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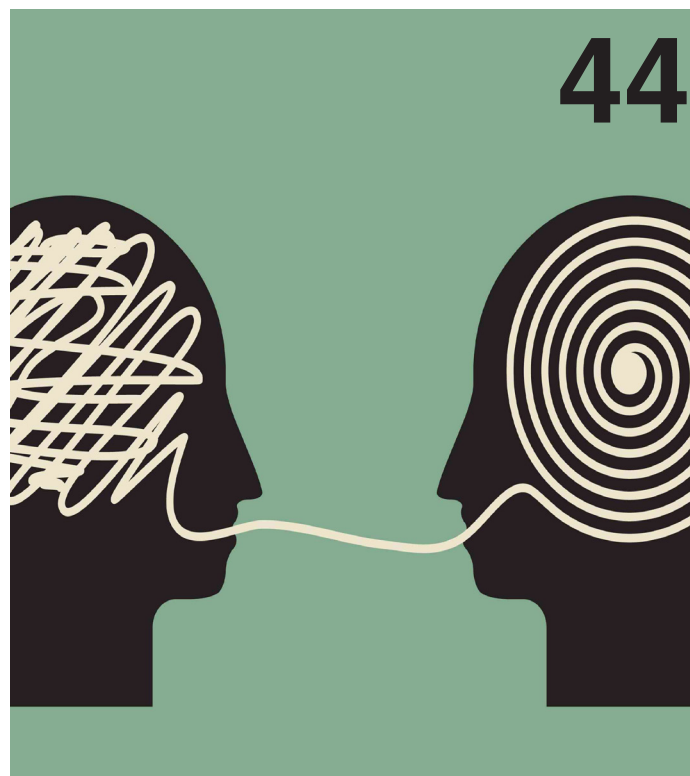
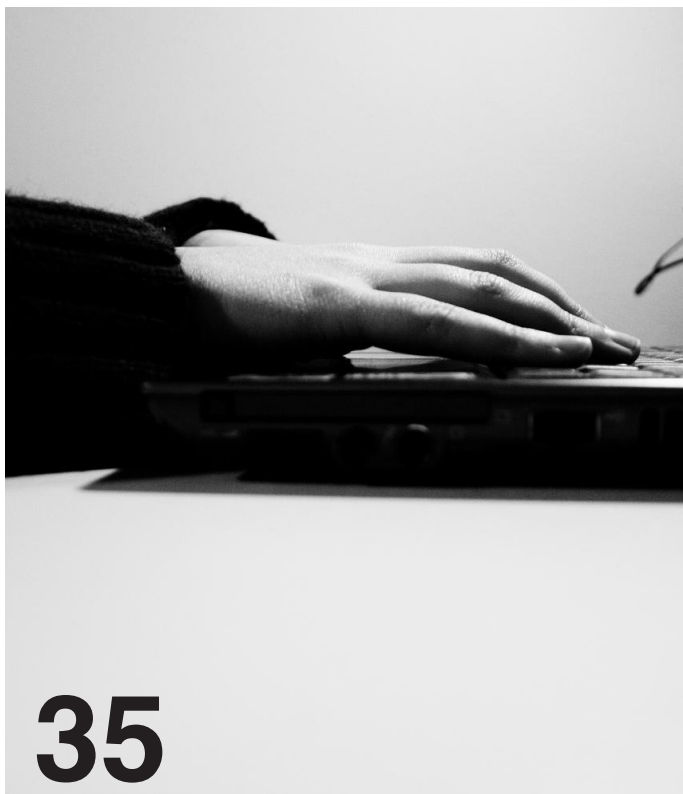
Collected
Essays on
Higher
Education

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Editorial Committee Introduction

Welcome to Issue 2 Volume 2 of *The IAFOR Academic Review*. In this edition we, the editorial committee, bring together a selection of the most interesting contributions from our Education conferences, with respect to discussion surrounding Higher Education and Learning. In many educational settings and contexts throughout the world, there remains an assumption that teachers are the possessors of knowledge, which is to be imparted to students, and that this happens in neutral, impartial and objective ways. However, learning is about making meaning, and learners can experience the same teaching in very different ways. Students (as well as educators) are part of complex social, cultural, political, ideological and personal circumstances, and current experiences of learning will depend in part on previous ones, as well as on age, gender, social class, culture, ethnicity, varying abilities and more. The papers selected by the editorial committee for this special edition certainly reflect the international, intercultural and interdisciplinary approach that lies at the heart of both IAFOR and the global goals of Higher Education that we both work and live in as career academics.

Sincerely,

Michael Liam Kedzlie

Editor

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Contributors

Jeannie Herbert (AM) is Foundation Chair of Indigenous Studies at Charles Sturt University, Australia. Following a long career as a teacher, guidance officer and educational administrator and manager, she has, during the past two decades in the university sector, established a reputation for strong leadership and innovative thinking in Indigenous Education. Professor Herbert was awarded an Australia Medal in the 2012 Queen's Birthday Honours for her work in education, particularly through improvements to educational outcomes for Indigenous Australians. Her current research focus is education/research as a tool of empowerment for Indigenous peoples.

Steven L. Rosen is an associate professor teaching American Studies in the Department of Intercultural Studies, Prefectural University of Hiroshima, Japan. His main area of teaching and research is American business history, and also U.S. economic history. He is also interested in the changing role of American business in the global market place. In the paper outlined in this edition Steven Rosen postulates that traditional business education in America through most of the 20th century has aimed at providing tools for short-term profit maximization within the context of the vertically integrated corporation.

Steve Talbot, James Johnson and **Alan Reeves** of The University of the West of Scotland, UK, have an interest in higher education trends, particularly those affecting socially excluded groups. Their current research interests include economics teaching in higher education and the socio-economic

impact of the co-operative business model. Together they have published several refereed articles and attracted funding into research on social exclusion and higher education. In their paper “Widening Access or Narrowing Student Choice? The Re-Emergence of Elitism in the UK Higher Education System”, the authors reveal how higher education systems in many parts of the world have struggled to reconcile falling state support with widening access and increasing participation of previously excluded groups.

Darya Loyola researches at University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne in the Directorship of International Relations where she has been working for a number of years within the context of international relations of higher education in China, Russia and France. During this time she has been observing the process of internationalisation in these very diverse contexts and educational systems. Ms Loyola is currently writing her doctoral thesis focusing on the public policy changes driving the current era of the internationalized markets within higher education. In her paper “French Higher Education Culture Changes and the Internationalization Strategies of Universities (Field Research)”, Ms Loyola reveals how France is following the global trends of internationalising higher education. Her research shows how both governments and institutions work on their policy approaches to promote their tertiary education system abroad and it needs to make its “offer” more attractive to gain a competitive advantage over other foreign universities and tertiary education systems. She postulates that the competition is now driven by the world-recognised American and British institutions and boosted by the international rankings, which influence on the institution policies.

Christine Piper is currently a professor in the Construction Science & Management Department at Clemson University, USA. She holds a Doctorate of Project Management from the University of South Australia, a Master’s degree in Construction Science & Management and a Bachelor of Science degree in Architectural Design, both from Clemson University. She teaches in the areas of scheduling, project management, cost control and marketing on the undergraduate and graduate levels. She has completed research in the areas of distance learning and craftworker productivity; developed training/educational programs for the construction industry; and has provided consultative services to various construction companies. **Lori K. Tanner** is the Director of Education, Outreach, and Workforce Development at Clemson University, South Carolina, USA. Prior to the joining Clemson University, Dr. Tanner was the director for the Student Technology Enrichment Program at the University of South Carolina Upstate (USC Upstate). As director, she focused on faculty professional development and student engagement while moving the university to be more technologically fluent. She taught a variety of subjects for the School of Education including literacy, technology, curriculum, and research methods. Dr. Tanner’s research has provided insight and expertise in coordination of curriculum development, technology integration, and support for faculty, staff, and students. **Richard Hartsell** is an Assistant Professor teaching the Foundations of Education Program in the Education Faculty University of South Carolina Upstate, USA.

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Meeting the Challenge of Higher Education: Creating Transformational Spaces that Empower Learners



By Jeannie Herbert, Charles Sturt University, Australia

Introduction

This paper is premised upon the reality of education delivery in a modern world. A world in which we, as educators, must look beyond the learning needs of past students to ensure that our current policies, programs and practices have the capacity to deliver an education that prepares present and future students for meaningful engagement in the productive life of his or her society. But increasingly this is a world in which the old established thinking that determined the boundaries or borders around the social, cultural, economic and political processes that operated within and beyond various national states is evolving, possibly even threatened, by a world that is, quite literally, beyond our experience. The theme for this conference, “Learning and Teaching Through Transformative Spaces” alerts us to the real challenge of the future for us as educators – the need to transform ourselves in order to meaningfully engage with our students and their learning needs.

The paper considers how effectively the creation of transformational spaces might enhance the capacity of Higher Education to meet challenges associated with addressing cultural diversity in ways that enable students from different cultural backgrounds to empower themselves through their university experience. Using the term ‘empower’ is a deliberate ploy here for if we return briefly to the world that many of us know, boundaries or borders have, over time, been used for various purposes including the creation of divisions that could then be used to include some while simultaneously excluding others. Much has been written about how colonialists used borders to take control of the land and resources of others, to subjugate and destroy the culture of the previous inhabitants

and to impose their cultural and economic supremacy in order to dominate those they had invaded (Fong Chua & Poullaos: 2002). But could this be changing in a global world, where new technologies have led to an explosion not only of knowledge but, equally important, its accessibility. Modern media contributes to this accessibility by ensuring we are all aware of the massive changes that could be perceived as breaking down the old World order while simultaneously destroying those borders of exclusion. Amidst the constant noise created by 24-hour news cycles bombarding us with highly dramatic descriptions of catastrophic events, it can be difficult to maintain our focus on the purpose of our work as educators. Yet, it is vital that we acknowledge the chaotic state of our current world for such action highlights the relevance of our work in delivering education that does prepare people to participate effectively in the world in which they live, thus empowering themselves through their education. We must also acknowledge that it is easy to talk about people from culturally diverse backgrounds 'empowering' themselves through higher education. Such words project a dual image of universities opening their door to those who missed out on a university education and of those who missed out, suddenly deciding the time had come for them to go get a university education and build a better life for themselves. Based upon my own life and work experience, I would argue that the reality is somewhat different. Hence, this paper will consider the following questions:

1. Is it important for modern universities to create transformational spaces for addressing cultural diversity?
2. How do people whose families have suffered serious inter-generational education disadvantage, empower themselves through tertiary education?
3. What needs to happen in communicative spaces to enable Indigenous students and /or other colonized groups to engage in transformative learning?

Context for Discussion

The challenges inherent in these questions will be considered within the context of higher education delivery for Indigenous students in contemporary Australia.

Universities in Australia

Any consideration of the modern university in Australia must acknowledge Australia's long colonial history and the reality that, as a British colony, early Australian universities reflected the traditions of the colonizer, hence, were established to ensure upward social mobility to the elite in society. Following the election of the Whitlam Labor Government of the early 1970s, the focus shifted to social justice and the subsequent abolishment of university tuition fees, forced universities to open their doors to students from a diversity of educational backgrounds. Successive Federal Labor Governments, in the 1980s, despite their stated concern for equity, implemented more economically driven policies aimed at ensuring a more competitive Australian workforce (Herbert: 2012). Hence, there has been huge growth in student enrolment, especially of students from equity groups, in Australian universities; a shift to preparing students for employment in the professions; and a need to employ academic staff with professional experience. The need to produce graduates with specific professional competencies has tended to overshadow production of critical thinkers. Governments' commitment to economic rationalism over recent decades has resulted in policy making and subsequent service provision being increasingly dominated by managerial demands around issues of accountability - standards, efficiency and productivity - driven by political masters preoccupied with shaping a world that reflects neoliberal beliefs while maintaining the colonial centre-periphery power structures that underpin capitalism. As a result many academics feel their role, relative to the purpose of universities, has been devalued, their capacity to deliver the relevant, quality education that is their 'raison d'être' is being eroded away and nobody is listening. The resulting discontent means Australian universities may not always be welcoming sites for the disadvantaged student seeking self-empowerment.

