

Meeri Hellstén
Anna Reid
Editors

Researching International Pedagogies

*Sustainable Practice for Teaching
and Learning in Higher Education*

 Springer

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Introduction

Researching International Pedagogies

Being Critical About Learning and Teaching in Higher Education

Meeri Hellstén and Anna Reid

Introduction

We live in interesting times. The past 20-year period has witnessed an amazing expansion of opportunities for mobility that has enabled students and lecturers to participate in an international higher education experience. Today, the effects of globalisation are undeniably evident in all aspects of higher education ranging from the development of economic and political strategies for institutional and national educational growth to a focus on individual learning designs for students. In English-speaking countries, the development of international education has in some instances brought about welcome opportunities for lecturers and students to augment the mundane teaching in local lecture halls with the inclusion of different cultural and social experiences brought about by international mobility. The novelty of internationalisation has meant professional opportunities of an exciting kind to some, transporting scholars to exotic offshore locations in the academic pursuit of knowledge innovation and transnational advancement. A dichotomous response to the increased international education market has been its sudden augmentation in global student mobility with its ensuing and sometimes locally unprecedented influx of incoming international students.

Regardless of its 'foreign exotic appeal' or its imposed local constraints, the aftermath of this globally rapid and expansive education market (Altbach & Knight, 2007) has left the teaching and learning community in uncertainty. The international education terrain is currently seeking direction in areas of both pedagogy and policy (Adams & Walters, 2001; Ninnes & Hellstén, 2005). While policy aspects of international education have received due interest from the community of scholars (e.g. Ball, 1998; Crossley & Watson, 2003; Knight, 1994), research has not afforded sufficient attention to the applied aspects of internationalisation, that is, the teaching and

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curriculum contexts of this global endeavour. The mounting pressures brought about by economic incentives that drive curriculum renewal, increase academic workloads, alter teaching conditions and generate technological advances have added considerable complexity to the task of quality teaching and research in pedagogy. There is a need for a reconsideration of pedagogies that acknowledge international education through the development of sustainable contemporary academic practices.

Defining International Pedagogies?

Interest in the ideas that gave birth to this collection derives from current debates in scholarly networks about the perceived need to re-conceptualise pedagogy to include systematic notions of teaching and learning in international contexts and with international students and curricula.

The global academic community dealing with the everyday of international education is exploring novel methods, practices, discourses, curriculum design and implementation to meet the diverse needs of international student cohorts. Many innovative methodologies, which profoundly affect the outcomes for students globally, are currently implemented across teaching floors and virtual learning sites. Regrettably, many successful pedagogical methods remain unrecognised and debates about international teaching and learning issues in academic circles are evermore embedded in lingering trepidation about insufficiencies. Paradoxically, the increasing amount of research into international student experiences shows that international students, too, are faced with uncertainty in their new learning environments (e.g. Arthur, 2004, see also citations in this collection). It seems, then, that there is a need for the collective global teaching and learning community to identify new pedagogies that engage with the new and future world where assumed old academic traditions may no longer prove effective. We hope that this collection of chapters may invigorate debate and attract dialogue about some of the critical issues that so profoundly affect the everyday of the academic community in relation to international education.

Within the current plethora of available pedagogical models, some more comprehensive (Volet & Ang, 1998; Watkins & Biggs, 2001) than others, there is still little evidence-based empirical documentation of their applicability to contemporary international higher education contexts. Mostly we find pedagogies that are localised to addressing student diversity as the main difference upon which pedagogical models and methods are applied. The scholarly scrutinising of pedagogical conceptions in diverse contexts has traditionally been flavoured by multicultural and integrative theories (e.g. Banks, 1994), and followed by sociologies of transnational inquiry and most recently the inter-cultural focus prevalent in international education and related literature (Lo Bianco, Liddicoat, & Crozet, 1999). Developed from Hofstede's (1997) influential notion of (inter-)cultural dimensions, and Gudykunst's (1997) theory of inter-cultural communication, the term 'inter-cultural pedagogy' has been broadly adopted as an intellectual pursuit for implementing culturally sensitive approaches (Lo Bianco et al., 1999) for teaching incoming

students in domestic settings. While providing both useful and workable models for domestic learning situations, inter-cultural pedagogy impacts on local learning contexts but seems to fall short of the globalised scope articulated in current rhetoric among international educators. Admittedly, while the present success of education is rightly indebted to the great pedagogues of the modern era, the ambivalence resonating through the current global educational climate (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2006) calls for progressive measures ahead.

This collection attempts to provide a concerted approach to reconfiguring the practice, methodology, discourse(s), reflection, evaluation, innovation and provision of quality teaching and learning in and for international contexts. In presenting the pedagogical examples of this set, then, we acknowledge the vast variation in applied teaching methods and their epistemological substantiations, and recognise that some may stand in direct contrast to others. As scholars whose objective it is to inaugurate critical debate on the subject of international education, we advocate respect for diversity in methods that lead to meaningful application of high-quality pedagogy in teaching practice. In validating the diverse pedagogical perspectives, then, we have explicitly resisted an attempt to re-theorise international pedagogy as being accomplished through a priori educational models. As an emerging field of scholarship and research, it is precisely this interdisciplinary breadth that in our view best represents the challenges facing educators in contemporary international teaching and learning environments.

