

LINKING ACADEMIC AND SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS IN A TEAM TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF TRANSNATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION

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GLOBALISATION AND INTERNATIONALISATION

Globalisation has transformed the economic community. One cannot read a newspaper without reading about a globalised business.

Globalisation has impacted on education in the form of internationalisation. To prepare students for a globalised business world, most countries are trying to bring aspects of internationalisation into their education curricula in some form.



INTERNATIONALISATION OF TEACHER EDUCATION

The most common form of internationalisation within universities is student mobility, usually meaning students will spend a semester of their degree at an overseas institution.

A less common form of internationalisation is where the whole degree programme is shared between two countries.

TWINNING PROGRAMMES

International twinning programmes occur where two or more partner institutions from different countries combine their resources to jointly teach a programme.

Twinning programmes can be taught with both partners teaching wholly in one country, or transnationally, where the students are taught in two countries by lecturers from one or both countries.

The BEd(TESOL) programme that is about to be described is the second type of twinning programme, where students are taught in two countries, by lecturers from two countries.

MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT QUALITY ASPIRATIONS

In an attempt to improve the quality of initial teacher education, the Malaysian government contracted the University of Auckland, as one of five overseas partners, to deliver a twinning degree programme to prepare teachers of English for Malaysian primary (elementary) and secondary schools.

Key Malaysian government objectives were to:

- internationalise teacher education;
- improve the standard of English teaching by utilising best practice from two countries;
- include full immersion in a first language English speaking country to improve the second language competence of graduates;
- Provide professional development for Malaysian lecturers.

BEd (TESOL) TWINNING PROGRAMME

Students accepted for the Bachelor of Education Teaching English as a Second or Other Language (BEdTESOL) twinning programme are educated in both Malaysia and New Zealand.

The students who graduate will receive a University of Auckland graduation certificate.

To enter the programme students must complete an 18 month foundation programme taught in English, in Malaysia, by a Malaysian teachers' college.

BEd (TESOL) TWINNING PROGRAMME

The programme is taught using a 1:2:1 sandwich model:

Year 1 Taught in Malaysia by the Malaysian partner teachers' college.

Year 2 Taught in New Zealand by the University of Auckland.

Year 3 Taught in New Zealand by the University of Auckland.

Year 4 Taught in Malaysia by the Malaysian partner teachers' college.

BEd (TESOL) TWINNING PROGRAMME PRACTICUM

In-school teaching experience practicum components occur in both countries:

Year 1 4 weeks observation in a Malaysian school.

Year 2 2 weeks observation in New Zealand schools.

Year 3 2 weeks teaching in New Zealand school.

Year 4 12 weeks teaching in a Malaysian school.

BEd (TESOL) TWINNING PROGRAMME FEATURES

Particular features of the programme include:

- **In country staff development programmes for Malaysian educators taught by Auckland staff members.**
- **Quality assurance visits by staff members from each country to the institution in the other country.**
- **Provision of dedicated pastoral care and academic support for Malaysian students when in New Zealand.**
- **A cultural visit and social good programme for Malaysian students while studying in New Zealand.**

SELF-MANAGING WORK TEAMS

- **A work team is a group of individuals with shared responsibilities who work interdependently to solve problems or carry out tasks (Guzzo & Dickson, 1996).**
- **Multinational and multicultural work teams are steadily increasing (Adler, 2002).**
- **Cultural attributes are just as important as demographics, personality or mental ability in determining work team success (Kirkman & Shapiro, 2005).**

CULTURAL VALUES

Consciously and subconsciously held set of beliefs and norms – often exhibited in the morals, laws and customs and practices of a society – that define what is right and wrong and specify general preferences (Adler, 2002).

CULTURAL VALUE DIMENSIONS

(After Hofstede, 1980, 2001)

- 1. Individualism-collectivism. Degree to which people prefer to act as individuals rather than as group members.**
 - a) **Individualism:** people care for themselves and their families.
 - b) **Collectivism:** Loyalty to an in-group who are expected to look after everyone.

CULTURAL VALUE DIMENSIONS

(After Hofstede, 1980, 2001)

1. **Power distance. Extent to which a society accepts that power in institutions is distributed unequally.**
 - a) Subordinates are not expected to disagree with supervisors.
 - b) Supervisors are not expected to consult with subordinates.

CULTURAL VALUE DIMENSIONS

(After Hofstede, 1980, 2001)

Uncertainty avoidance. Avoiding uncertain situations by establishing formal rules and expertise and not tolerating deviant ideas and behaviour.

- a) Preference for clear rules and guidance.
- b) Expressed or unexpressed negative dispositions towards difference.

CULTURAL VALUE DIMENSIONS (After Hofstede, 1980, 2001)

Masculinity-femininity. Extent to which dominant values in society are masculine or feminine.

- a) **Masculinity:** assertiveness, performance, success, competition, acquisition of money.
- b) **Femininity:** quality of life, warm personal relationships, care for weak, solidarity.