Indigenous Australian Student Cohort

Over recent decades, with the expansion of globalization, many who work in universities have experienced increasing student numbers together with increasing cultural diversity in the student body. Working in the field of Indigenous education in Australia, catering for cultural diversity has been the focus of my work over many decades and it is that work experience, as teacher, manager and researcher, that leads me to suggest that what happens in Australian Indigenous education could be seen as a microcosm of wider cross-cultural education environments.

Australian colonial texts, with their references to 'the blacks', 'the savages', 'the Aborigines', implied a oneness, a certain cohesion, but in reality Australia's Indigenous peoples, Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Island peoples, comprised a diversity of groups occupying many distinct lands. There is a paucity of the written record in regard to Aboriginal populations at the time of invasion but various estimates suggest a total population around 750,000

people, with 700 different languages (Australian Museum: 2013). While population recently reached 500,000, few Aboriginal languages have survived.

It is important to acknowledge that, under contemporary Australian law, an Indigenous person is defined as a person of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives. Identification is determined by: descent; self-identification; and community acceptance. In this paper, the term Indigenous will be used to denote Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island peoples and it is their educational experiences, as colonized peoples, that inform any discussion of the potential of

education as a tool of self-empowerment. This is a critical aspect of this paper for Australia's colonial legacy has ensured that education in Australia continues to be influenced by Western values and beliefs (Herbert, 2003: 25-26). Many universities have failed to recognise the 'pervasive and unrelenting persistence of the invasion of Aboriginal Australia' (Dudgeon cited in Herbert, 2003:75), a reality that has long diminished their capacity to deliver education that is empowering for Indigenous students.

Enabling Transformative Education

Finally, having provided a brief insight into the factors that have impacted upon Indigenous students participating in Australian universities, the evidence of recent research will be used to provide a way forward. In recognition of the students' own agency in choosing to participate in the research, this paper will use student quotes to enable student voices to speak out, to share their experiences and insights concerning their engagement in the university. Analysis of those 'voices' will indicate what might constitute a 'communicative space' that enables Indigenous students and/or other colonized groups to engage in transformative learning.

Transformative Education for Culturally Diverse Learners

Transformative education essentially seeks to 'transform' how one views the world and one's place within that world. In his Theory of Transformation Learning Mezirow argues that 'learning is understood as the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or a revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience to guide future action' (1996:162).

Nagata cites Lennox (2005) work around the on-going attempts to define transformation, highlighting her choice of O'Sullivan, Morrell, & O'Connor's (2002) work to provide a tentative definition of integral transformative learning.

Transformative learning involves experiencing a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feeling, and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and permanently alters our way of being in the world. Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self locations; our relationships with other humans and with the natural world; our understanding of relations of power in interlocking structures of class, race, and gender; our body-awarenesses; our visions of alternative approaches to living; and our sense of possibilities for social justice and peace and personal joy (Lennox cited by Nagata, 2005:46).

This shift to thinking about who we are and how we become who we are enables learners to become more aware of issues of social justice and the importance of critically engaging in the discourses surrounding their own identity and their own positionality relative to those discourses (Kemmis: 2000). Such active engagement in their own learning, in the critical reflection and decision-making around who they are and where they wish to be is an essential element of transformative learning especially for culturally diverse students who may have limited experiences of engaging with and understanding the discourses that define their identity and how such identity may have been used to position them within their higher education learning environments (Lennox cited by Nagata: 2005).

Communicative Spaces

This paper considers how the opening up of communicative spaces in universities might enable all learners – researchers, teachers and students – to engage more effectively in an education process that is empowering for all within both individual and collective contexts. This focus aligns with Habermas's views around communicative action and its critical place " as the core concept" (cited by Kemmis, 2000:4) of philosophical modernity.

While such positioning is important, however, Wicks & Reason also stress the importance of what happens right at the beginning, in the discussions and actions that determine what is needed. They cited Kemmis (2001) argument that:

The first step in action research turns out to be central: the formation of a communicative space which is embodied in networks of actual persons . . . A communicative space is constituted as issues or problems are opened up for discussion, and when participants experience their interaction as fostering the democratic expression of diverse views . . . [and as permitting] people to achieve mutual understanding and consensus about what to do . . . (Wicks & Reason, 2009:243).

Relevance Of Transformative Education Practice In Australian Universities

The historical record demonstrates how education has been used to position Indigenous peoples within Australian society and, in the process, created a discourse of 'failure' that continues to permeate Indigenous education both in terms of student achievement and teacher expectations (Herbert, 2003:2012). It also reveals why Indigenous Australians are relative newcomers into the academe.

But, despite changes that began to occur in the 1960s, as a result of the international social and technological changes of the 1950s-1960s, the impact of 170 years of colonial oppression became increasingly evident in the levels of educational disadvantage suffered by Indigenous Australians. Despite the desire to improve the social and economic circumstances of Indigenous peoples and increase access to schools, especially primary schools, education continued to fail Indigenous Australians well into the 1980s. But this decade also marked a real change in the public profile of Indigenous Australians as ideals of self-determination began emerging. The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (NATSIEP), endorsed and implemented in 1990, was a watershed in the history of Indigenous education in Australia, for it was: a) the first policy to deal specifically with education for Indigenous Australians; and, b) the first attempt to connect policy, schools and communities. It failed, however, to address the social environment in which Indigenous students lived and the reality that poor educational outcomes were deeply embedded in societal structures that continued to reflect colonial attitudes and the protection of Centre power (Herbert:2012).

The crucial breakthrough came in 2000 when governments began to recognise that the broader disadvantage suffered by many Indigenous peoples appeared to be affecting the capacity of governments, education providers and students themselves to improve Indigenous educational outcomes. They acknowledged that Indigenous education policy couldn't be developed in isolation from other areas that would likely impact upon the social and economic wellbeing of Indigenous peoples and implemented structural changes to ensure Indigenous peoples' engagement in what is termed a whole-of-government approach to policy development and implementation. This was a critical development as Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2011 census data revealed that Indigenous peoples comprised 2.5 % of the total Australian population and Indigenous students comprised 1.4% of all university enrolment in 2010. Population parity remains a future goal and Indigenous Australians remain significantly under-represented within the Australian system of higher education. It has been difficult for such a small group, to make the diversity of their voices heard.

Implications for Higher Education

While change has been limited and slow, it is encouraging. More significantly, however, change is beginning to occur in higher education with reports of increased:

1. enrolments of school leavers with successful Year 12 completions; and
2. participation of Indigenous students in disciplines other than the arts, humanities, social science and teacher education.

The importance of such change was evidenced in 2012 when for the first time population parity was achieved for Indigenous students enrolling in the first year of medicine in universities across Australia. A small but significant achievement indicating that some Indigenous students are discovering that education can be a tool of empowerment. Upon reflection, these changes representing the emerging reality in Indigenous higher education in Australia, are particularly enlightening for they imply that something transformative may be beginning to take place in certain learning environments or within certain learners. And, there is evidence to support this argument in the small but growing number of qualified:

- Indigenous peoples taking up positions in the professions of law, medicine, engineering, science, accountancy and so on; and
- Indigenous academics, including at professorial level, being employed within Australia's universities.

The following brief consideration of some of the findings from my PhD study into Indigenous success in higher education will be used to consider the potential of higher education to become a site for opening up communicative spaces that encourage learners – researchers, teachers and students – to engage in transformative education. Student voices drawn from my thesis will inform the discussion. Most of the students in this study perceived higher education as the pathway to realising their personal and professional aspirations, creating better futures for themselves and their families and achieving equality with their fellow citizens. Many students talked about their feelings of inadequacy within the university community, identifying lack of English language skills and/or very limited previous school experience as critical factors in their ‘not knowing what to do or how to do it’. Many had no knowledge of university protocols around expected behaviours, where or how to access whatever support they needed or how to deal with racist attitudes from staff and other students.

The Research

The research comprised a small qualitative study of 50 respondents participating in either individual interviews or focus group meetings, designed to explore Indigenous students’ lived experience in relation to their own education. Questions sought reflective responses from participants thus allowing some space for people to make their own choices about the knowledge they wished to share, an important consideration in a study that sought to demonstrate a commitment to processes of decolonization, of healing, of transitioning and transformation as individuals. Interview transcripts were returned to individuals so they could participate in a second interview if they desired to make changes to what they had said. This enabled them to participate in the decolonisation process and engage in their own transformation. Respondents were invited to share their opinions, thoughts and feelings about success and the experiences they considered had enabled them to become university students and/or academic staff. Data was gathered during 2001, in three universities, all of which had Indigenous support units. The following themes - power, knowledge, culture, community, diversity, language, policies and racism – emerged out of the data and were used as analytical tools to examine the university experience.

Research Findings And Implications

The majority of students in this study indicated they came to university to acquire the knowledge and skills they needed to get a better job, in terms of salary and security, thus enhancing their life opportunities. Over 50% of students considered their university studies were enabling them to become more critical thinkers and a similar number believed they were becoming better communicators. While these are vital aspirations for educational empowerment the fact that they can also be transformational is revealed in the following:

Margaret explained that she had come to university, thinking of herself simply as ‘Margaret’ but suddenly she became ‘black’, ‘female’ and ‘disadvantaged’. She was shocked by this and went and talked to the Professor in an effort to work out how to deal with these labels. She also experienced considerable conflict as a result of people in her classes — both lecturers and students — referring to Indigenous peoples in what she considered to be derogatory terms. After putting up with it as long as she could she was finally unable to remain silent.

The word ‘black’ was used really openly and I felt that some students didn’t want to be . . . to participate in your group. I mean it was not done in an ‘in your face way’ but you can read the body language . . . one day, in a group discussion, I got sick of them using the word ‘black’ so I stood up and said, ‘Excuse me, using the word ‘black’ like this upsets me. We’re future social workers, we’re going out to work with different people — Indigenous peoples and ethnic groups. I think that we should be thinking about how to get on with these people, how to relate to them. I think it’s time you left that word ‘black’ out of your vocabulary.’ Then the lecturer turned around to me and said, ‘So, what do we call them?’ I said, ‘Everybody has a name . . . use people’s names and why can’t we refer to Aboriginal people or Indigenous people?’

Ultimately, Margaret’s determination to bring such issues out into the public domain proved transformational for all engaged in that learning space for it forced people to consider their attitudes not only within the context of fellow students but also beyond the university into their future workplace environments and the wider community. Significantly it also caused the lecturer to reflect upon the language she was using within the learning setting and the hidden messages she was conveying as a result. While she did modify her language, she also followed Margaret’s lead and established class discussions to critically reflect upon a range of sensitive issues that could have implications for these students in their future workplaces.

Other Critical Findings

Students in this study identified the following as the most critical factors in enabling them to achieve the outcomes they wanted from their higher education.

1. Access to Indigenous support units. All universities in this study, offered enabling and foundation programs in addition to general pastoral support for all Indigenous students studying in the university. Respondents indicated such units were the most positive form of enabling support universities could give their Indigenous students.

Len, who had attempted two mainstream programs prior to enrolling in the tertiary access program, provided some valuable insights.

When I first came to university, I went straight into a mainstream program. I thought I could handle that. My self-esteem was pretty low and I found it extremely hard to build my confidence. You put in assignments and just get over the line or go into exams and just get through or fail . . . It was just one big struggle all the time . . . coming into the access has made a big difference. I'm getting good marks because I'm getting encouragement and I'm talking with the lecturers because over here they have an interest in their students. In mainstream, no-one cares if you're struggling, it's like 'so what if you drop out!'

A majority of students identified the importance of being able to return to the Centre between lectures, to be with their own people, to feel they belonged. Others talked of feeling proud to be able to bring their non-Indigenous fellow-students over to the Indigenous unit when they wanted to find a place to work together on some aspect of their course. Only two students in this study did not perceive the socialisation aspect of these units as critical to them being able to 'hang in there . . . to survive'.

