able to integrate this information into a more broad understanding within such relevant frames as religious syncretism, postcoloniality, or civic pluralism, were curtailed by the model's incompatibility with an overarching curriculum.

Language deficits, as expected, allowed for very limited interactions between students and locals, with few exceptions constraining such encounters to Indonesians involved in the tourism industry. As English is not widely spoken across the country, and there was no institutional framework for connecting students with English speakers, the hope for ethnographic exercises, interviews, and other activities that depend largely on language skills were minimal. Scavenger hunts, which are a common tool in such short-term abroad trips when coupled with subsequent discussion (Schneider & Parker, 2013; Wesp & Baumann, 2012), proved helpful as ways to direct independent exploration, but ultimately ineffective at promoting a nuanced cultural awareness. Again, the ability of students to have even rudimentary conversations would have added a large dimension to such activities.

More than any of the other models presented here, Cultural Tourism strained the power distance between students and faculty (Hofstede et al., 1991). In my reviews of similar programs I have found that the high power distance of the classroom environment may be considerably lowered by the absence of institutionalized evaluation. On my 2009 trip, though I suggested a reading list and handed out a number of short articles throughout the trip, with the goal of discussing them as a group, I quickly found that the absence of graded assignments and formal seminar venues stripped the trip of much of its academic tenor. The social circumstances often associated with this model may further undermine efforts to maintain that tenor by putting instructors in close living situations with students, but without the countervailing parameters that are implicit in a formal, academic program.

Benefits

Ultimately, this model yielded an experience akin to "camping out in Indonesia," in the words of one student participant, cultivating largely in-group socialization and bonding, with the setting often reduced to backdrop. Nevertheless, students reported having an overwhelmingly positive experience, which is one reason I maintain this model remains a worthwhile venture, in the absence of alternate options. First, though we were unable to develop this trip as part of a for-credit academic course at the time, it nevertheless provided an opportunity for students to travel to Indonesia who – based on student feedback – were otherwise unlikely ever to have done so. Whether this in itself constitutes a benefit is a question I have subsequently investigated (Barkin, 2015).

Secondly, several motivated students, who read all recommended texts and sought out further literature, had a relatively more engaged experience than the rest, and one that differed more sharply from standard cultural tourism. Trips like these provide excellent opportunities for more self-motivated students, who benefit from being abroad with an area studies specialist, even without the structure and incentives of university coursework.

Even for those who were less engaged academically, and who reported the most "temple blur" along the way, evaluations of the trip were rife with acclamations of its transformative nature. And, indeed, there were some notable outcomes. Two students who were on the 2009 trip applied to volunteer programs that would take them back to Indonesia. One student applied to graduate school in cultural anthropology, and plans to pursue a research agenda in Indonesia. This adds up to 25% of the students on the trip attempting significant life commitments to the country, based largely on this experience, even if the original trip did little more than spark their interest. Finally, a successful trip in this mold may provide a 'proof of concept' to help in convincing administrators to support a for-credit course/trip in the future.

For faculty considering a trip in the style of Model 1, I would nevertheless recommend not ruling out the possibility of undertaking Model 2 or 3, as the benefits of linking travel to an institutionalized, academic agenda are significant. If a non-credit trip is necessary or preferred, I recommend establishing clear parameters of participation to students very early in the process, as a means of framing students' expectations in a manner that promotes contextualization of experience and academic engagement under what may prove challenging circumstances. This framing may also benefit those embarking of a

course-trip in the style of Model 2, as the lack of prior preparation and common focus on sight-seeing activities may lead some students to frame the trip as predominantly leisure oriented.

Model 2: The Mobile Classroom

Based on my own survey, the most common model for short-term, faculty led study abroad involves an intensive, for-credit course that takes place almost entirely in the destination country, integrating readings and written assignments that must be completed during the trip (Jackson, 2006). I originally conducted a course/trip using this model because of its ubiquity and pre-existing institutional support. Liberal arts colleges with a "January term" often employ such models, as do many other institutions as summer courses, generally lasting between three and five weeks. These programs are popular because of their modular nature: they are brief, include adequate faculty contact hours and academic content, and allow students and faculty to visit novel regions of the world under the auspices of immersive coursework (DeLoach et al., 2003).

