

The International Classroom



How to transform an international educational practice into an Intercultural Classroom?

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Associate professorship
Cross Cultural Understanding

teacher Intercultural Studies

Academy for Leisure

doctorate study on the
International Classroom

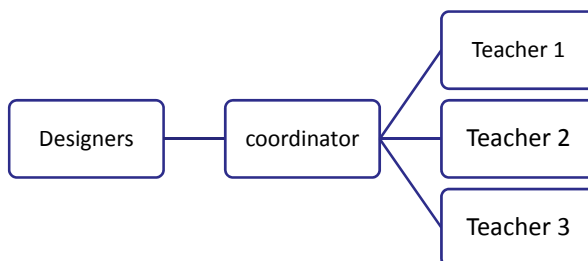


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The context of the study



- English taught professional BBA bachelor
- 360 students (year 1 to 4) of which 26% is international
- Predetermined curriculum
- Project group based
- Teachers are not automatically designers (team-teaching)



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Different approaches



1. Instrumental orientation: focus on means

- English
- Having international students and staff
- intercultural competences will be automatically acquired



2. Integral process-based orientation: focus on goals

- Learning outcomes are integrated
- Facilitating co-creative intercultural learning processes



International Practice into Intercultural Classroom



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based on: Allan (2003), Mestenhauser (2006), Leask (2012), De Wit (2012), VH&VSNU (2014)

The Intercultural Classroom



Its main aim is that through interaction knowledge, ideas and theories from multiple cultural contexts are shared, explored and scrutinized (***intercultural engagement***) in order to generate new knowledge and action within disciplines and professional practices (***collaborative knowledge building***)



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based on: Platenkamp (2007), Gesche & Makeham (2008), Singh & Shrestha (2008) Leask (2009/ 2012)

Lecturers are the key

- Application differs in professions and across disciplinary groups.
- IC needs to be developed within the context of the study programme.
- This requires involvement of teaching staff.



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based on: Leask (2012), Nuffic (2014a,2014b)

Participatory Action Research

Overall objective: How to transform this international educational practice into an Intercultural Classroom?

12 participants: mix of perspectives:

- Dutch and international programme
- Senior and junior teachers
- Designers, coordinators and teachers
- Dutch and international backgrounds

Three phases:

Phase 1: exploring the current educational practice

Phase 2: designing and implementing interventions

Phase 3: key elements for sustainable change



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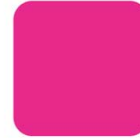
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Underlying views teachers



In what way do teachers recognize cultural diversity?



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Process of Intercultural Development

realize

- Translating it into actual behaviour and actions
- Third culture building

reconcile

- Learn with others
- Valuing different cultural perspectives

respect

- Learning from others
- Understanding the different cultural perspectives

recognize

- Learn about others
- Becoming aware of cultural differences

based on: Hoopes (1981), Bennett (1986), Casrnir (1999), Trompenaars (2012)

How teachers view cultural diversity in their class

"I see students as the same in which I need to pour knowledge"

"I only know what nationalities my students have, but I don't know about their cultural backgrounds"

"I only see the Dutch culture"

"I do see different personalities/ types of students"

"I see so much different cultural perceptions emerge in my class that I sometime don't know what to discuss and what not to discuss"

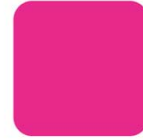


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Underlying views teachers



**In what ways are teachers
dealing with cultural diversity?**



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Ways to manage cultural diversity

ignored

- cultural diversity is irrelevant or should be fused together into one homogenous culture
- assimilation of all students in the preferred dominant white model.

minimised

- culture diversity causes problems or threats which need to be managed to avoid or limit negative impacts
- tendency to “exoticize” international students and treat cultural identities as fixed.

utilised

- cultural diversity is an opportunity for learning and generating synergy
- be recognised as a student-centred approach. Students get engaged in a process of dialogue to stimulate critical thinking

based on: Schneider & Barsoux (2003), Warren (2005), Seymen (2006), Adler & Gundersen (2008),

How teachers deal with cultural diversity



Ignorance

I do not have a real vision on it, aren't we just talking about teaching in general?

Conscious ignorance

I cannot use cultural diversity because I do not have enough knowledge.

Assimilation

We are cloning the students, BECAUSE...

Adaptation

I try to / I do take into account (cultural) differences by adapting my behaviour, BUT...



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How teachers deal with cultural diversity



Including examples from abroad

As a teacher I (can) ask students about their international examples, BUT...

Building on significant different cultural perspectives

There are so much opportunities to build on the cultural diversity present in class and to use students' cultural input to generate knowledge BUT...

The power of the teacher

I realised how much power I have as a teacher which students I empower.



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Changes the game



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Underlying educational beliefs

In what way do teachers view teaching the students?