Essentially, these centres encouraged students to come in and actively engage in discussions with others - students and staff - as a means of enabling them to identify, explore and question what was happening to them and how they might deal with some of the issues they were confronting. Solving their own problems in this way was not only empowering for the individual but also enabled them to move on with minimal disruption to their studies.

2. Encouragement to take responsibility for their own learning. Research respondents revealed that, despite some initial reluctance, they grew to value opportunities where they could participate in formal and informal activities that focused on identifying factors that enabled them to effectively engage in their university learning. That such activities were an important component in building their personal capacity to persist in their studies, was revealed through the number of critical issues they identified including: relationships with teaching staff and other students; language - spoken, written and body; access to tutors; cultural affirmation; racism, and, most importantly, being treated as equals.

Many students raised the inappropriate use of language, by teachers or fellow students, that made them feel culturally excluded and impacted upon their ability to engage. Such concerns did not apply only to spoken language as Margaret explained:

It didn't matter what I did she would write comments all over it. I know I probably didn't have good writing skills but she would write 'you need to go and learn to talk proper English' . . . that sort of thing.

Almost 80% of respondents suggested that the quality of relationships with teaching staff was a critical factor for Indigenous students and, in particular, the capacity of lecturers and tutors to provide support and demonstrate respect for students was considered to be paramount for students seeking success. Yvonne revealed that one of the things that made her feel valued in the university was 'having people willing to listen, having the lecturers make time for me . . . I had a big fear about that. When they gave me their time it made me feel I was worth something'.

While students generally spoke positively about their learning interactions, some revealed how damaging negative experiences could be.

I remember in a first year lecture . . . I put my hand up and asked a question and the lecturer yelled at me that there was no such thing. The lecture theatre was full and she nearly killed me with that. About six weeks later, we had a lecture on the very thing I had asked about. That really killed me. I never had any input into her lectures after that, I wasn't game to speak (Margaret).

I would be asked to explain some aspect of culture...but then they would give the impression that I was just talking a lot of rubbish (Lorraine).

These comments encapsulate the sense of powerlessness that too many students experienced, particularly during their initial engagement in mainstream studies. The use and misuse of power in educational encounters was a frequent focus of discussions involving students and staff in the centres. Ultimately, many of the students in this study attributed their capacity to confront and overcome such issues as having emerged out of their being able to engage in such discussions in a space where they were able to say whatever needed to be said.

Racism could be overt or covert, blatant or subtle:

. . . there were a couple of lecturers . . . no matter how hard I tried, it was never good enough. In my third year . . . I was doing a theory subject and it didn't matter what I did, I'd only get a pass. It was like there was a ceiling put there. Other students would read my assignments and wouldn't be able to see anything different to their assignments yet they would get distinctions and I would get passes . . . I want to believe everybody wants us to succeed but I don't know if that's true. Cross-cultural training should be mandatory for all lecturers (Mary).

Various students were confronted with the dilemma of trying to maintain and validate their own cultural values and knowledges whilst having to learn and appreciate knowledge that was constructed and underpinned by western values. A critical issue for students attempting to incorporate their own culture into behaviour, class discussions, assignments - was the degree to which lecturers, tutors, fellow students might understand or appreciate a different viewpoint. Some found other ways of dealing with such situations as Ben, a law student explained:

Racism is one of those things that people confront when they have to or when it's easy . . . but for Indigenous students, they're still . . . wary of it. They're pretty awake up to the fact that it's there, but often misunderstand the position as far as getting into university. It's still there! That was my biggest — well, you know, you see it outside in the mainstream and you think . . . well it doesn't mean that people who study are any more intellectually-minded than the bloke out on the street who's digging the ditch. When it suits them they will both fall into the same pit. It's a lot to do with peer pressure. We know that and accept it but we also have to confront it when we have to. A couple of years ago, Henry was here - a pale faced bloke. A group of them were criticising him for saying he was an Aboriginal. Next day I gave the four of them a heap of material on Aboriginality. A week later they handed it back to me. They didn't say anything but they stopped calling Henry the 'white Aboriginal'. That's how we dealt with it. Henry was pretty upset but I said, 'It's something we know is there, it's a part of life and the university is just a part of the community so it's no different to life anywhere'.

Conclusion

Based on the evidence of the data, I concluded that the students in this study had, through their very personal revelations concerning the importance of their personal growth in line with their cultural identity, demonstrated their increasing competence to operate within both, or either, western and Indigenous frameworks. I argued that many of these students were seeking to create new discourses rather than simply engaging at the interface to buy into the discourses of the other. They were moving from the margins of the university to take their place at the centre and beginning to articulate what they wanted from the university (Herbert, 2003:257). They were empowering themselves.

It is important to acknowledge that a specific focus of this research was to explore issues around education as a tool of empowerment and whether or not Indigenous students participating in Higher Education programs in Australia, could, in fact, empower themselves through their studies, given that, over the past two centuries, education had failed to deliver on its promise for their peoples. The dialogues presented in this paper illustrate how some of the students in this diverse group discovered that they were able to take responsibility for their own empowerment once they found their own voices. This was relatively easy for those who were articulate individuals - they were simply engaging with different people and situations. For others, however, it was often a frustrating process before they reached the point where they could no longer remain silent, where they had to change their behaviour and engage in a transformational process. Significantly, most of the students who found their voice, discovered that developing the capacity to deal with issues that directly concerned them, in a straightforward, calm manner was highly effective in getting their message across, in being able to engage other learners - their fellow students, tutors and lecturers - in discussions that inspired critical reflection and collaborative problem solving as equals. Ultimately, the reality of these outcomes - Indigenous empowerment and attitudinal change for all learners - proved the value of opening up communicative spaces that encourage learners - researchers, teachers and

students – to engage in transformative learning. These outcomes also demonstrated that having transformed themselves through their engagement in empowering communicative spaces, these Indigenous students had provided the catalyst for a transformation that would enhance the capacity of their university to meet the challenges of creating educational spaces that would empower learners from a range of culturally diverse backgrounds.

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American Business Education: Past, Present, and Future Trends



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Abstract

Traditional business education in America through most of the 20th century has been aimed at providing tools for short-term profit maximization within the context of the vertically integrated corporation. However, starting in the 1970s a number of social and economic historical events have presented inescapable challenges to MBA and other business education programs. The first was the breakdown of Fordism and the Keynesian welfare state in the 1970s followed by the explosion of a new wave of globalization. The second was the Silicon Valley digital revolution of the 1990s with its informal corporate culture and horizontally integrated management style. The third significant event was the collapse of Enron in 2001 which, along with other major accounting scandals, led to the introduction of corporate social responsibility (CSR) education. The global economic crisis of 2008 made CSR education even more compelling, and resulted in critical self-reflection in the field of business education as well as economics. Finally, the impending global environmental crisis has reached such a tipping point that business and business education has moved from an adversarial relationship with environmentalists to a new stance based on win-win strategies. It is the aim of this paper to give a detailed analysis of how all these major historical changes have impacted business education, and further to evaluate to what degree business schools may be undergoing a radical reorientation away from purely capitalist aims to more social contract values.

This paper examines American business education in its historical context. It argues that a paradigm shift is occurring in the business world which can be characterized as a shift away from the traditional trajectory of industrial capitalism and further, that this shift is being picked up by and reflected in modern business education.

This shift includes a new emphasis on sustainability, stakeholder value over shareholder value, and a deepening sense of social contract. This new stance toward business management may replace the old paradigm which conceives of business education as geared primarily towards profit maximization, i.e., short-term, shareholder profit. This has also traditionally included an antagonistic and often exploitative relationship to labor, and has also had an exploitative relationship with the natural environment. This paper will attempt to appraise and evaluate whether this traditional stance is being undermined and whether or not a revolutionary paradigm shift is in fact occurring within American business education today

Business is the most popular major in higher education. Today, over 100,000 MBA's are granted each year in the U.S.; it is indeed the most popular graduate degree in the world. (Datar 2010, p. 18) Furthermore, 25% of all bachelor's degrees in America are in business. (Amdam 2010, p. 594) Business provides the basic functional skills necessary to run a successful enterprise (no small feat to be sure). Business leaders and entrepreneurs have not only altered the world economy in new directions, but have also profoundly altered the contours of society and world culture (for better or worse, is an evaluative judgment outside the scope of this paper). (Walsh 2011, p. 215) Indeed, revolutionary changes in society and economy and technology seems to be moving into two countervailing directions at once; on the one hand, people with graduate degrees in business and economics have, through greed and avarice and in some cases even criminal malfeasance, led us to an economic credit crisis; they have led us down the path of recession and credit crisis. (Tett 2012, p. 307) On the other hand, one only needs to look at list of some of the top entrepreneurs of modern business history to readily realize that the innovative firms they started have affected the contours of our entire social-economic world in highly creative and beneficial ways, through innovative technology and creative global business management.

Michael Dell: in the 1990s he was one of the first to exploit lower transport and communication costs, thus starting us on the path of extended global supply-chains which characterize modern business and economics today.

Howard Schultz (Starbucks): Starbucks has made the traditional 17th century European style coffee house ubiquitous around the globe.

Steve Jobs: facilitated the IT revolution through innovations which brought high level digital communication, entertainment and computing technology for everyone personal use

Mark Zuckerberg: popularized social networking systems (SNS); 1 out of every 12 people on the planet have a Facebook account

Jim Bezos (Amazon): transformed the way we do retail business

Sergey Brin and Larry Page (founders of Google): designed a revolutionary and powerful search engine which has enabled us to retrieve information which previously was unavailable to most mortal men and women.

This is but to name but a few; it's interesting to note that this list, and other lists of key entrepreneurs like Anita Roddick (Body Shop), Sam Walton (Wal-Mart), and Richard Branson (Virgin Group) are business leaders without MBA's or business degrees of any kind. Indeed, the fact that much business innovation has come from people not formally trained in business has not been lost on business educators, who now try to foster innovation and entrepreneurship as an essential part of their curricula. (Datar pp. 256-7)

Historical Excursus: Business Education in the Context of the Rise of Industrial Corporate Capitalism

In the latter half of the 19th century, America entered an era which saw the rise of industrial corporate capitalism on an unprecedented scale (usually referred to as the Second Industrial Revolution). Through new technology and new energy sources based on fossil fuels (oil, and coal) industrial production could attain new levels of extraction and exploitation of both labor and materiel never before seen in the history of mankind. Monopoly capitalism and the limited liability corporation transformed America into the richest nation on earth, a status which it still maintains today. The corporation became the multinational corporation in the 20th century and, sociologically speaking, became (and still is) the dominant institution of our time. (Kelly 2003, p. 57)

In 1881, the prestigious Wharton School of business at the University of Pennsylvania was founded, as a way to provide higher level business skills beyond the commercial science courses being offered at the time; the complexity of the new economies of scale demanded it. (Amdam 2010, p. 584) It was explicitly founded in order to address

the needs of the American industrial revolution—the need for highly qualified business people to manage large corporations in this new economy based on mass production and economies of scale. (Amdam 2010, p. 581)

Ford Motor Company became the richest corporation in the world in the 1920s, and represented a new type of business orientation called Fordism, which was the dominant business paradigm or model in the 20th century, at least until the 1970s. (Kipping 2010, p. 97) This model entails the vertically and horizontally integrated corporation using scientific principles. It was, however, not Ford Motor Co., but Alfred Sloan at GM who developed a management paradigm which heavily influenced American business education throughout the 20th century. In addition to the scientific principles and production style of Ford, Sloan introduced the science of marketing, and perfected a model of the vertically integrated corporation with separate operating divisions all under one roof. (Lamoreaux 2010, p. 41) General Motors became the prototypical multinational industrial firm in America, a symbol of America's corporate prowess.