The chapters apply a critical research perspective to international pedagogy with some focusing on the overall context of international higher education, some showcasing curriculum design and renewal, and some exploring developing technologies that support learning and teaching in international environments. Some authors report on students' experiences as 'international' learners, and others explore issues related to language and learning. Collectively, the book attempts to illustrate innovative teaching and learning methods, methodological frameworks and novel pedagogies that contribute to improving the effectiveness of teaching and learning in international settings and diverse student groups globally. It contributes to the current debate on applied critical educational thought, to critical pedagogy, innovation in teaching and learning and culturally sensitive and inclusive curriculum practices. In many cases, the authors describe examples of effective learning and teaching situations that foster international perspectives and attitudes. However, what sets this book apart from others in the field of international education is that all of the examples provided by the authors have been formally assessed and evaluated and provide evidence for implementing progress and advancement in the field.

The chapters were selected through submissions elicited from a 'call for abstract submissions' to scholarly mailing groups of organisations such as AARE, ANZCIES, HERDSA, and as advertised through scholarly research conventions locally in Australia and overseas. Submitted chapters were selected by blind review by respected scholars whose expertise we duly acknowledge. The chapters are based on high scholarly quality and relevance with the themes and objectives of the book. The selection process resulted in invitations for chapters from a range of countries, namely Australia, the USA, New Zealand, the UK, Spain and Denmark.

Themes

The book reaches out to a global readership and community of scholars sharing their concern over the current conditions of international teaching and learning. We hope to provide international breadth to the researching of instruction, classroom practice, curriculum and teaching philosophies. The chapters contribute to each major theme in the book in order to share sophisticated and thoughtful approaches to teaching and learning that are grounded in holistic cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary views of teaching in diverse global settings. The themes of the book are:

- (a) **Curriculum innovation**, which includes methods for evaluating international pedagogies; the quality of teaching and learning models; innovation in international curriculum design and renewal; and international curriculum content, assessment and evaluation. Leask (chapter 1) begins the discussion by focusing on the development of international perspectives within the curriculum. She suggests that ‘an internationalised curriculum must, as a minimum, cater to the rapidly changing and divergent needs of all students as global citizens’. Petocz and Reid (chapter 2) develop this theme further by providing a framework to evaluate such an internationalised curriculum with the main focus on the possible development of inter-cultural justice as a value for learning; the utility of the framework is illustrated with several case studies. Trahar (chapter 3) takes a more personal reflective approach as she acknowledges the individuals within the curriculum – the teachers and students – in suggesting that inter-cultural competence is generated through the recognition of different values.
- (b) **Teaching and learning experiences**, which include analyses of specific pedagogic situations involving international teaching practices that have been formally evaluated, methods for appraising teaching and learning in diverse ethnic groups, and experiences of students in ‘study abroad’ and ‘home-based’ learning situations. In this theme, Singh (chapter 4) presents us with the concept of ‘double knowing’ that ‘explicitly recognises that international students are situated in the intellectual life of at least two societies’. As Singh invites us to acknowledge the global/local flows of knowledge that accompany students, Hellstén (chapter 5) provides a complementary view as she attends to students’, academics’ and host institutions’ accomplishment of ‘new’ identities through embedded international pedagogies. Tange (chapter 6) encourages listening to the experiences of university academic and support staff. Here, she analyses the impact of internationalisation on those who are at the interface of international mobility. The remaining chapters in this theme focus on students in transition. Reciprocating the discussion presented in chapter 5, Edwards (chapter 7) explores the basic assumptions behind student mobility – that students are somehow changed by the experience itself – and how to make the most of that experience once the students return ‘home’. Bell (chapter 8) provides a very lively view of city-dwelling students from Singapore experiencing an agricultural field trip to (outback) Australia and the opportunity this presents to critique personal values of culture.

- (c) **Language as a medium of cultural exchange and learning** recognises the important role of culturally sensitive pedagogies for dealing with linguistic diversity. It highlights successful case studies of meeting the needs of diverse student populations that have been formally evaluated. Tindale (chapter 9) describes a successful collaboration between linguists and discipline specialists that focuses on the inter-cultural learning skills of students and teachers. Kuiper (chapter 10) reflects critically on his career as an English language teacher and how new technologies and student diversity have enriched the pedagogical environment. Hirst and Brown (chapter 11) draw attention to the inter-cultural relationship between students and present a means of interpreting learning as a dialogic relationship.
- (d) **The use of information and computer technologies for supporting international pedagogies** is the final theme of the book. This section presents studies of social and cultural nature and the importance of developing inter-cultural dialogues for the future. Gibson (chapter 12) provokes us with questions about the role of technology and the opportunity it provides for international communication, interaction and networking between people and ideas in the twenty-first century. Bretag and Hannon (chapter 13) explore the pedagogic development of diverse communities of inquiry using computer-mediated situations. Gesche and Makeham (chapter 14) report on a large-scale project where a set of pedagogical principles are structured around cognitive, affective and operational categories. The categories are presented as interdependent agents for curriculum change and renewal. Sancho (chapter 15) explores the inter-relationships between cognitive, technical and emotional knowledge and applies these principles through active curriculum change. Finally, Sorenson (chapter 16) returns to the dialogic nature of learning as it is mediated by technology. She emphasises the way technology can assist in inter-cultural dialogue that may lead to global societal growth.

