



Teaching you, teaching me: Onshore & offshore international students' collaboration & support of Australian transnational academics

ISANA 2015

Dr. Kath Lynch

What is TNE

Transnational education is 'all types of higher education study programmes, or sets of course of study, or educational service (including those of distance education) in which learners are located in a country different from the one where the awarding institution is based.'

(UNESCO/Council of Europe Riga, 6 June 2001)

Unique aspects of the research design

- Focus on fly-in fly-out academics
- National study, 20 Australian universities
- Diverse disciplines, partners and countries
- Academics, AD, observations, document review.

Findings: Academics Preparation

Formal

- Low priority, ad hoc, poor quality, pre-departure

Informal

- Colleagues
- Self-preparation
- *International students*
- Discipline team-based academics and TNE partners.

Context: Academics and international students

The lack of training in teaching students from different cultural backgrounds has not helped matters, and lecturers understandably often feel the demands placed on them are unreasonable.

(Ryan, J., 2002)

Context: Offshore students and academics

‘... students were tolerant of lecturers’ cultural naivety and appreciative of their efforts to adapt.’

(Lyn Hoare, 2012, p.238)

International students *prior to departure*

Students in a class setting

“When we are in class and focussing on a particular country it’s a chance for me to learn because they are the experts”.

Exchange students

“I invite a few exchange students to meet for coffee to help me prepare, to know what to expect, a few greetings, that kind of thing”.

Doctoral students

“In discussing their research and how it will play-out for them on the ground collecting data ... we’re able to share certain kinds of understandings which inevitably influence your own mindset”.

International students *offshore*

Formal Evaluations

Cultural appropriateness, and evaluations relatively recent.

Inside the Classroom

“I had to learn to stop being so suspicious (e.g. drink, Indian food)
If you take a step back from the content and the formality, then I think
humour helps the students to relax, which then helps me.”

Outside the classroom

“There are a squillion students on campus and if you want to eat you
just have to watch and learn and engage.”

International students and *returning home*

“Now , I’ll ask my international students back in Australia about things I experienced when I was teaching overseas, things I didn’t quite understand.”

“It is like I see things in tutes and labs back in Australia that I didn’t see before, I mean, how international students are acting.”

“Well I think I’ve developed more of an understanding ... I’ve become more empathetic towards the students perspective that’s for sure. I think I share more with all my students now, I’m a better communicator and educator.”

Conclusion

'I know what it feels like to be the other.'

References

Colourbox graphics - <https://www.colourbox> via free account

Council of Europe, 2001 *Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education*, Riga, Latvia

Hoare, J. 2006 *So Near and Yet So Far: An Ethnographic Evaluation of an Australian Transitional Education Program*. Doctoral thesis, University of Melbourne, Melbourne

Ryan, J. 2002 *University Education for All: Teaching and learning practices for diverse groups of students*. Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Ballarat, Ballart