The emphasis on business education was explicitly profit maximization, and by the 1950's, when the United States became the sole global superpower, business education attempted to perfect a scientific approach to profit maximization, using scientific quantitative methods modeled on the RAND Corp. and other scientific think-tanks. (Walsh 2012, p. 522) A core curriculum emerged with a heavy emphasis on the quantitative functional skills for finance, accounting, logistics, marketing, and in addition to that, micro and macro economics for businessmen. At Harvard, the case study method was introduced as the general method of choice, which became the model for many business schools to use for learning how to apply quantitative models and methods to real life business situations. (Rosett 1982: *passim*) Consequently, the American MBA became viewed by the whole world as the premium qualification for executive management. (Walsh 533)

A major crisis hit the U.S. economy in the 1970's resulting in the breakdown of Fordism and the Keynesian welfare state (and the beginning of the end of powerful labor unions). Business schools, however, were slow or failed to react to the new demands of the global marketplace; there was the aping of Japanese management strategies rather than a real serious attempt to develop new business orientations or conceptual paradigms concerning the foundations of business consciousness. (Kipping p. 100)

In the 1980s, Reaganomics offered a new capitalist ideology, or more precisely, the revival of an old ideology of free market capitalism, but in the guise of a new terminology- the supply-side economics of Milton Friedman: deregulation, privatization, and tax cuts for the investor class (the supply side). In this new ideology, labelled by some "neoliberalism;" the belief that if businesses thrive and GDP grows, all segments of society will benefit because the wealth will "trickle down." Though this theory sounds very charming, in practice, such macroeconomic results were never realized; supporting the investor class through tax cuts and deregulation resulted in greater concentrations of wealth for that class of individuals. At that time (1980s onwards), off-shoring, out-sourcing and a general deindustrialization of American economy led to a downward pressure on wages and the gradual dissolution of labor unions bargaining power. Thus there resulted a shift in wealth away from the working class (who became the working poor), and toward the upper strata of the socio-economic ladder.

So called "trickle-down economics" became a code word for the rise of the business yuppie class in which Adam's Smith classical economic paradigm became reduced to the proposition, "greed is good." The MBA became the new ticket to drink from this well of capital gains (Yau 2012, p. 2); and corporations and people with MBA's generally did well in the 1980s. In 1989, after the Berlin Wall came down, American economic confidence was high, and the American MBA was held in high esteem by business persons all over the globe; other nations began to found business schools based on the American model.

In the 1990s, a technological revolution, the likes of which have arguably never been seen in history, occurred mainly in northern California; the digital revolution which came mostly out of Silicon Valley, transformed the face of the global market place. Silicon Valley venture capital represented a real paradigm shift in many ways. These successful companies were horizontally rather than vertically integrated with a young, casual, intellectual and social conscious orientation. (Graham 2010, p. 360) Many of these start-ups came not from experienced MBA trained executives but from young computer scientists and electrical engineers. Business education was forced to integrate IT skills into their core curricula, but did so without changing the fundamental outlook, which was short-term profit maximization based on scientific-quantitative strategic models. (Walsh 2012)

However, three significant events occurred in the course of business and economic history which reverberated in politics and society and, though at first had little impact on business education, eventually influenced the content

and even mission of business education. The first was political; in 1999 the streets of Seattle erupted in violent protests during the WTO Ministerial Conference. At first this had little or no impact on business education; business schools at this time were still influenced by and operating under the assumption of the economist Milton Friedman, who asserted that it was not the role of the business firm to be a charitable institution; it was the role of government regulation to protect the environment and provide social welfare, not corporations. Their economic and legal obligation was solely toward shareholder profit; Milton's supply-side economic theories (enriching the investor class as a way to achieve maximum GDP growth) indeed influenced business schools throughout the 80s and 90s. The influence of Reaganomics (deregulation, privatization, cutting social welfare supports) was still strong in business circles.

Nevertheless, the WTO protests in Seattle signaled the beginning of the end of complacency, the raising of awareness, that the attitude of neoliberal economic policies (embodied in international institutions like the WTO, IMF and the World Bank) was good for multinational corporations, but not necessarily for the rest of humanity. The dangers of unfettered capitalism were articulated on the television news for all to see; the American public at large started to become more attuned to the relationship between the activities of large multinational corporations and three detrimental trends: (1) labor exploitation in the third world and developing nations, (2) the increasing concentration of great wealth in the hands of a few nations or individuals, and (3) that much extractive technology was leading to irreversible environmental destruction.

WTO and G7 meeting protests seemed not to have impacted the content or direction of business education in America in any significant way, however, in 2001, an event in the business world did have a seismic effect on business culture and business education: the collapse of Enron. Enron Corporation was listed as the sixth largest corporation in America before it bankrupt in 2001. Along with it, one of America's oldest and most respected accounting firms, Arthur Anderson went out of business, as the result of shady accounting practices, and even outright fraud. This event, and the subsequent collapse of WorldCom, forced a radical reexamination of the way businesses operated in America. (Datar p. 161) Though, from a business point of view, it was primarily an accounting scandal, the Enron scandal led to soul searching about the ethical foundations of the way business was conducted in America, and the way business managers were being taught. A renewed emphasis on CSR and business ethics began to emerge; no longer were such courses relegated to the backburner of the curricula, they became an essential part of a new emphasis on business leadership. Indeed, many of the top business schools today highlight leadership as a centerpiece of their educational mission. (Datar, pp. 86-89)

Finally, the biggest crisis in economic history since the Great Depression occurred in and around 2008, not only with the collapse of the large Lehman Bros. investment bank, but also the near collapse numerous other financial institutions (like AIG), deemed "too big to fail." Credit markets around the world froze due to the collapse of the U.S. housing market, in which banks around the world had invested heavily. "Securitized assets with inflated value was seen as a risk-free way to effortlessly create wealth." (Korten 2013, p. 2) In terms of economic policy, the credit crisis of 2008 resulted in a critical reassessment of the value of deregulation. In terms of business practices, there has been even more soul searching and renewed calls for more training in business ethics and corporate social responsibility (CSR). The spectacle of investment bankers awarding themselves huge bonuses while sinking their own ships, requiring large capital infusions of taxpayer money was becoming unacceptable, not only to the general public, but to teachers at business schools as well.

Thus new courses and a renewed emphasis on CSR emerged in business schools around the world. (Doane 2005, p. 24) However, CSR has been roundly criticized and even condemned from both within and without business education; in no way can be regarded as constituting a paradigmatic shift in business thinking. A clear case in point is Wal-Mart Corp. which has made sustainability a centerpiece of its management strategy, but only because it is good for the bottom line. "CSR strategies may work under certain conditions, but they are highly vulnerable to market failures." (Doane p. 24) In other words, if, at any time, it turned out to be unprofitable, then the firm would turn away from their green orientation in a heartbeat. At best, it gives a false confidence, implying that issues of social ethical issues can be easily fit into a course curriculum which is otherwise orientated to profit maximization; at worst it becomes a kind of window dressing, an excuse for inaction and even a mask for fraud. Indeed, Enron during its heyday was highly touted for having a strong emphasis on CSR and social concerns. "No one could argue that these types of changes add up to a wholesale change in capitalism as we know it, nor that they are likely to do so anytime soon." (Doane p. 24)

A New Paradigm?

“...according to Old Paradigm logic, economic growth will generate the financial assets necessary to correct for related social and environmental harms.” (Korton 2013, p. 3)

The traditional aim of business education is of course, to train students in the basic functional skills necessary to run or management a company. Beyond the core functional skill courses like accounting and logistics, there are other courses which are broader and deeper in that they draw on research from the social and behavioral sciences as well- micro and macroeconomics, human resource management strategy, governance, and entrepreneurship, organizational leadership courses require more than econometric or computational skills. Further, there are a new range of courses in such areas as ethics and globalization, and innovation- courses which go well beyond the purely technical scientific courses of the core curriculum.

Until very recently, in American business education, there was scant attention paid to leadership as opposed to functional skills; in other words, management in its broadest sense over purely business administration. The Yale School of Management in recent years has shifted its curriculum to emphasize the importance of such skills and other schools around the world have followed suit. This has meant “...giving equal weight to instrumental and humanistic aims, rather than casting either as means for the other’s ends. Making the case for authenticity, service, equality, concern for the planet just as fervently as the case for shareholder value maximization. Balancing instruction and assisted reflection, on oneself and on the cultures we live in. Brokering new connections. Stimulating imagination.” (Bennis 2:2005) All of this sounds very much like a fundamental paradigm shift. To what degree have these new paradigm goals been realized? There is no empirical data to support a definitive conclusion on this but some historical trends can be noticed.

The rising importance of these new courses indicates that business schools see their mission as much more than the mere training of profit maximizers (the traditional capitalist aim), and more in tune with what has been termed social contract goals. (Bennis 2005:1) For example, there seems to be a shift in perspective such that business students should not only be trained in issues of regulatory compliance, but in how to contribute to the common good through such things as socially responsible investing and sustainability practices. (HBR Blog, 2012 ‘Unilever’s CEO on Making Responsible Business Work’) However, the question still remains as to whether or not we are witnessing in a truly new paradigm shift away from profit maximization and models for economic efficiency. Such a paradigm shift would, above all else, be focused on creating real value, not merely stockholder value (Hanauer 2014, p. 33) The focus would not be on compliance to regulation so much as cultivating an attitude *a priori* in which regulatory compliance is not even an issue because it would be the intention of the firm to make products or provide services in sustainable and socially beneficent ways. Indeed, the fact that such firms do exist is evidence of a potential paradigm shift in business; that such firms (South West Airlines, Google) are often used as business school case studies suggests that educators, at least, take seriously the notion that a fundamental re-visioning in business management is desirable. Indeed, not only American business schools, but even more so, European MBA programs explicitly advertise themselves as providing the tools necessary to function in the ever changing global market place which includes social contractual goals such as fair trade, sustainability, socially responsible investing, and increasing stakeholder value. (Mangan 2010, p. 2)

Conclusion

It is clear that business education in America and around the world is undergoing some profound changes. Many of the biggest shifts are related to globalization- the nature of the global market place in the digital age where we see many new emerging markets and an ever shifting ground which is requiring business schools to adapt and develop new, more flexible models which move beyond the core functional skills. (Lurie 2009) The new paradigm which has been emerging in the business world for some time, and is beginning to make its way into business education at various levels is a renewed idea of social contract, with an additional conceptualization that nature is sacred. (Eisenstein 2011, p.392 & *passim*) In other words, we are beginning to see a profound and radical sense of social community and essential interconnectedness. (Rifkin 2009, p.503 & *passim*)

A *Harvard Business Review* blog, piece entitled, “Are Business Schools Clueless or Evil?” by Ganpiero Petriglieri, associate professor of organizational behavior at INSEAD, says that that business schools must share responsibility for the “lapses in judgment and unfettered self-interest that wreaked havoc on the global economy and sank people’s trust in corporations.” (Petriglieri 2012) He goes on to point out that there are two camps of critics- one is those who paint business schools as clueless, distracted by academic theories, and a second group whose criticism

is more severe. They see business education as a force of evil, perpetuating an amoral view of the world, peddling theories that support selfish elitism; the only true moral value in the universe of business being the bottom line. In this context, to conceive and experience nature as fundamentally sacred would indeed be a paradigmatic shift for business. “The monetization and commodification of relationships, competition for individual financial advantage, and abandonment of attachments to place are celebrated as contributions to increased economic efficiency and accelerated development progress as defined by growth in GDP.” (Korten 3)

Commitment to sustainability in and of itself does not constitute a paradigm shift if the primary motivation of such policies is maximizing the firm’s profits. It is interesting to note that Unilever’s CEO, Paul Polman admitted that such an integrated (holistic/sacred) business model which his firm has adopted is not the norm. “Nobody has ever really made that public commitment, and nobody has ever really achieved it. Otherwise, the world wouldn’t be facing these challenges.” (HBR Blog 2012) The dominant paradigm in business and business education closes in on itself- “is incapable of self-correction.” (Korten 5) In business education they may indeed teach students how to establish value added partnerships with NGO’s, but what about in the case where there is no cash value for such a partnership, but rather only because it’s the right thing to do based on a radical commitment to the social and environmental commons?