THE BEd(TESOL) TEAM

There are 6 teams because each partner institution has a team:

1. Malaysian teachers' college
2. Macquarie (Australia)
3. QUT (Australia)
4. Auckland (NZ)
5. Victoria (NZ)
6. MARJON (UK)

THE BEd(TESOL) INSTITUTION TEAM

Each BEd(TESOL) institution team is complex, comprising:

1. Director(s) **1-2**
2. Teams of lecturers, in Auckland's case, teams from Arts and Education faculties. **20+**
3. Teams of faculty support staff comprising:
 - a) Faculty office manager **1**
 - b) Academic support staff from each faculty **2**
 - c) Pastoral care support staff from each faculty **2**
 - d) Cultural and social programme organisers
 - e) Practicum manager **1**
 - f) Enrolment person **2**
4. International Office staff (matriculation/visa/serious pastoral care issues). **3**
5. Uniservices staff (business management). **3**

Total 35+ staff per institution directly involved for a significant period of time. 200+ across all institutions.

BEd(TESOL) TEAM CULTURAL VALUES THAT MAKE IT WORK

Distributed leadership
Ownership of tasks
Respect for each others' roles
Co-operation with each other
Flexibility in roles and work flow
Inter-cultural awareness
Friendly relations with Malaysian partners
Pride in the quality of our graduates

BEd(TESOL) TEAM COORDINATION TRADITIONS

Any component that does not work prejudices programme outcomes, so:

1. Everyone has a voice at their level that is valued, including students.
2. Everyone involved has direct access to the Director(s).
3. Success is celebrated (student dinners, trips, visits to Malaysia where possible, Christmas, special graduation ceremony in Malaysia, welcome and farewell parties).
4. Malaysian culture and customs are respected (prayer rooms, Fridays, holidays).

BEd (TESOL) TWINNING PROGRAMME COORDINATION

Coordination systems structure:

1. Director level. Overall programme coordination meetings in Malaysia of Australian, Malaysian, New Zealand and British Directors twice a year at 2 levels: institutional level and whole programme level.
2. New Zealand institution level. Regular management/Board of Studies meetings with directors, lecturers, support staff, Uniservices and students.
3. Support staff level.
 - a) Regular meetings between Uniservices and support staff to plan cultural events.
 - b) Meetings of Director(s) with support staff as needed (twice a week on average).

KEY STUDENT TEACHER BENEFITS FROM THE BEd (TESOL) TWINNING PROGRAMME

An independent programme evaluation was comprehensive and resulted in a detailed report that totalled more than a hundred pages. Significant positive outcomes for Malaysian student teachers included:

- academic attainment in courses at the overseas universities significantly higher than the overall average results for mainstream domestic students in the overseas universities, with performance improving from year one to year four;
- formative cultural experiences while overseas;
- significant growth in student teacher mastery of the English language, both written and oral, these outcomes also being supported by the Malaysian lecturers.

KEY STUDENT TEACHER BENEFITS FROM THE BEd (TESOL) TWINNING PROGRAMME

Other positive outcomes for student teachers included:

- Malaysian lecturers saw the student teachers returning from their overseas sojourn as being very confident, articulate, approachable, amicable and exhibiting a service attitude;
- student teacher attrition rates of less than 1% were significantly lower than for domestic programmes in both Malaysian and overseas universities.

KEY MALAYSIAN STAFF BENEFITS FROM THE BEd (TESOL) TWINNING PROGRAMME

Notable capacity building benefits for the Malaysian teachers' college, for transfer into domestic programmes included:

- improved understanding of other education systems;
- improved understanding of their own tertiary and compulsory schooling education systems;
- improved assessment of student learning;
- better understanding of important teacher education programme structural features;
- improved practicum organisation;
- improved quality assurance procedures, considerably more robust than for domestic programmes in the participating universities.

KEY NEW ZEALAND BENEFITS FROM THE BEd (TESOL) TWINNING PROGRAMME

Notable capacity building areas for the New Zealand university included:

- improved staff understanding of Malaysian culture and educational imperatives;
- greatly improved staff understanding and acceptance of things Islamic;
- adjustments to university regulations to include acceptance of difference working in another culture and time zone;
- improved New Zealand domestic student understanding and tolerance of difference, particularly in relation to Islamic countries;
- many personal transnational friendships.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BEd (TESOL) TWINNING PROGRAMME CASE STUDIES

1. Teaching English to indigenous Malay Orang Asli students.
2. Teaching English to lower socio-economic students in a large Malaysian city.
3. Some high achieving BEd(TESOL) graduates are now lecturers in Malaysian universities.

SAMPLE ISSUES TO CONSIDER FOR TWINNING PROGRAMMES OF THIS NATURE

1. Differences between tertiary education systems in the two countries:
 - a) University regulations will differ and can be compromised;
 - b) Pedagogical differences include the role of tutorials, tests and examinations;
 - c) Student learning styles can differ, such as asking questions, being given specific guidelines, time management.
2. Cultural and religious differences such as prayer times, national celebrations.

SAMPLE ISSUES TO CONSIDER FOR TWINNING PROGRAMMES OF THIS NATURE

3. Participating staff time.
4. Need for rapport between participating staff members in both countries, and within each institution.
5. Importance of pastoral care support when students are overseas.
6. Financial implications.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS FROM THE BEd (TESOL) TWINNING PROGRAMME

Overall, the 1:2:1 sandwich programme design was commended as leading to learning outcomes for both students and staff members that were significantly more positive than for mainstream domestic programmes in both participating countries.

The team approach was deemed the most significant single factor in ensuring the success of the programme.



The result of successful team work

QUESTIONS?

Thank you for attending this session.

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