In practice, such courses can borrow more from the "cultural tourism" model than one might expect, given they are often given credit equal to a full semester course, and are forced to make compromises for a variety of practical reasons (see Barkin, 2015; Jurgens & McAuliffe, 2004). Chief among these is faculty planning. Whereas some faculty may have research sites, non-profit connections, or other relationships that can facilitate an academically focused experiential pedagogy, many take the simpler path of relying on others to plan and even lead activities. This reliance may have the effect of orienting the trip in a way that draws more on educationally or culturally themed activities within the larger field of the tourist economy, with academic content inartfully tacked on[vi]. Examples of this from my own "Mobile Classroom" experience include tours of batik and silver goods production facilities in Yogyakarta, ostensibly geared to teach visitors about traditions and practices surrounding their production, but which are brief and superficial, largely developed as means of getting tourists into the facilities' lavish gift shops. These were thinly connected to readings on the history of Javanese textiles and colonial history. Colleagues from several institutions have confided to me their strained efforts to add an academic gloss to activities ranging from cooking lessons to rainforest treks, with the common thread being that the academic content was always a retroactive response to undertakings made accessible and appealing by the cultural/educational tourism establishment.

Because of their compatibility with conventional academic calendars, however, this model is ideal for many instructors wishing to offer trips to less common study-abroad destinations, where students would likely have no significant background. In addition to reviewing and co-planning several "mobile classroom" trips since 2006, I planned and conducted such a course in 2007, while on the faculty of a small college that compels students to enroll in a three-week intensive program each January. Many of these are such "study trips," as the college refers to them, which involve international travel. Although the college had never sent students to Indonesia, I nevertheless inherited the outline of a curricular model that was established on numerous other "study trips" to various destinations. As with many liberal arts institutions that feature January terms, this model included staying in hotels and employing local tour guides, while engaging in relatively little academic work — the focus was instead on what was deemed experiential learning. Course/trips were marketed to students on the basis of the destination, rather than the course's academic focus, or even department. As such, many students shopped for January term study-trips as though they were choosing a vacation destination, asking questions about leisure activities, destinations, and free time[vii].

This class/trip was uncomfortably large, at thirty-two students, because of the college's enrollment policies. I put together a rather general syllabus on the anthropology of Indonesia, endeavoring to take advantage of visits I had scheduled to Yogyakarta, Ubud, and North Sulawesi. In many ways, the planned activities were similar to the Cultural Tourism model, as the college's template for such trips, which I was encouraged to follow, involved employing local guides to fill the day with activities of conventional interest. As noted above, this pushed the course/trip into the tourist economy, even as I

struggled to negotiate a more critical perspective on the packaging of 'Indonesian culture' for educational consumption.

Some of this experience was institutionally specific, but many features were a function of the key elements that characterize this widespread model: (1) a short, intensive term that comprises both the course and the travel abroad, (2) the confinement of most academic activities to this period (i.e. a lack of classroom work and assignments before departure), and (3) a non-traditional course environment while abroad, meaning the travel abroad is not to a university or similar environment, but is rather focused on travel, service work, or experiential learning in the host country (see Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005).

More "Camping Out Abroad" and Other Difficulties

When compared with an entirely non-academic trip, this model has significant benefits, which are discussed below, but its danger lies in the presumption that its for-credit status will significantly add to its immersive impact. While graded exercises and the opportunity to assign readings and conduct classroom sessions increase the degree of power distance between professor and student, allowing the academic tenor of the trip to be more easily maintained, they make little difference in overcoming some of the key shortcomings noted in the previous model. The difficulty involved in trying to hold class sessions in non-traditional environments would seem to be relatively superficial, and some might even romanticize the itinerant, improvised classroom as part of the immersion process. Anyone who has had to conduct a lecture in a functioning restaurant, however, or lead a book discussion in the lobby of a youth hostel, might disagree.

What is gained in romanticized endurance of hardship is more than lost in students' and instructors' reduced ability to focus on lecture, discussion, and other classroom activities. In cultural anthropology, such improvisations are particularly esteemed, as the discipline retains much of its historical pride in Malinowskian "stepping off the veranda," and becoming involved in the lived circumstances of those under scrutiny (Ogden, 2007). I would argue this conceit is misplaced here, as (in my Indonesian experience, certainly) locals themselves do not often consider restaurants, lobbies, buses, and similar venues appropriate environments for higher education. It is in this wilful effort to "rough it," even in violation of local norms and with greatly diminished effectiveness, that one risks entering the territory of the backpacker tourist, and the under-informed performance of cultural relativism (Scheyvens, 2002).