What would then constitute a real paradigmatic shift in business education and business culture? Below is this writer’s formulation:

Old paradigm: exploitation (of labor)

New paradigm: appreciation (no longer seeing labor as deficit or debit on the bottom line, as is the case with most business education)

Old paradigm: technology is designed to extract from nature useable wealth.

New Paradigm: technology is designed to develop in a sustainable way

Business education needs to move beyond the parameters of cost efficiency metrics to a different vision of business education. As noted above, the innovative entrepreneurs listed above who have changed the world, arguably for the better, do not contain any MBA’s! It’s almost as if business education needs to catch up with these business visionaries who are moving us beyond the parameters of an unsustainable paradigm. Rather than seeing personal enrichment as sacred, realizing one’s dependence on and connection with nature (Loy 2007, *passim*) and humanity, and sublimating the quest for one’s exclusive personal gain for the good of the whole, would signal a profound paradigmatic shift.

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Widening Access or Narrowing Student Choice? The Re-emergence of Elitism in the UK Higher Education System



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Abstract

Higher education systems in many parts of the world have struggled to reconcile falling state support with widening access and increasing participation of previously excluded groups. Evidence from the UK higher education system suggests that this tension has led to the re-emergence of a bifurcation of the education system along social class lines. The paper explores the experience of the different categories of UK-university as they manage the changed socio-economic environment in which they operate. Contrary to the aims of much EU policy and the various structural changes introduced within the higher education sector since the 1960s, lessons from the UK experience suggest that a form of elitism has re-emerged in the provision of certain subjects. We show how a combination of market forces, government policy and other developments in the UK higher education landscape may lead to the withdrawal of the key subjects for many vulnerable groups. We look at economics provision across the UK to show how a silent process of differentiation and stratification may take place and that this may be to the detriment of national policies on social inclusion in higher education.

Introduction

Like many EU countries the UK has undergone major structural change to its system of higher education provision. While the nature of the driver for change within individual countries is unique, the main collective force for change is the desire to improve the international competitiveness of the EU region. The desire at the EU level is to replicate the perceived dynamics of the US system of higher education which is deemed to have furnished impressive economic and innovative performance. Trow (2000) casts doubts on the robustness of the resultant European model of the university and its ability to meet the challenges associated with globalisation due to an innate lack of flexibility of governance. Critically for Trow, and others, European models of Higher Education are characterised by high levels of government involvement, unlike in the US where market forces play a much larger role (Huisman, Meek and Wood 2007). The reliance on markets as an arbiter of US higher education provision reflects the significant structural change at two key junctures in its past¹ when it was necessary to rapidly expand higher education provision and the legacy of this change is deemed to have bestowed the competitive advantage of flexibility and adaptability on US universities. As Trow (2000) notes, the structural changes reflected wider societal change within the US (e.g. abolition of slavery) and consequently the ability of US universities to act autonomously in terms of provision and enrolment. The result is that the US is traditionally seen as more responsive to changes in the market for education and is able to pioneer new access arrangements such as credit transfer and articulation with high schools.

To emulate the success of the US higher education system and to meet the increased challenges of globalisation, the role of European universities has been gradually changing over the past 30 years. To better reflect the US model a conscious effort has been made to combine the traditional university missions of research and teaching with a new, third mission. EU universities now have an explicit mission of socio-economic engagement (Nelles and Vorley 2010) aimed at unlocking the knowledge within universities through a partnership between government, industry and Higher Education (Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff 2000). This utilitarian vision of the university mission has been heavily supported by national (Mawson 2007) and supranational bodies, especially within the EU (EU 2006, EU 2008) and further afield (OECD 2007). The move to a more utilitarian approach was an EU-wide phenomenon with the creation of the European Higher Education Area and compatible overarching frameworks for qualifications that were part of the Bologna process instigated in 2000, although Teichler (2008) questions how successful this has been. Adding to the momentum towards a utilitarian approach to the Higher Education sector, the 2007 Lisbon Declaration of the European Universities' Association recognised the concerns of universities by stating the need for university autonomy but deferred to the 'managerial and economic priorities' of governments (Anderson 2010). Traditional university activities of research, teaching and knowledge transfer activities are deemed to become more effective at the socio-economic level if universities are encouraged to engage in each sector of the triple helix model: the knowledge society, economic competitiveness and social cohesion. Explicitly, the overall aim of EU higher education policy is to make the European university system a model of best practice by ensuring that there are sufficient resources, effective networks and increased outreach and international appeal of European universities (The Role of the Universities in the Europe of Knowledge COM 2003/58).

In the UK there has been a gradual move towards a triple-helix-type model for higher education. In 1963 the Robbins Report (Committee on Higher Education 1963) paved the way for the creation of the third mission by recognizing the need to overcome the damaging effects of an overly-differentiated provision of post-school education by creating so-called chartered universities (i.e. new non-traditional universities). In 1992 the Further and Higher Education Act recognised the need to widen further socio-economic engagement in higher education by removing the distinction between universities and polytechnics/colleges. As a consequence, the UK Higher Education sector has become an intricate pattern of institutions able to perform the functions of a university, Tight (2011) with the result that the UK a more diverse Higher Education system than many European countries (Huisman, Meek and Wood 2007). While education is a devolved responsibility in Scotland, the Robbins and Dearing changes were fully adopted. This top-down approach to higher education reform resulted in a small country (Scotland) having nineteen university-type institutions (Universities Scotland 2012) and appearing to offer US-style flexibility and improved student choice. Allied to these changes there was a further weakening of the demarcation between higher education and further education through a series of articulation agreements between some universities and the further colleges. The result is that in Scotland 17 per cent of higher education-level students attend programmes delivered at Further Education institutions (Mullen 2010) leading to further

¹ Two key junctures were the end of the civil war and the early part of the twentieth century.

education becoming more like US community colleges rather than old style technical colleges (Gallagher 2006). For the purposes of this paper it is the nature of the articulation between further education colleges and the universities that is the main area of contention when looking at issues of social inclusion.

Is there evidence of widening access?

Scottish policies designed to widen access to higher education to previously excluded groups have been a success. In 2009, the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) introduced the 'Framework for Equality, Access and Inclusion' which set out and summarised the actions of the various stakeholders at national, regional and local level tasked with assisting in widening access but particularly to improve access to higher education. Data appears to confirm this policy has been successful, with around 20 per cent of entrants to undergraduate study entering universities through the articulation route whereby students study Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework² (SCQF) Level 7³ (Higher National Certificate) and Level 8 (Higher National Diploma) at a further education college before continuing to Level 9 (degree) at a degree awarding institution (Universities Scotland). SCQF Levels 7 and 8 define the first two rungs on the Scottish higher education ladder and by offering Levels 7 and 8 further education institutions play an important role in the pursuit of wider access. Figures show that in 2010-11, 185,290 Scottish students studied at Scottish higher education institutions while a further 37,220 students attended further education colleges to study for Higher National Certificates (17,968) and Higher National Diplomas (19,252). Thus around 17 per cent of students at Levels 7 and 8 attended a further education institution. (The figure for higher education is around 20 per cent higher if non-Scottish students are included but it is difficult to get a precise picture due to the way the data are gathered (Croxford, Howieson and Steele 2011) However, as will become clear, taking the further education route to Levels 7 and 8 before attempting to complete a degree at university means that much of the richness of higher education landscape will be denied to those on this route. In addition, it is the socially excluded who traditionally take this route and therefore have a much more limited higher education horizon than those accessing higher education with school-based qualifications.

Impact of policy

While access to higher education has undoubtedly been widened, the real issue when discussing social inclusion is whether all groups have the same access to the whole higher education landscape. The nature of the issue is more subtle than gross numbers of the socially excluded actually attending university. There is a silent dynamic at work that operates on the demand for higher education and on the supply of higher education which leads to a bifurcation of the sector to the detriment of disadvantaged groups. The result is a higher education system characterised by product differentiation among universities and access stratification on socio-economic class grounds among students (Gallagher 2006). While the emergence of differentiation and stratification in the UK higher education sector has been established (see for example Gallagher 2006, Croxford and Patterson 2006) but what have not been identified before are the details of the silent dynamic at work. We present evidence that may be of interest to universities in other countries on the details of the silent dynamic and how it appears to work against the aims of policies designed to alleviate social exclusion.

The relevance of widening access policies to the provision of university programmes is that if population groups previously under-represented in higher education have aptitudes and programme preferences that are systematically different from those of the groups that have traditionally populated the UK higher education system, and students entering universities through access programmes tend to study at certain types of institutions, then the pattern of demand faced by new universities will change and will also be different from the pattern of demand faced by old universities, with some programmes being a lot easier to fill than others. It is clear that students from lower socio-economic classes are much more likely to attend new universities and, to the extent that not having traditional academic qualifications will be reflected in different university programme preferences, will want to study other subjects.

² The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership promotes lifelong learning in Scotland.

³ For a detailed explanation of the academic framework and the respective positions of HNC and HND level qualifications in the Scottish higher education framework see:

[http://www.scqf.org.uk/content/files/SCQF_Level_Descriptors_for_website_-_Feb_2010\(2\).pdf](http://www.scqf.org.uk/content/files/SCQF_Level_Descriptors_for_website_-_Feb_2010(2).pdf)

As the discussion so far indicates, the number of students attending higher education has increased and the role of the further education sector has helped provide a pathway for many students new to higher education. However, a major imperfection in the UK system means that 'some students are disadvantaged at school compared to pupils at private schools and cannot get to the university they deserve' (Simister 2011:135). Gallacher (2006) shows how a dual process involving social stratification and differentiation by higher education institutions appears to militate against the erosion of this imperfect system preventing the establishment of a more meritocratic system. We now look at the experience of a subject which has traditionally been viewed as one of the more difficult subjects and one requiring relatively high entry qualifications.

The emergence of differentiation in economics provision in Scottish higher education and the role of university autonomy

Recent research by the authors into the current state of economics degrees within the UK found that something quite profound has happened and that this had wider societal implications: economics had become an elite subject whose provision is restricted to a few elite universities. To help explain this it is possible to view economics provision as having two distinct elements, teaching (named economics degrees) and research. Analysis of the data reveals that old universities were much more likely to offer an undergraduate degree in economics than new universities and the difference is prominent. Indeed, the best predictor of whether a university offered an economics exit title was almost certainly whether it was categorised as old or new. The data set includes 65 new and 54 old universities. Approximately three quarters (48 out of 66) of the universities offering single programmes in economics, business economics or financial economics were old. In contrast, three quarters of new universities did not offer an economics exit award in 2011-2012.

In terms of named degree programmes and research, economics has disappeared in all post-1992 institutions in Scotland. So-called Chartered universities (those established under Robbins in 1963) while still offering economic degree programmes have to some extent retreated from economics research defined as entry in the Economics and Econometrics Unit of Assessment of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). Only the four ancient universities maintain the duality of economics provision and economics research as defined above. This is an important point as this duality maintains the elitism of these universities and hence the future employment prospects of their students. The consequence of structural change in higher education is quite clear: economics has become an 'elite' subject increasingly the preserve of the ancient universities who draw their students mostly from the most advantaged sectors of society. Shattock (2001) identifies a set of themes that support this structural divide between what he calls the 'old' universities and the post-1992 institutions with one outcome being the retreat of some subjects from the latter group. Such research supports the notion of a process of rationalisation, whereby some institutions abandon certain subject areas and our research confirms that in Scotland this process has impacted on economics provision. A similar pattern emerges for the UK as a whole, with the best predictor of whether a university offers an economics title being whether it is old or new, with 75 per cent of old institutions offering economics degrees in contrast to only 25 per cent of post-1992 institutions.