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Educational ideologies

Expert

**curriculum-as-product*
**the aims and objectives movement*

- Reproduction and transmission of absolute truth
- Controlling the educational environment
- Designing and teaching are divided roles

Developmental

**curriculum-as-process*
**learner centred ideology*

- A continuous development experience of the individual in which the content is never taken for granted
- Meaningful learning experience
- More power and autonomy for teachers

Co-creative

**curriculum-as-praxis*
**the curriculum as a dynamic and interactive process of learning*

- Transformative view: empower students in becoming effective members of society
- Knowledge is critiqued and re-constructed
- Power is more equally distributed among the teacher and learners

based on: Grundy (1987), Kelly (2004), Fraser & Bosanquet (2006), Schiro (2013)

All three ideologies are reflected

Expert

- Pouring knowledge into the heads of students.
- I think that students would not see me as a good teacher if I don't give the answers to their questions.

Developmental

- Solving the puzzle together: students asked a lot of critical questions to each other.
- My colleague changes the class based on students' needs, I should do that more.

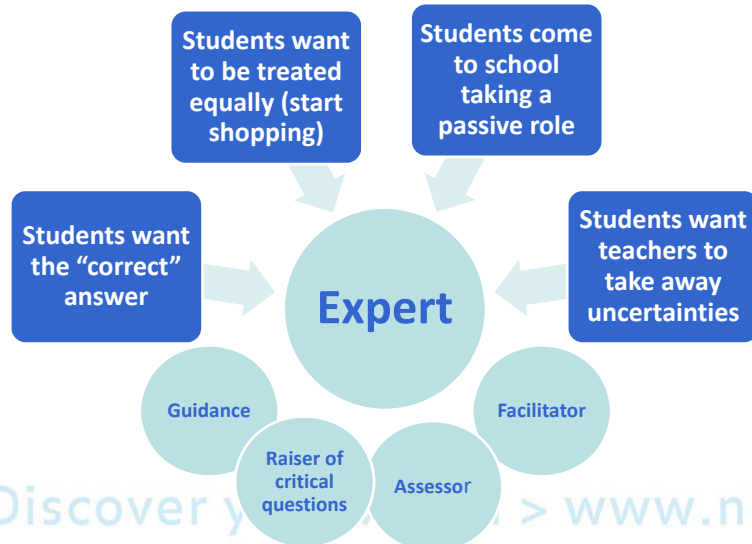
Co-creative

- I see the classroom as a lab: a safe place where you can experiment
- Challenging to take it a step further



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The power of the students



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Team-teaching is prohibitive

- Room teachers have depends on the approach of the coordinator

"my role is to be the supervisor, dot, and live up to that role"
"great opportunity emerged, but the manual indicated that..."

- Teachers are expected to be generalists
- Staff meetings



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It is exhausting

Let's go back to teaching now.

Focus on the content (check and control) makes me immune to the process.

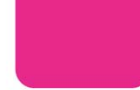
Although the workshops were designed that I take a facilitating role, I explain and teach a lot (know-it all).

It brings unpredictability so it increases uncertainty for teachers -> you need to dare to do it

Teaching this subject is the job I get paid for: so don't waste time on doing things in your class we did not agree on (Dutch pragmatism).

IC is currently an addition: it depends on how much time you have left.

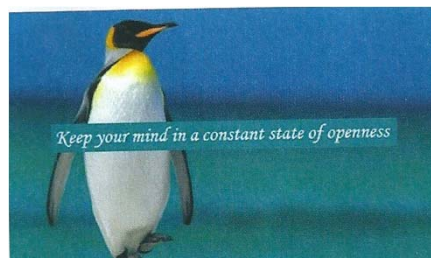
Students do not currently see the necessity/ relevance.



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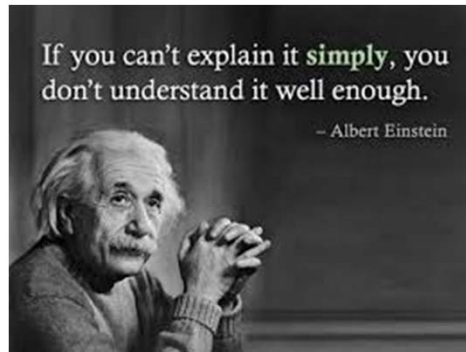
What needs to be changed?

- Gain and share more perspectives/ knowledge both individually and as a team.
- Gain more knowledge from the students.



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What needs to be changed?



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What needs to be changed?

Teachers need to be specialist chameleons



"we should claim our differences"



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What needs to be changed?



Ceci n'est pas une pipe.



Be stubborn
about your
goals, and
flexible about
your methods.



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Any questions?



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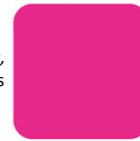
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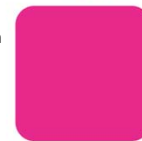
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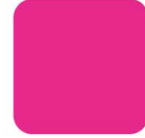


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