The central weakness of the model, however, is shared with the previous one: the near inability to engage in meaningful and immersive ethnographic activities. This is the result of language deficits, of course, but also the lack of opportunities to organically develop relationships with locals, as well as the lack of area studies background and cultural preparation, all of which are ostensibly being provided during the trip. Given the rich opportunities for immersive experience during such travel, this model fails to take advantage of most, as the cultural setting of the trip necessarily becomes more of a backdrop for the academic course, which by necessity must focus on explaining and contextualizing those "cultural activities" that are *already* accessible (see Sachau, Brasher, & Fee, 2010). This ironic double-bind, wherein students are not in a position to venture much beyond cultural tourism activities or low-skill service work due to a lack of prior instruction, which in turn delimits the scope of the course's curriculum and instructors' ability to assign more immersive activities, cripples this approach to short-term study abroad. Said one colleague of this model's weaknesses, "it's as though the students can never really leave the museum, and we are forced to become the guided narration, when what we really want is to teach them how to paint."

Benefits

This model manifests essentially all the benefits of the previous one, and several more. Chief among these is that, by the end, students will have gone through an area studies course that, while often less content-driven than conventional coursework, benefits from its association with service work or cultural tourism, both of which may lead to valuable, serendipitous experiences or connections. There are also opportunities to engage students in readings and discussions that apply directly to the activities they're involved in, even if the model may allow little opportunity to go beyond the survey level. In the final analysis, this model's greatest benefit is its compatibility with the academic calendar, allowing brief, for-credit abroad trips that mix academics with various entry-level cultural engagements. One common alternative to this model is the addition of a prerequisite course or courses, and although my discussion here focuses on circumstances in which such supplementary coursework is not an available option, I briefly address this practice in the "Conclusion" section, below.

Model 3: The Extended Semester

I developed this model during the 2010-11 academic year as an effort to address the limits and failures of the models described above, while accommodating the critical constraints of a relatively brief time window abroad and the absence of available background or language courses. It builds on Aixa Ritz's ideas (2011) of incorporating study-abroad as a course component, rather than an isolated pedagogical module. In its development, I remained focused on creating as immersive and locally engaging an experience as possible – one that emulated the best and most enduring elements of semester-long abroad programs (e.g. Anderson et al., 2006), given these unavoidable limitations. Having now conducted three course-trips in this model, I have received a great deal of positive feedback from students and colleagues, and I myself have been surprised at how successful it has been in transcending many constraints that I expected to prove intransigent. I have broken down my description of the model into what I consider to be its three most indispensable elements.

1. The Conventional Semester

Rather than trying to get a full, intensive course into a short abroad trip, which, as detailed above, can lead to a sub-par academic experience as well as missed opportunities for local engagement while abroad, this model involves a full-length, semester-long course, taken by all students who will be going on the trip, which begins at the end of that semester. In my case, this course has been on the anthropology of Southeast Asia, with a focus on case studies within Indonesia. The course also introduced students to some Javanese cultural and behavioural norms, as well as basic words and phrases in Indonesian. In this way, the model borrows on the notion of a pre-requisite course, but builds on it in important ways, by closely dovetailing the abroad portion of the course with the semester at home. This was accomplished not only through the language and culture training that accompanied a more traditional seminar, but also through student development of individual research projects.

These projects involved extensive library research during the semester, culminating in a lengthy literature review and a proposal for ethnographic research while abroad. This ethnographic work was made possible by Indonesian student companions who were both interview subjects themselves and also facilitated and occasionally translated interviews.

All projects were guided such that they would draw on interviews with locals and first-hand experience during the trip, while cultivating students' individual interests to promote a sense of ownership and responsibility for the project. While abroad, time was provided outside the standard schedule for students to pursue these projects, and finally to write their findings into a synthetic essay that integrated ethnographic findings with their revised literature reviews, and resulting analysis. Beyond course content and project development, the semester also serves to build anticipation and frame the importance of the abroad trip, while providing time to thoroughly explore the issues of dynamism,

diversity, and syncretism that help break down student stereotypes and exotic anthropological imaginaries (Doerr, 2012a).

2. The University Setting

One key problem of the previously discussed models is their connection to tourism, and the notion that the trip/curriculum design must in some way follow the important "sights" of the region or country. Indeed, many such courses follow a fairly standard "cultural tourist" agenda (Baker-Clark & Sisson, 2011), being built around the notion that an expensive trip to a distant location must necessarily incorporate such visits (Richards, 2007), albeit with greater contextualization. As with semester-long programs and others built around volunteer or service work, I abandoned this presumption, instead allowing students to travel on their own afterward. I situated the abroad portion of the course-trip at a local university, eschewing, as best I could, the exigencies of touring culture (Craik, 1997). Students (and faculty) stayed in dorms alongside Indonesian students, and took advantage of university classroom spaces for coursework every morning. Students also attended a daily language class designed to increase their conversational abilities, however slightly, during the time they were there. The course culminated with a two-day visit to a rural village, where students stayed with local families, putting their language skills to the test.