Lessons for others

A key lesson for universities in other countries is the role played by universities in this process of rationalisation. In Scotland as in the rest of the UK, universities enjoy a high degree of autonomy in terms of deciding what provision they will offer prospective students. The continuing autonomy of universities appears to have resulted in a degree of rationalisation of economics beyond what any government would have seriously been able to propose without a major campaign of resistance by the economics profession. It is this autonomy which has enabled the re-emergence of a differentiated higher education landscape that was supposed to have been removed in the UK by the structural changes of 1963 and 1992. The interesting aspect is the emergence of clear differences in the extent of economics provision along the structural divide: all ancient and two chartered universities (Dundee and Stirling) had economics programmes and economics research, two of the chartered universities had economics programmes but no economics entry in the research assessment exercise (Strathclyde and Heriot-Watt) and finally all of the post-1992 institutions had no economics programmes and no economics research.

As mentioned earlier, the key issue is not access to higher education (access has been widened) but the gap between the most advantaged and the least advantaged in gaining admission to the ancient and chartered universities. Because many post-1992 institutions have abandoned key subject areas it is to be expected that job prospects and access to the professions will be constrained. Scotland is not alone in this as a similar picture seems to emerge from England. According to the Office for Fair Access (OFFA), while there have been substantial increases in participation in higher education among the least advantaged 40 per cent of young people over the last fifteen years, the participation rate among the same group of young people at the top third of universities has remained

virtually unchanged over the same period (Office for Fair Access 2010). Moreover, the most advantaged twenty per cent of young people were around six times more likely than the least advantaged group to attend in the mid-1990s and this increased to around seven times by the mid-2000s. Thus, the evidence suggests that strategies to improve access have only been partially successful as equality in participation has not been achieved. This is our main thesis: that access to higher education has improved but it is not equal access to all subjects; for many students from disadvantaged backgrounds the door to economics remains almost closed. This raises some serious issues for policymakers.

Changes described in this paper would also seem to reflect a change in the nature of higher education, particularly in the new universities, where the emphasis is on training people for work rather than providing an education per se. In other words, the utilitarian approach favoured by Dearing has some unexpected results. With increased specialisation in the sector overall, the task of educating students in the traditional manner and subjects has to a much greater extent been allocated to the old universities. The recent criticisms from employer organisations appear to suggest that the new universities are not always being successful in their allotted role (CBI/NUS, 2011). If market rates of pay are a reflection, at least in part, of worker productivity, the fact that economics graduates earn relatively high levels of remuneration (Chevalier, 2011) suggests, all else being equal, that the study of economics raises to a greater extent than some other subjects the ability of individuals to contribute to economic growth and to enjoy the rewards from doing so. If members to lower socio-economic groups are unable to access the subject due to it being withdrawn from the sorts of universities that these sorts of people typically attend, this will risk damaging their career prospects. It is not possible to quantify the number of people who may select 'second best' subjects or who may decide not to go to university at all as a result of their preferred option not being available but it is potentially a serious loss. In a sense the market might be failing to allocate enough resources to the study of economics and this may be grounds for government providing some sort of subsidy for the study of economics in the new universities.

However, market forces, government policy and other changes in the UK higher education landscape would appear to have conspired to set the UK higher education system on a path that has reduced the opportunity for people from lower socio-economic groups to participate in the public debate on this vital issue. The reason for this is that if access to old and new universities is stratified along social class grounds (and there is a lot of evidence to suggest that this is the case - see for example, Gallacher, 2006 and Boliver, 2011) and if new universities are increasingly removing economics degree programmes (and the evidence presented above shows that this is increasingly the case) then students from lower socio-economic groups will have less access to the study of economics at an advanced level. The resultant weakening in the voice of these groups may have skewed the national debate on the crisis in unexpected and undesirable ways. This is something which universities in other parts of the world need to be aware of.

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French Higher Education Culture Changes and the Internationalization Strategies of Universities (Field Research)



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Abstract

France is following the trend of internationalization in higher education. Both governments and institutions work on their policy to promote their education system. French universities enter the international market of higher education and they need to make its offer more attractive to gain a competitive advantage over foreign universities. The competition is driven by the world-recognized American and British institutions and boosted by the international rankings which influence on the institution policies. While on the governmental level these evaluations are taken into consideration to pursue the reforms, our filed research shows that French universities are conservative enough not to bring important changes to its education culture. In this article the results of filed research at 3 public universities are presented. This filed research consisted of the interviews with university vice-presidents responsible for the elaboration and for the realization of institution's internationalization strategy. The result of these interviews is a deeper understanding of the main features of French higher education internationalization strategy and its impact on the evolution of higher education system and its culture.

Higher education world is the reflection of society development. The main, basic, principles of society are defined and glorified in higher education institutions, they are refined at higher education culture. Changes that modern society engages for higher education systems are discussed with fear, pride and prejudice. What seems objective and timely for higher education policy-makers seems unnatural for the conservatives of higher education. Internationalization has become not a trend but a necessity for the universities all over the world: they try to find their place internationally and work on their “internationality”, they compete for better status and sources. It has been more than a decade since the beginning of Bologna process for the European universities to realize that they are not alone in this world and a birth of several academic rankings within last 10 years boosted intra-university competition on the international scale. The decision-makers at higher education institutions face the challenge to

elaborate the right internationalization strategy given the certain context and the certain sources. Our analysis is an attempt to examine the actual policy of France to make French universities more international. To make this analysis more tangible this article includes the data of the field research at three French higher education institutions where the internationalization strategy leaders (vice-presidents and directors responsible for international relations) were interviewed on the subject of the internationalization strategy of their institutions.

Being attractive = risking a culture loss?

According to the data of UNESCO on the international students mobility France is the fourth most popular host country in the world for foreign students after the USA, the UK and Australia (UNESCO, Institute for statistics, 2012). Three leading countries belong to the same traditions in higher education; also their higher education systems have many similar features in terms of financing. French education system is different in many ways. The scientific literature both in English and in French is abundant for the comparative studies for France-UK and France-USA differences (Premfors, 1980; Buisson, 2004). Going through the information on the financial sources of Anglo-American universities and the cost per student per year at the highly-ranked prestigious universities, it is obvious for any scholar, that public institutions in France could not offer anything close to dreamy campuses, or service, or status, or a salary based on the name of the institution marked on the diploma. France spends 11 630 euros per student per year, which is average in Europe (OECD, 2012). And yet, it is the fourth most attractive country in the world for international Bachelors, Masters and PhDs.

France has its natural appeal for foreign students originating from Francophone or the countries with historic-geographical ties with France. Its lure in terms of tuition fees is also natural. Tuition payment in France is 181 euros per year for Bachelor, 250 euros per year for Masters degree and 380 euros per year for Doctorate program (French Ministry of Higher Education and Research data, 2013). France is culturally seductive too, and the social security system works well for foreigners. That is basically why France keeps up with the leading host countries for international students. However, French universities are not ranked as high as the universities of the USA and of the UK (ARWU, 2013; Times Higher Education, 2012 - 2013).

French governments of the last decade have made many efforts to turn the internationalization to the way that French universities could become more recognized internationally, more visible internationally and just more international.

The aims of law n° 2007-1199 of the 10th of August 2007 (Loi n° 2007-1199 du 10 août 2007 relative aux libertés et responsabilités des universités) - - law LRU in French abbreviation, were first, to make the university more attractive, second, to leave the palsy of universities governance and third, to make universities research more visible internationally. After the beginning of 2007 university reform, the French minister of higher education Valérie Pécresse visited the Jiao Tong scholars, creators of Shanghai ranking to introduce the higher education reform undertaken in France and to underline the positive changes for French universities (. Particularly, it was mentioned that the universities will become bigger and more interdisciplinary, which is assured by the creation of federal universities – poles of research and higher education (PRES in French abbreviation). This visit shows close attention of preceding French government at academic rankings and the intention to improve the place of French universities.

In addition to the structural - making public universities bigger, more heavy in terms of research and visible from far, - there is a governmental call for promotion of excellence and selectivity. In the Report for French Senate « L'autonomie des universités depuis la loi LRU : le big-bang à l'heure du bilan » of 26th march 2013 (Gilot, D., Dupont A., 2013) the French senators confirm the objective of LRU to make French higher education model more attractive according to the rankings criteria and the growing international competition between universities. The excellence is represented by the world-recognised highly ranked American and British institutions which belong to the higher education culture of the capitalist economic system of the developed states. The excellence of these institutions is found on their financial autonomy and autonomy of their governance. The same report cites the European Council that called European higher education system for excellence at their institutions. The word “excellence” is going throughout the report which became a footstep of the project of new law – law Fioraso - adopted in France on the 9th of July 2013 (LOI n° 2013-660 du 22 juillet 2013 relative à l'enseignement supérieur et à la recherche).

Apart from continuing the policy of the reinforcement of universities' autonomy and the corrections in their governance, a new law project also introduces the obligation of courses in English language at French universities.

This generates a long debate for French academic society. On the one hand, it makes French universities more attractive for international students who do not speak French. The incoming mobility numbers would rise. The paid education programs will find their consumers. On the other hand, the quality of this education will loose whether linguistically or scientifically. What is more, one of the sides of the attractiveness of France, the capital of the Francophone, was its open door for French-speaking countries. This was also favourable for the promotion of the French language. Now, when the capital of the club has adopted another second major language, it loses a little bit of its cultural identity.

In the Report of International Association of Universities of the 28th of June 2012 “Internationalization of higher education: trends and indicators” there is a page with the listed risks brought by the internationalization for the systems of higher education (Egron-Polak, E., 2012). There are particularly three risks which sound relevant in the debates of the actual French higher education policy: commercialization of education programs, the raise of the competition between universities and the loss of the cultural identity.

By the letter French higher education culture is based on the secular education independent from any political, economic, religious or ideological dominance. It tends to the objectivity of knowledge; it respects the diversity of opinions and guarantees to the education and the research the possibilities of free scientific, constructive critical development. (Code de l'éducation - Article L141-6). By the spirit it is based on the equality of chances, free access to higher education and academic democracy. Is France changing its higher education culture?

Rob Cuthbert in his report *Changing the Higher education culture – Is it possible?* (Cuthbert, R., 2009) tries to highlight the possible changes in the UK higher education which are: globalisation, managerialisation, marketisation, massification, diversification, privatisation and academic capitalism. More and more scholars in France are worrying about the academic capitalism (Conférence annuelle du DIM IS2-IT 2013). Even if these trends seem of current importance if France, it is necessary to examine the institutions policy to see the foundations of their internationalization strategies and how capitalistic and Anglo Americanized they become.

Modern conservative university

In order to see if the practices at the institutions of higher educations in France are different from the general governmental line the interviews of universities decision-makers on the internationalisation strategy were conducted. We chose 3 French universities to find out their internationalisation strategy. This survey does not include any private higher education institution. French higher education is represented by its public institutions - 80% of students study at public universities, which, basically, define the system of higher education in France (Campus France, 2012).

First university is specialized in Law, Economy and Human sciences. In 2012-2013 it had 39 876 students, 7712 of them were foreign students. The annual budget was, 203 560 453,22 euros, 11% of it - proper financing. In our research we call it UniHumans. Second university UniScience - is specialized in Science and Mathematics. It is ranked 1st in France, 6th in Europe and 37th worldwide in the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) where it was 1st among French universities. In 2012-2013 it had 270289 students, 4780 of them - foreign students. Budget - 400 million euros. Third university – UniMedicine is an interdisciplinary university with a very strong research in medicine, biotechnologies, social sciences and psychology: 38900 students totally, 4000 foreign students, budget of 333 millions euros. This data on the universities is published at the web-sites of universities.

All together these three French universities cover 23, 5% of the total number foreign students in the region of Ile-de-France and 7, 5 % of the total number of foreign students in France.

We have interviewed the vice –presidents responsible for the international relations. These vice-presidents are the persons which with its team elaborate the international strategy of the institution and present it in a form of quadrennial plan. We have interrogated these internationalisation policy decision-makers on the different issues related to the international competition and its effects of the universities strategy (Loyola, D., 2013).

