Internationalisation of the Curriculum: a 'Wicked Problem'?

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Overview

- Why a 'wicked problem'?

- Some definitions

- A framework for 'internationalising the curriculum'

- Examples from Bristol, Hong Kong and Israel

- Finally…why is internationalisation of the curriculum important?

A 'Wicked Problem'?

'There is a varied and highly limited view of the curriculum in different universities which constrains their understanding and application of pedagogical principles' (Maringe, Foskett & Woodfield, 2013, p.15)

Curriculum internationalisation does not seem to be a top priority for many universities because of academic resistance to 'changing the purpose, content and methodology of teaching' Maringe (2010, p.27) .

Internationalisation of the Curriculum

'The incorporation of an international and intercultural dimension into the content of the curriculum as well as the teaching and learning arrangements and support services of a program of study' (Leask, 2009, p.209)

Internationalisation of the Curriculum

'Curricula, pedagogies and assessments that foster understanding of global perspectives and how these interact with the local and the personal; inter-cultural capabilities in terms of actively engaging with other cultures; and responsible citizenship in terms of addressing different value systems' (Clifford, 2009, p.135)

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Internationalisation of the Curriculum

- Recognises that as graduates, all students will have social and cultural as well as economic roles/responsibilities

- Their lives will be influenced by the global environment

- The ability to think locally, nationally, globally will be important

'A Global Citizen'?

- Aware of the wider world, sense of one's own role as a world citizen

- Respects and values diversity

- Has an understanding of how the world works economically, politically, socially, culturally, technologically and environmentally

- Is outraged by social injustice

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'A Global Citizen'?

- Participates in and contributes to the community at a range of levels from local to global