The university setting worked well for the course-trips on a number of levels. Semiotically, the site functioned as a way of framing the trip for students as an extension of their semester at home, rather than a post-course excursion; this eliminated power-distance concerns and led to a much more focused and productive time abroad. This was compounded by an ongoing syllabus of readings and daily class sessions connected to extant course themes as well as students' research projects, which in turn were used as inspirations for each day's field activities. Thus, this model represents a genuinely extended semester in which students are well prepared for their time abroad, and also develop synthetic research projects in which they ideally become invested. These topics, in turn, may be used to shape the in-country agenda, which ideally allow students field research opportunities. I have found this combination of countervailing interdependencies connects the trip to the conventional semester in a persuasive fashion, and has further led to some of the best student research papers I have read during my career. The ability of students to conduct such independent work, however, and even to engage in the sorts of daily, ethnographic assignments I required, necessitated the participation of local students.

3. Local Student Involvement

Perhaps the most important element in this model is the involvement of local students from the host university. They help guest students by accompanying them in small-group-based ethnographic activities, guiding them through local venues, and helping them with their individual research projects, both as occasional translators and, more often, by connecting them to appropriate interview subjects and giving their own perspective on relevant topics. No representations are made to students of either group that the other represents an idealized manifestation of national culture or a representative sample of any particular population. Rather than representatives of an imagined "other," the groups are encouraged to work together in a relationship approximating that of students who seek help from tutors or peer advisors (Doerr, 2015).

The idea of institutional "student buddies" during abroad trips is hardly new, but in my reviews of programs that endeavored to integrate them, students often reported disappointing results. Having tried this idea several ways myself, I have found the following approach to be the most effective for facilitating limited ethnographic research and promoting a sense of immersion, as well as fostering a good relationship with our hosts: first, arrangements should be made beforehand to recruit students with appropriate language skills and a genuine interest in joining the program. In my experience, one local student for every two or three guest students proved a good ratio, creating more of a small-group dynamic than the common one-to-one ratio, and putting local students in a leadership position.

Expectations should be clear from the outset regarding what exactly will be expected of local students, as well as the compensation they will receive (given that they may be expected to spend a lot of time with the program over a number of weeks, I highly recommend offering appropriate compensation rather than relying on volunteerism). Second, I found it beneficial to the program if local students could be involved, voluntarily, in all areas of the course, rather than just those activities where their assistance was specifically requested. For example, invitations to morning class sessions, should they wish to attend; in my experience, this was not always interesting for them, given that they were essentially joining a class in its final weeks, but attendance by local students often led to unexpected and insightful discussions, and it created a sense of horizontal camaraderie between local and guest students. Third, I allowed local host students and my own students to choose who they worked with on a daily basis, rather than making permanent assignments. This allowed relationships to form between like-minded students, and ultimately led to a number of ongoing friendships to develop.

These relationships in many ways mirror those which ethnographic fieldworkers develop with what used to be described as "key informants" (e.g. Marshall, 1996; Tremblay, 1957). In Marshall's formulation (1996), these locals were rarely representative of the broader population, but shared the characteristic of being more open and forthcoming in their interviews and conversations with the ethnographer. In the same way, because of the need to overcome the language barrier (among many barriers), the local student assistants recruited into this model are unlikely to be particularly representative of broader local (or even university student) populations, but their ability and willingness to communicate with guest students allows for more productive engagements and a broader potential for personal connection.

By setting up the parameters of these collaborations carefully, and making sure local students felt free to express themselves, I found that, although there were always some participants in both groups who were not as interested in developing social connections, many report having transformative experiences on the course-trips that are largely attributed to these relationships, and the serendipitous encounters that can come from them in combination with loosely structured, ethnographically-oriented activities. Although the ostensible reason for enlisting local students to participate in the program is to help visiting students navigate a culturally and linguistically foreign environment, the most important outcome of their involvement in my trips has been their own connections with guest students, and the diversity of insight both groups have drawn from these relationships.

Conclusion

In this essay I have explicated three models of short-term, faculty-led study abroad for culturally oriented academics seeking to foster an immersive experience, but who cannot expect participating students to have much (or any) background study on the destination or its local language(s). I first presented two common models on which I have collected data from several liberal arts colleges, and which I myself employed due to institutional exigencies. I discussed their benefits and reviewed the shortcomings I have found in implementing them, as well as observing and reviewing other programs that followed the same or very similar models. I then discussed my own recommendation, "the extended semester," which I present as one means of generating more of the benefits associated with longer-term study abroad, given the same constraints.