The first questions aimed to reflect interviewees on the space where their universities compete with other universities from all over the world and if it was the international market of higher education. All three interviewees said that they had to admit that international market of higher education exists and should be taken into consideration. An internalization strategy leader of UniMed said that this market is violent. However, being

aware of the existence of the international market of higher education and their leaders and actors, two of three interviewees had difficulties to give a definition to the market. Only internalization strategy leader of UniHumans clearly stated his concept of international market of higher education, the offer and the demand, though he said that he “does not like the word market”, because this international higher education market “is not a regular market, in a sense that there is a global place where offer and demand meet, and there is no pay, the strict amount of money to give to acquire the good. Here, I want to say, that the ability to pay is important, but if you want to get into a very prestigious American university for a Bachelor degree you have to pay a lot, but you also have to show very good academic results. Thus, on the one hand, the selection is done by money, on the other hand by the academic results. A very good student who is looking for a doctorate school will always find a place where he will be offered a scholarship, so they pay him to come, so it works inversely: an institution, the offer-maker of the PhD program, will pay the students. Here, in Europe, many universities do that as we have doctorate contracts.” With this approach the conception of market is not seen as a place of economic and status competition between universities, but as a zone where both parties are something to offer and something to take. The student is unlikely seen as a consumer: a foreign student pays same amount of money, little considerable amount of money comparing to the state financing of its cost (Loyola, D., 2013).

Three interviewees gave different characteristics to the market, and took some time to find words to describe the market. The internationalization strategy leader of UniScience admitted that “it is not easy to talk about the market as the reflection on the market is poor”. The first market-question responses and reactions suggest that with the intensifying internationalisation French universities feel the competition between institutions on the international level, but still do not reflect on the “marketisation” of this space.

Mainly for the reason of symbolic tuition fees the reflection of French universities on the policy of attractiveness for international students has a different psychology – not to have many foreign students to earn money and a status in rankings, but to get international in research to win national and regional competition.

The internalization strategy leader of UniMed says that university does not have any strategy to attract Bachelor candidates but to integrate foreign undergraduates into French Masters and most importantly PhDs “for the ultimate result – their contribution to the advancement of knowledge and the science in France”. Same idea was expressed by internalization strategy leader of UniScience: “we do not have to choose our students for Bachelor programs, but for Masters and doctorate programs. We have a lot of PhD candidates coming from abroad”. Here is a French specificity of the French higher education market for foreign students: the offer is mostly Master and PhD programs. Even a very good public university of a good reputation in France does not make money on foreign students (if it is not a very specific program, often a joint-degree taught partially/fully in English). Also, a public French university has an obligation before the state to accept all students for the first year of Bachelor without any selection within a limit of places. Basically, they are obliged to take everyone who is eligible and applied earlier within a deadline; the universities do not get to choose their undergraduate students and their potential. With regards to Masters and PhD, there is a selection with an evaluation of the whole profile of a potential candidate: his academic records, work experience, other extra scholar activities, and also well explained motivation and a logic personal project which has a place and application of the desired degree. So there is no economic interest to attract students at the first cycle, but to select students for the second and third cycle: the students that might bring some valuable research results, which could upgrade the status of university and might serve as an advantage in the national competition for government grants (Loyola, D., 2013).

The absence of tuition fees for usual programs and the lack of paid programs make the international strategy leaders at universities focus more on the partnership with ranked foreign universities in order to establish good exchange programs and then proceed with joint degrees. This becomes the core of their internationalization strategy. Internalization strategy leader of UniScience defined his mission as to “develop the agreements with the best universities in the world, to create a VIP club of research-based universities” and for this reason, he has to “improve the shop-window, the visibility of his university, the communication” not to attract the students, but partners. Internationalization strategy leader of UniMed admitted that university is more interested in the establishment of joint labs than in attraction of foreign students.

All three decision-makers agreed that the international competition plays an important role in the elaboration of university strategy. However, here again the motivation is more the national status than international. Internationalization strategy leader of UniMed while answering this question mentioned only the importance of the competition is to work on internationalization as any modern university should do to get to the tenders and grants. Same idea was expressed by the internalization strategy leader of UniHumans: “the international

competition makes a French university to choose well his international strategy...before we had foreign students from the French ex-colonies or other French-speaking countries, we did not reflect a lot on the non French-speaking countries, and now our privileged partners are from Brazil, India and Asia, in general... We need to attract the best students to be better ranked and get he access to the programs of ANR” (Agence National de la Recherche – state agency that manages the programs of the state support of the higher education and the research in the form of tenders for universities and research institutions). Internationalization strategy leader of UniScience also focused more on the national aspect, as he wants to make more university more attractive in order that the foreign partnering universities prefer to send the exchange students to UniScience than to another university with the similar programs in French. Therefore, the international competition reveals the best foreign universities and also the trends in global students’ mobility to take into consideration while choosing the partners to be more competitive nationally (Loyola, D., 2013).

Two of three interviewees criticized rankings for their non-applicability to the different contexts including the French context which is clearly less homogeneous than Ivy League context. One interviewee said that “since we are the best in France in Shanghai ranking, then Shanghai ranking is a good one”. Despite the certain scepticism towards rankings all three decision-makers admit that they take into account the criteria of rankings while working on their internationalization strategy, but neither of them take the criteria as something to achieve, but rather something to consider and be aware of. All three interviewees outlined clearly the zones of their interest: Asia (China, particularly) and the countries of Bricks.

To the question to reflect on the trends on the international market of higher education all three interviewees stated that the priority is to develop the research at universities. For UniMed it is the creations of international “scientific platforms”, so the universities could exchange their scientific knowledge or trade it for service to have win-win intra-university cooperation. There was a description of the collaboration with Chinese traditional medicine university which tries to find a partner for the better understanding how to adapt Chinese pharmacology to the European norms. UniMed got against the necessary missing data on traditional Chinese medicine.

Apart from the research development, the internationalization strategy leader of UniScience mentioned the importance of the development of the international professional integration of students. These ideas make recall the higher education policy of excellence of Sarkozy government with the promotion of research within higher education institutions and the reinforcement of the university mission to integrate students into a professional life with better orientation and better service to help students work on their employability as it is done in the UK where the fees are high and the students need to feel employable, secure and supported in the construction of their career path after getting into a student loan to pay for many years after graduation. Internalization strategy leader of UniHumans underlined the importance “to produce the original goods as, for example, the curriculum Paris-New York-Paris, or three semesters at best European universities to be different from others’ (Loyola, D., 2013).

Internationalization of high education is a necessity as France wishes to play an important role in the world politics and still keep the influence over certain regions of the world. Also, being international for French university is a prerequisite to have access to the national and European funds. To be more international French universities work on the mobility figures promoting the exchange programs among their students, offering mobility scholarships and partnering with attractive universities. So they could furthermore develop joint diplomas and get more international, more recognized and gain better reputation to win national and European trends. This is internationalization of higher education in France. “Within my mandate (3 years) I want to double the mobility numbers” (UniHumans). “It is so difficult to deal with a individual demand (individual mobility - students applying for Bachelor and Masters programs), because there are fake diplomas, fake grades, we do not really know the schools or universities of those applicants...It is much more interesting not to take the students who knock the door because hey see the light, but those from universities we know well, with whom we have agreements. It is a collective demand (exchange programs mobility)” – UniScience (Loyola, D., 2013).

Do French universities look at the rankings, study their criteria and be aware who is considered the best of the world and why? Yes, they do. However, it is more of an observation then a study. They look at the rankings because the students look at the rankings and also because it is a mode of university evaluation. They look who is the leader too. But the system is different, culture is different. Any French university is dreaming of the glory of Ivy League, but every university policy leader knows that the systems are incomparable and the conditions are different. They do try to work on the image of university, on the products, but the price for those products is to a littlest extent defined by the international, a little more regional and much more of the national market.

However, there are two important aspects of being international for a French university which might point out the inclination of French higher education culture towards academic capitalism and the inspiration from the market leaders: the acceptance of the idea of higher fees for public institutions and the promotion of the English-taught programs.

Two of three universities leaders (UniHumans and UniScience) agreed that anglophonization of higher education in France is inevitable. Internationalization strategy leader of UniMed was uncertain if it is necessary to introduce more English in the education programs: “For me, it is a stupid debate. Internationalization strategy leader of UniHumans admitted that he “has to say yes to anglophonization”: “Today, if you want to have at once students from the North America, South America... Africans, Asians, Russians and Chinese, you have to speak English”. However, he revealed that he tries to promote the idea of an introductory year of integration for the foreign students applying for Bachelor programs. “Since we are lucky in France to have Bachelor in 3 years and not in 4 years, like in other countries, than why not to create the first year of French integration?” Internationalization strategy leader of UniScience said that he is in favour to augment the number of English-taught programs, but with the French method: “Our offer on the market is poor because of the language... We have so many partners (foreign universities) who ask us why we do not offer programs in English?.. There is “speaking French” and “thinking French”, and I think, France, we have something to give in terms of thinking. We think differently: there in French journalism, French architecture. We want to teach something in a French way, we can do it in English... I think English language is fundamental.”

All the three universities are in favour of the raise of tuition fees. Internationalization strategy leader of UniHumans warned that “if we stay in this dynamics of not raising the fees we will see the death of the public higher education”. Internationalization strategy leader of UniScience is “extremely in favour” of higher fees: “There is a private offer from the schools of managements which make pay an expensive price and they offer something extraordinary. We can not offer anything extraordinary in terms of service. I think, it is necessary that French students pay more. And foreign students should pay the cost”. Internationalization strategy leader of UniMed claims that “our education is not considered as a good one, because it is not expensive. But in fact it has the same cost as in other European countries, it is just the state that pays. I do not see the problem in raising the fees. Foreign students pay more? No, I do not think so. Equality should be there”. One of the interviewed acknowledged that the academic capitalism is inevitable even though France will fight for its higher education cultural identity (Loyola, D., 2013).

Conclusion

Higher education in France has taken its turn to internationalization by its own path. The governments work on the image of French universities and set the rules to be “rankable” and recognizable. Internationalization for the very universities – it is like a mayonnaise for a sandwich – one of the layers they must think about to be taken into consideration. However, there are few opportunities for commercialization and visibly little marketisation of higher education institutions. The government will be the one to give a green light for marchandialisation of university programs. Before the tuition fees rise, the internationalization at French universities would probably keep the following features:

- No policy of attractiveness for Bachelor programs;
- Allying with ranked universities from developed world and emerging states to create joint degrees and receive students on paid programs;
- Making efforts to raise their mobility figures to upgrade the status of university nationally and regionally.

These tactics create a certain level of “internationality” for French universities to keep France in the top 5 of host countries, but do not change dramatically French higher education culture before the tuition fees go up.

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Is it Cheating if Nobody's Watching? Conflicting Beliefs about Dishonesty in Online Learning

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Abstract

This paper addresses part of an extensive study investigating faculty and student perceptions of academic integrity in online courses. This analysis compares the quantitative responses to the qualitative responses of a survey sent to three institutions asking 1800 faculty and students their beliefs about cheating in online courses. The conclusions drawn from this analysis of the qualitative data and a comparison to the previous analysis of the quantitative data is that faculty and students report the possibility for cheating in online courses at different rates. This phenomenon may be due to either a propensity for faculty to over report or for students to under report the extent to which cheating is occurring in online courses. Regardless, there is a conflicting belief about academic integrity between faculty and students interacting in an online course.

