

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION: MAXIMISING THE POTENTIAL OF THE ESL CLASSROOM

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OUTLINE

- Defining internationalisation
- How can we apply it to the ESL classroom
- Some examples
- Reflection & discussion



DEFINING INTERNATIONALISATION- CONFUSION & COMPLEXITY

- Over 20 years of debate over its definition with only a small number of people studying it (Knight, 2004 p.8-9)
- Initially focused on mobility of students & collaborative research (Clifford 2013)
- Additive approach- do an international case study (Banks 1999)
- Has become a buzzword in higher education; increasingly important for universities



DEFINING INTERNATIONALISATION

- Built into most Australian universities' goals of teaching & learning
- However, a cause of confusion; what does it actually mean & how do we put it into practice?
- In a recent audit when the TEQSA panel spoke to Deakin staff they found that the “...understanding of what is meant by internationalisation of the curriculum and how it might be achieved is *somewhat patchy*.” (TEQSA 2012 p28)



FINDING A DEFINITION TO APPLY TO THE ESL CLASSROOM

- Knight's updated & carefully considered definition "...the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post – secondary education" (Knight 2003, p.2).
- "A curriculum with an international orientation in content and/or form, aimed at preparing students for performing (professionally/socially) in an international and multicultural context and designed for domestic and/or foreign [international] students" (Crowther et al 2000).
- My focus is from the following definition which states that an internationalised curriculum can include "...global perspectives, intercultural communication & socially responsible citizenship" (Clifford 2013).



INTERNATIONALISATION IN THE ESL CLASSROOM

- According to Knight (2004 p.6-7) the real process of internationalisation occurs at an individual and institutional level
- Room full of primary sources- our classes are already ‘internationalised’!
- Give students opportunities to share experiences from their home countries; facilitate cross-cultural understanding
- International students can make important contributions to higher education by helping campus communities to institutionalise internationalisation and help develop intercultural competencies (Urban & Palmer 2014, p.320); “reciprocal cultural learning” (p321)
- Counterhegemonic element - moving beyond western Eurocentric topics to incorporate a range of perspectives (Andreotti 2011).
- Australian culture as international



CREATING GLOBAL CITIZENS

- Recent interest in using internationalisation to make students global citizens & educate them for a global workplace (Clifford & Montgomery 2011)
- Global citizenship includes the ability to develop a 'world view' i.e. - compare one's experiences to other situations and use this for knowledge building & a curiosity for understanding different cultural perspectives (Deakin Learning Futures 2013)
- Need to consider:
 - who are our students?
 - where are they going?
 - what do we want our students to learn?



EXAMPLES OF INTERNATIONALISING CURRICULUM FOR ELICOS

EAP programs:

- Read articles from international journals for a literature review
- Examine English as a global language and some of the concerns around its rise
- Research essay topics on ethical world issues such as the impact of globalisation on developing countries
- Discuss cultural differences between Australia & students' countries
- Interview locals for research report- learn about Australian culture & reflect on differences with own country
- Present on social, environmental & economic issues e.g. racial conflict in Singapore, deforestation in Malaysia, Bollywood in India



EXAMPLES CONT...

General English projects:

- produce a video about cultural differences between Australia and students' countries
- create a brochure for new students about what to expect in Australia
- plan & present an international food fair

Extra curricular:

- multicultural festivals at end of every 5 week intake where different student groups have the opportunity to showcase their countries' traditions, food, dance & music (often linked to festivals such as Diwali, Eid, Chinese spring festival)
- Student association reps- Spanish / Arabic language exchange groups, dance and sporting clubs



CULTURE CHECK

READ THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS BELOW ABOUT CULTURAL BEHAVIOUR.
IS IT THE SAME OR DIFFERENT IN YOUR COUNTRY?

- PEOPLE OFTEN KISS FRIENDS ON THE CHEEK WHEN THEY MEET.
- PEOPLE USUALLY SHAKE HANDS WHEN THEY ARE INTRODUCED TO SOMEONE.
- IN AN OFFICE, PEOPLE USUALLY PREFER TO BE CALLED BY THEIR FIRST NAME.
- YOUNG PEOPLE USUALLY LIVE WITH THEIR PARENTS UNTIL THEY ARE MARRIED AND MAYBE EVEN AFTER THEY ARE MARRIED.
- IT'S OK TO ASK PEOPLE HOW MUCH THEY EARN.
- IT'S COMMON TO BARGAIN WHEN YOU BUY THINGS IN STORES OR SHOPS.



REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

- What examples & elements of internationalisation do you use in your teaching?
- Creating 'global citizens'- what can we achieve in short intensive courses?
- Do you think students are more interested in learning about Australian culture than the cultures of their fellow students?
- What aspects of Australian culture do you like to include in your classes?
- What experiences have you had of students talking about their countries / cultures?
- How can our institutions utilise students as 'cultural assets'? (Urban & Palmer 2014)

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