- Is willing to make the world a more sustainable place and

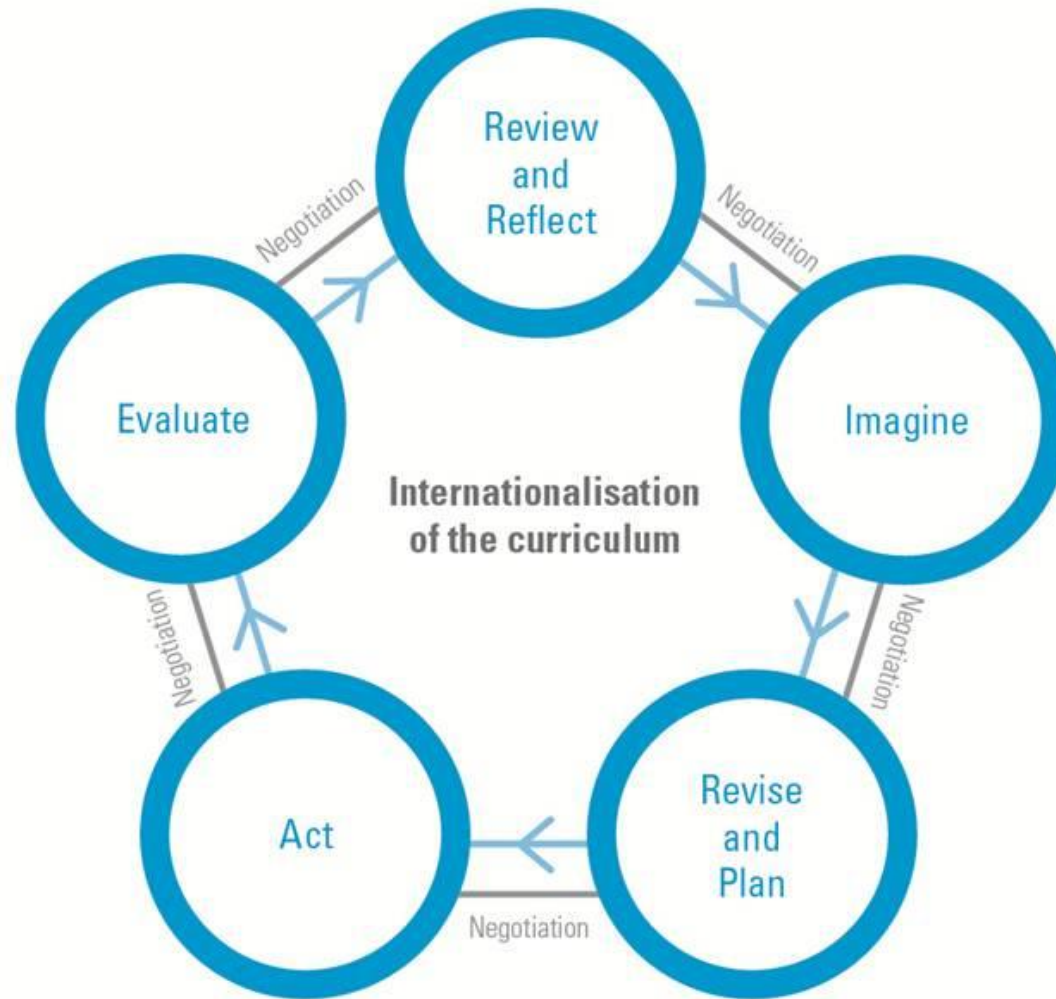- Take responsibility for their actions

(Oxfam, 2006)

The Process of Internationalisation of the Curriculum

- Is an important part of the periodic, critical review of the curriculum
- It should include reflection on the impact and outcomes of teaching and assessment practices on student learning and a review of content and pedagogy
- Involves a series of choices about whose knowledge will be included, what skills, attitudes will be developed
- Involves thinking beyond dominant paradigms in the context

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Internationalisation of the curriculum

Review and Reflect — Negotiation — Imagine — Negotiation — Revise and Plan — Negotiation — Act — Negotiation — Evaluate — Negotiation

The role of the facilitator in the process of IoC is critical to ensuring the success of the process. One of the most important skills is that of negotiation.

The Process of Internationalisation of the Curriculum

- Review and reflect

- Imagine

- Revise and plan

- Act

- Evaluate

- Review and reflect…

The Process of Internationalisation of the Curriculum

- **Review and reflect** – to what extent is our curriculum internationalised?
- What is the rationale for Internationalisation of the Curriculum in the programme?
- Reviewing content, teaching and learning approaches and assessment in individual courses
- **Imagine** – what other ways of thinking and doing are possible?
- What are the cultural foundations of dominant paradigms in your discipline?
- **Revise and plan** – what will we do differently in our programme?
- Establishing goals and objectives
- Identifying experts/champions who can help overcome obstacles
- How will you evaluate the effectiveness of changes?

🔥 The Process of Internationalisation of the Curriculum

- **Act –**How will we ensure that staff and students are best supported to achieve our internationalisation plan?
- Introducing compulsory workshops for students prior to a multicultural teamwork assignment
- Evaluating the development of intercultural/international knowledge, skills and attitudes in students
- **Evaluate** – to what extent have we achieved our internationalisation goals?
- Analysing evidence from stakeholders
- Reflecting on the impact of action taken
- Considering any 'interference' factors – unexpected events that may have had a positive/negative impact on achievement of goals

Internationalisation of the Curriculum

- How can we internationalise the curriculum in this discipline area, in this institution, and ensure that, as a result, we improve the learning experiences and outcomes of everyone?

- Is the process different according to the discipline? 'Soft'? 'Hard'?

- How do we 'address different value systems'?

- How do we do it? What are we doing already?

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Understanding Educational Research (UER)

- Compulsory for all doctoral students, EdD and PhD in Bristol and Hong Kong

- Aim is to enable students to 'read' and 'understand' the philosophical perspectives that inform educational research and to explain the relationship between philosophical position (paradigm), methodology and research methods

🔥 Review, Reflect, Imagine – To What Extent is UER 'Internationalised'?

- All of the philosophical perspectives - positivism, interpretivism, critical theory, postmodernism, poststructuralism – are Eurocentric

- Student constituency diverse, very few social scientists, many not speaking English as first language, many non-Europeans – language of social science philosophy difficult and impenetrable

- To what extent is it appropriate to 'teach' perspectives that are grounded in particular ways of seeing the world to such a group?

- To what extent are our learning, teaching and assessment approaches inclusive?

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Revise and Plan – What Did We Do Differently?