"Instead of creating the binary of self versus other or global versus local, implied in the notion of global citizens," suggests Neriko Doerr (2012a: 17), "educators can encourage students to relate with individuals through whom they can better understand the diversely intersecting social, economic, cultural and political situations that affect them." It is in this spirit that I have pursued an immersion rooted not in learning about reified "culture" or the sites of cultural tourism, but rather in mutually negotiated understandings of conscious individuals from diverse backgrounds (Clifford, 1988). In this regard, Model 3 has been surprisingly successful, transforming the three-week trip abroad from a disconnected tour wherein Indonesia was relegated to the role of backdrop, into a transformative space

for social exploration and boundary breaking. Most of all, it has clearly been most effective at overcoming anthropological stereotypes and diffusing notions of otherness and exoticism. As one of my students told me a year after his trip ended, "I know we were only there for a few weeks, but by the end I kinda felt like that was just where I lived."

Where faculty leaders may rely on course prerequisites for their trip, the outline of Model 2 or even Model 1 may be used while avoiding some of the pitfalls outlined above, but that discussion is beyond the scope of this essay. It should be noted, however, that Model 3 does confer significant benefits over merely requiring prerequisites for an otherwise self-contained trip. Chief among these is the fruitful dovetailing of the semester-long course with the abroad trip, both through the development of academic projects that integrate research at home and abroad, as well as introductory language and culture lessons intended to better prepare students for the daily realities of their field excursion. Given a prerequisite course that includes some students who may go on a subsequent trip and some who will not, this sort of integration would not be possible.

I have conducted student evaluations on each of these course/trips, and it should come as no surprise that students unanimously found Model 3 to be (1) a more interesting and academically profitable experience, (2) more culturally immersive, (3) facilitating of more connections with locals (even when connections with local students were not considered), and has led to the highest percentage of students seeking to return to Indonesia through volunteer, research, and scholarship programs. In this way, it comes much closer to realizing the benefits of longer-term study abroad (i.e. Anderson et al., 2006; Ritz, 2011; Sachau et al., 2010) than do the other models, and has been used as a model by colleagues seeking to implement similar programs.

Of course, not everyone seeking to undertake such a program will have the resources or institutional support necessary to implement it in the fashion I describe, while others will find some of its components to be impractical or undesirable for themselves or their students. I present the above breakdown of what I have found to be the key elements in the success of the model such that readers will be able to pluralistically borrow what best suits them and their own circumstances, and as an avenue to promote the potential benefits of short-term study abroad to less-common destinations, even at smaller colleges and universities.

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[i] I would like to thank the individuals and funding agencies that made this research, and the study abroad trips on which it is based, possible. In particular, the Trimble family for having supported group travel to Asia at the University of Puget Sound, the Henry Luce Foundation for its ongoing and generous support of our field initiatives in Southeast Asia, as well as the funding agencies that supported my initial research in Indonesia, namely the Fulbright IIE and Fulbright-Hayes Programs, the National Science Foundation, and the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. I would also like to thank my colleagues Benjamin Lewin and Nick Kontogeorgopoulos for their invaluable support with these abroad trips through the years, as well as Lisa Long for her comprehensive assistance on my 2014 course-trip. Finally, I would like to thank Kristine Bartanen for initially suggesting and making possible the "extended semester" structure that became the focus of this article.

ii "The Extended Classroom" model was undertaken, with mild variation, in 2011, 2012, and 2014.

iii It should be noted that very few universities in any category offer Indonesian language instruction, however, and that this case should be of interest to those at larger universities wishing to take students to areas that are not well represented in their institutions' curricula.

[iv] A similar application and interview process was used for all "Model 3" trips, discussed below.

[v] Because this trip followed my first year at the University of Puget Sound, which houses only one other Southeast Asianist, it was not reasonable to expect or require such background.

[vi] My current research focuses on this concern, and particularly the role of travel agencies that specialize in educationally themed group excursions, and their influence over course planning and syllabi (see Barkin, 2015). Many such agencies

feature graduated levels of control to accompanying faculty, offering up fully planned itineraries, tour guides, and even suggested readings to those willing to cede authority over their courses.

[vii] I should emphasize that many students, particularly those with social science emphases, did not approach January term this way, but as all January term trips were advertised to students in one, large meeting (during which time faculty were expected to take the floor to promote their courses via images and oratory), the preponderance of questions invariably fell into these categories.