The chapters provide a collective research-based view of international pedagogies which takes account of diverse perspectives and participant groups in a changing world. We hope that this collection develops further the critical debate surrounding internationalisation as a whole, and internationalisation as it impacts on learning, teaching, institutions and the global society.

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Theme One
Curriculum Innovation

Chapter 1

Internationalisation, Globalisation and Curriculum Innovation

Betty Leask

Introduction

Internationalisation is not a new concept in higher education. However, the shape and purpose of internationalisation in the higher education environment has undergone many changes – many of those related to globalisation. Various phases in the internationalisation of higher education and various types of response to a somewhat mobile and increasingly diverse student population in the UK, Australia, Europe, Malaysia and the USA have been described in the literature (Back et al., 1997; Mestenhauser, 1998; Van der Wende, 2000; Lee, 2000; Webb, 2005; De Vita, 2007). One could argue that internationalisation of the curriculum in higher education is constantly in a process of transformation (Foucault, 1981). Furthermore, given the rapid pace of change in the world as a result of globalisation, this constant state of transformation is perhaps understandable, even if the transformations themselves are not predictable. But are we responding appropriately?

In 1998, Josef Mestenhauser argued that if we are to internationalise the curriculum we will need to challenge both the nature of the curriculum and the paradigms on which it is based (p. 21). He argued that up to that point in time internationalisation of the curriculum had been focused too much on projects and programmes designed to train a few students as future international affairs specialists, completely ignoring the fact that all graduates will work in a global setting, as engineers, accountants, doctors, etc. This chapter is an attempt to explore some of the issues associated with curriculum reform and innovation for internationalisation. It makes direct reference to the findings of research into the impact of changes implemented in an Australian university at about the time Mestenhauser was writing – changes designed to transform and internationalise the curriculum in a large

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Australian university. The research highlighted some of the issues associated with curriculum innovation and provided some insights into possible ways forward.

Internationalisation and Globalisation

Internationalisation in the higher education sector is a much debated and diversely interpreted concept and a number of definitions have been developed and elaborated over the years (Knight, 1994; de Wit, 1997; Van der Wende, 1997; Hamilton, 1998). Knight (1997) was correct when she stated that 'it is clear that internationalisation means different things to different people, and as a result there is a great diversity of interpretations attributed to the concept' (p. 5). However, two common themes of relevance here have emerged in discussions around internationalisation in higher education – globalisation and inter-cultural competence.

It is almost impossible to talk about internationalisation without referring to globalisation and indeed there is much to be learned about internationalisation from its relationship to globalisation, 'those processes by which the peoples of the world are incorporated into a single world society, a global society' usually against their will or at least without their conscious consent (Albrow, 1990, p. 9). Globalisation has been a speedy process which has increased the interconnections between nations and peoples of the world. The forces of globalisation include the rapid increase in movement of people, money, services, goods, images and ideas around the world.

The cross-border provision of education is an important contributor to the growth of a global knowledge society in which ideas move rapidly around the world, crossing many borders, being 'bought' and 'sold' to create a fluid global 'ideoscape' (Appadurai, 1990, p. 296). As such, cross-border provision of education is a force, a primary medium and an agent of globalisation. Cross-border higher education includes the movement of people (students and academic staff), providers (institutions with a virtual or physical presence in a host country), programmes (courses or programmes of instruction) and projects (such as joint curricula or development projects) as part of international development cooperation, academic exchanges and linkages and trade in education services, and is on the internationalisation agenda of many higher education institutions (Knight, 2004). Thus internationalisation of higher education is clearly linked to globalisation – but the relationship is complex, multifaceted and, for some at least, problematic.

Marginson (1999, p. 19) argues that as the main function of internationalisation is the 'formation of the skills ... required to operate in the global environment itself', it is in itself a form of soft imperialism which imposes 'Western' ways of thinking, doing and acting on an ever-increasing proportion of the world population. Marginson also argues that 'by spreading English language and Americanised practices, global education markets colonise national cultures and identities' and sustain imbalance in the power relationship between developed and developing nations (Marginson, 2003, p. 25). Furthermore, the key role played by English in the popular media and on the Internet has resulted in an increased demand for English language education and for