- Previously students had worked in groups to critique a book – 4 roles – summariser, classifier, supporter, critic – all books reported UK research

- Used an article instead of a book

- Selected 4 articles all on the theme of diversity in education, international, 'local' students in HE

- Articles reflected the student constituency and possibly their experiences

- Each piece of research conducted from a different paradigmatic perspective

- Groups formed around each article

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🔥 Act and Evaluate

- We did it!
- Very powerful activity on many levels
- Enabled some students to find their 'voice'
- An eye opener for the 'local' students i.e. it raised their awareness of how their 'international' classmates might feel
- For some people the first time they had ever read any research that was not positivist – dominant paradigm in many parts of the world
- Standard of assignments improved – assessment clearly related to learning activity

Review and Reflect

- Successful – but still focusing on Eurocentric philosophies that developed in Europe following the Enlightenment

- Very few European students

- Importance of challenging dominant perspectives on 'knowledge'

- If we challenge – students develop the confidence to challenge also - modelling

Decolonising 'Knowledge'

- Philosophies that are based on 'Northern' or 'Western' ways of 'knowing' continue to dominate social science

- They build a model on the experience of the most privileged 600 million people – and assume it for the 6000 million in the world

- Social science is embodied practice – as is any practice - carried out by particular groups in particular settings

Revise and Plan

- Introduced philosophical perspectives from outside Europe and US e.g. those influenced by Confucianism, Buddhism, Islam

- Indigenous knowledges – and decolonising methodological approaches

- Examples from existing students e.g. reconciling postmodernism and Islam, integrating social constructionism with Confucianism, integrating local Akan (a Ghanaian tribe) knowledges with narrative inquiry

Act/Evaluate

- Students assigned to multicultural groups

- Each group discussed a statement from core reading – had to think about their own values and beliefs – and the extent to which they accorded with those in the different paradigms

- They were going 'beyond the text', learning about each other's differences and similarities

- Vehicle for developing cultural capability – in many ways

The IRIS Project – and my Role

- Fostering International Cooperation with Higher Education Colleges in Israel (IRIS) http://www.braude.ac.il/tempus/

- 7 Israeli HE colleges, several EU partners, including UK - me

- Aims are to develop strategic plans for internationalisation processes, encourage international activities among academics, administrators and students and to create international liaison departments

- HE disciplines include teacher education, engineering, art and design

- Work Package Leader – Internationalisation of the Curriculum

The Context

- 'Conceptualising internationalisation in Israel especially complex because of its 'heterogenic, segregated populations' and the 'international dimension can be complicated as the "other" or "foreigner" can refer to those who are not of the country's majority population or to other nationalities from outside the country' (Cohen, Yemini & Sadeh, 2014, p.26)

- Four distinct school systems – secular Jewish, religious Jewish, Palestinian Arab, ultra – orthodox Jewish

- Lead to lack of understanding – and respect for the 'other' (Wolff & Breit, 2012)

- First IRIS consortium meeting February 2013 – 'identities'

Internationalisation of the Curriculum

EU IRIS Project 2012 - 2015

- Collaborating with Kaye College, Be'er Sheva on MEd in Education in the Era of Information and Global Technologies – blended learning programme

- Olzan Goldstein, Programme Director, keen to develop the curriculum so that it is more internationalised

- This involves, in particular, facilitating the students to develop intercultural understanding

- Read 3 papers, including one of mine

- Discussed them together and then with me via Skype

EU IRIS Project 2012 - 2015

- 24/11/2014 – session devoted to the main concepts of globalisation, internationalisation and multiculturalism, connecting them to personal perspectives

- First time that the students had worked in mixed groups – prefer to work in 'homogeneous groups' – Jewish women, Bedouin women, Bedouin men, Jewish men

- Worked in mixed groups to expose themselves to different points of view

- 08/12/2014 – Skype meeting to discuss these issues – 'We are beginning to see the person, not the culture'

A Small Step Forward?

Finally…An Internationalised Curriculum…

- An internationalised curriculum, through 'strategic, intensive reviews of teaching and learning, profoundly influences the student experience and engagement' (Crossman & Burdett, 2012, p.230)

- Optimises 'contact zones' - opportunities for dialogue in those spaces where disparate 'cultures' meet, without glossing over 'difference'

- Can lead to ambivalence as we encounter those whose values/beliefs disrupt our own – 'unhomeliness' – rich learning opportunities

- 'A pedagogy of discomfort' – 'invites students to critique their deeply held assumptions and destabilises their view of themselves and the worlds. The process is painful, but contains the promise of hope for the future' (Leibowitz, Bozalek & Rohleder, 2010, p.84)

- Facilitates awareness of own 'pedagogy of discomfort' – through interrogation of my own values and beliefs – about pedagogy, about myself (e.g. Trahar, in press)

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