Keywords: academic honesty, distance learning, online courses, cheating, integrity

Introduction

With a myriad of mobile technology in the hands of students and the academic pressure to succeed in college, the availability of online information lures students into believing they are not cheating if they can find, rather than know, the answer. Globally, institutions are afflicted with academic dishonesty among their student body (Bowers, 1964, Diekhoff et al., 1996, Hinman, 2002, King, Guyette, & Pitrowski, 2009, and McCabe, 2002). As institutions move more of their courses online, students are no longer in close vicinity to their instructors or classmates. "Whether judged positively or the contrary, institutions of higher education have been impacted by the adoption of internet technologies" (Tanner & Piper, 2010 p. 1457). The conversation about enforcement of academic values and honesty is not new to the digital era. (Diekhoff et al., 1996, Jordan, 2001, and McCabe et al., 1999). Research continues to show evidence that academic dishonesty in online classes is no more prevalent

than in traditional face-to-face education (Grijalva, Nowell, & Kerkvliet's, 2006). However, with the movement towards campuses encouraging mobile technology and courses being designed for hybrid and/or online delivery, the internet has given students an extensive and unrestricted opportunity to cheat (Bedford, Gregg, & Clinton, 2009, Brock, 2008, Rowe, 2004, Tanner & Piper, 2010). Academic integrity, especially in the online environment, continues to be a concern for universities (Bowers, 1964, King, Guyette & Pitrowski, 2009, Kitahara & Westfall, 2007 and McCabe, 2002).

Brock's (2008) idea of moral relativity may be what is necessary to understand the temptations students are experiencing. He suggests that academic integrity and honesty do not have clear boundaries and, in certain situations or circumstances, "students believe that cheating and plagiarizing can be...acceptable" (p. 2). Moral relativity in virtual environments only adds to the frustration faculty experience when teaching online courses. There is more temptation to cheat in online courses primarily because the student is more distant from the instructor and secondary, many students taking online courses are busy in careers and are not invested in the integrity of the distance-learning programs as they would be in traditional face-to-face programs (Rowe, 2004). In the virtual environment, students seem to have a technological advantage because many faculty and administrators are still unaware of the possibilities for cheating online (Rowe, 2004 and Rogers, 2006). This difference in the belief about online cheating was the stimulation for this research study.

The purpose of the study was to uncover the beliefs about academic integrity, specifically academic honesty, with respect to online courses and compare the faculty and student perceptions. The objectives were to determine if and why students felt that it was easier to cheat in a distance learning course than a traditional face-to-face course.

Methodology

Three public institutions of higher education were sites for recruiting participation in our survey. The participants were either students (undergraduate and graduate) or faculty (full and part-time). The institutions are public four-year universities. The smallest university is a regional commuter campus in the southeastern part of the United States with an enrollment of 5400 students and approximately 500 full and part-time faculty. The second and largest university is also in the southern part of the country and considered a top-tier research university with a student enrollment of 18,000 and approximately 1200 full and part-time faculty. The third university is located in the south central Midwest part of the country with a student enrollment of 17,000 and approximately 1400 full and part-time faculty offering degrees in more than 100 areas as well as master and doctoral programs in most programs. The universities offer traditional, hybrid and online courses.

A cross-sectional online survey was developed to incorporate the measurement variables for the constructs conceptualizing student and faculty beliefs about academic honesty with respect to online courses. Questions were structured in the format of multiple answers, Likert-scales, and open-ended comments for the purpose of comparing student and faculty responses. The surveys were developed and disseminated via survey monkey, an online tool that allows for the self-administration of surveys and data collection.

There were 243 faculty and 1649 students that responded to the larger survey. For this research paper, which is a subpart of the larger study, the qualitative data was examined by focusing on responses given to the open-ended student question "Is it easier to cheat in a distance learning course?" There were 644 student responses to this question and 541 of those responses were able to be coded into one of three categories: Lack of Supervision, Unclear Boundaries and Open Source. Each of the three categories corresponded to one of the relationships between faculty and student definitions of cheating suggested by the study's quantitative data. The coding was performed by one of the researchers and the responses were grouped into one of these three categories. This qualitative analysis compares the open-ended responses to the earlier quantitative analysis (Tanner & Piper, 2010) which is summarized in the background section.

Limitations

This study is not without its limitations. When using an online survey distribution tool, the participants are expected to have email in order to receive the invitation to participate, as well as access to the specific domain housing the survey instrument. Response rates for online surveys are usually lower than traditional postal mail or telephone interviews. However, this sample was one of convenience and purposive in that the researchers were affiliated with the institutions chosen for participant selection and the population selected from the institutions were only faculty and students rather than the entire populations of the institutions. All students and faculty at

each participating institution had regular internet and email access. This can be problematic in that internet based sampling is not representative of general populations. However, it is rare that university communities are not fully integrating the expectation of primarily email correspondence.

Two different survey instruments were used to collect data. Students were asked questions similar to, but not exactly the same, as the questions asked of the faculty. Faculty were asked about their experiences with cheating in their online courses; whereas, students were asked if they knew of someone who cheated in an online course. Data sets for faculty responses and student responses were kept separated for the analysis. Responses to similar questions were compared using descriptive statistics and one-way analysis of variance (Tanner & Piper, 2010). The separate analyses were compared, but no causal or correlation statistics were run with aggregated data due to the differences between instruments (Tanner & Piper, 2010).

It was not possible to control for duplicate responses due to the nature of the questioning around cheating and the ethics review board recommendations. The researchers were not permitted to limit the number of responses per internet protocol (IP) address or require individual passwords in order to ensure anonymity of participants (Tanner & Piper, 2010). The researchers realize that the sensitivity of the topic of cheating may discourage the honesty of the student responses out of fear of being caught or incriminated. However, the response rate of 18% for each group of participants (faculty and students) was similar among the participating institutions (Tanner & Piper, 2010).

Background

Previous analysis of this research data (Tanner & Piper, 2010) showed that students perceive it is easier to cheat in an online course vs. a traditional face-to-face course for the following most commonly cited reasons: (1) lack of proctoring, supervision, being watched or monitored makes it easy to cheat and difficult for instructor to catch cheating; (2) unlimited test time allows one to look up answers to the test online or via cell phone, texting or emailing a classmate; (3) all course materials can be laid out for reference and one can also work with a classmate at the same time and not get caught; and (4) one classmate can take the test and email or text answers to others.

Based on the previous analysis of this research data (Tanner & Piper, 2010), the research results indicated that dishonesty exists; and the temptation and occurrences of cheating occurs most frequently on tests and quizzes, then homework assignments, and finally, major papers. Both faculty and students were equally divided on whether or not instructors can control academic dishonesty and the difficulty of enforcing academic honesty. The findings suggest that faculty perceive cheating to be occurring at a higher rate in online courses than in traditional courses. However, the study also indicates that students consider cheating to be occurring at a lower rate in online courses than faculty assume. The somewhat contradictory nature of these two findings is reflected in much of the literature surrounding academic honesty in online courses. A number of studies, such as Lanier (2006), Kennedy, Nowak, Raghuraman, Thomas, and Davis (2000) and King, Guyette, and Piotrowski (2009), indicated that both faculty and students consider cheating in online courses to be easier and more prevalent than cheating in traditional courses. However, other studies indicated a divergence between faculty and student perceptions of cheating with Grijalva et al (2006) suggesting students considered there was no difference between the amount of cheating in online and traditional courses. Complicating the matter even more, studies by Stuber-McEwen, Wiseley, and Hoggatti (2009) and Watson and Sottie (2010) suggested students believe less cheating occurs in online classes.

Analysis

Further analysis of the study's quantitative results suggests three possible scenarios for explaining the discrepancy between student and faculty perceptions of academic honesty in online courses. These scenarios are based on the assumption that mutual understandings between faculty and students regarding academic integrity are more problematic in online courses due to the lack of face-to-face interpersonal contact and to the open source nature of digital information (Scanlon & Issroff 2005). The first scenario suggests students and faculty may perceive different levels of cheating occurring in online courses because students tend to underreport personal acts of dishonesty while faculty over report cheating due to the fact they are more acutely aware than students of the potential for the relatively un-policed nature of online courses to encourage student cheating. In this scenario, a stable, shared definition of what is and what is not academic dishonesty skew reported faculty and student perceptions of the amount of cheating occurring in online courses in opposite directions due to different levels of willingness to acknowledge the possibilities for cheating. Studies such as Trenholm (2006) and Sanders, Wenzel, and Stivason (2008), which emphasize increased monitoring of online courses as the primary remedy to cheating,

support this scenario in that the call for increased monitoring at least tacitly assumes a shared definition of cheating between faculty and students.

The second scenario for explaining discrepancies between faculty and student perceptions of academic honesty in online courses centers on the confusion which may occur as the result of shifting definitions of the distinction between collusion and collaboration. Because the distinction between these two concepts is not absolute and can vary from teacher to teacher and thus from course to course, students may occasionally incorrectly assume certain behaviors are collaborative as opposed to collisional. In such cases, students would once again tend to report fewer instances of cheating than faculty. Such a scenario also assumes a stable definition of academic honesty. However, in this case, the definition is conceptually, but not operationally, shared; faculty and students simply interpret similar behaviors in different manners. Studies such as Barrett and Cox (2005), Turner (2005), and Jakes (2009) support this scenario in that they indicate web-based courses either create or enhance confusion regarding exactly which behaviors should be considered collaboration as opposed to collusion. Such studies' prescriptions for maintaining academic integrity in online courses emphasizes such techniques as creating assignments that are inherently collaborative, and specifically identifying for students the few circumstances in which collaboration is not permitted, i.e. where collaboration will be considered collusion.

The third scenario for explaining the study's findings of student and faculty's perceptions of academic honesty in online courses envisions a generational redefinition of the concepts surrounding intellectual property. Such a redefinition is created by the possibilities digitalization provides for the open sourcing of information (Evans, 2009). In this scenario, the operating assumption is students report less cheating in online courses than faculty because students' views on ownership of information, particularly digital information accessed online, are fundamentally different than the views of faculty. Students, due to their more open-source orientation to digital information, are assumed to have a far less restrictive notion of the possibilities for legitimately accessing and sharing information online. Moreover, not only is their view less restrictive where compared to faculty views, it is also less restrictive than their own views of non-online information. In much the same way students tend to make more of an ethical distinction than faculty between downloading a pirated cd than shoplifting the same cd, students from this point of view see information mediated through the internet as significantly more open to common use than information obtained in other manners. Such a student open source perspective on digital information translates in online courses as a far less restrictive notion of academic honesty than faculty typically have. Thus, in this third scenario, the discrepancies between faculty and student perceptions are explained by the fact that faculty and students approach open source resources in online courses with significantly different definitions of cheating.

The three scenarios presented range from a completely shared definition of what is and what is not cheating (lack of supervision) in the first scenario to a conceptually shared but, somewhat operationally, fuzzy definition (unclear boundaries) in the second scenario to a final scenario in which faculty and students operate under different conceptions of academic honesty with respect to open source information (open source). Because of the variation in alignment between student and faculty conceptions of cheating the three scenarios represent, each scenario calls for fundamentally different actions for successful amelioration. The first scenario, for instance, would simply call for a higher level of monitoring students, while the second and third scenarios would require clarification and negotiation of a shared definition of academic honesty, respectively. Successfully coping with cheating in online courses is dependent on which of the possible scenarios suggested by the study's quantitative data is most likely.

In order to establish the relative likelihood of each of the possible scenarios arising out of the study's quantitative data, an element of the study's qualitative data was examined. This element focused on responses given to the open-ended student question:

[Is it] easier to cheat in a distance learning course?

Of the 644 student responses to this question, 84 percent (541 categorized responses) were able to be coded into one of the three categories: Lack of Supervision, Unclear Boundaries and Open Source. Each of the three categories corresponded to one of the scenarios between faculty and student definitions of cheating previously explained. Of the 541 categorized responses 273, or 51 per cent, were identified as belonging to Scenario 1 *Lack of Supervision* - the category corresponding to a shared, common definition of cheating between students and faculty (see Figure 1) which included directly quoted responses such as:

- No one is watching.
- No one is there to prevent you from taking a test collaboratively.

- There is no direct face-to-face interaction with instructor to develop rapport and respect.
- No one is there to prevent you from using books, notes, and the internet.
- I have a relative whose wife took all his tests for him.
- There is no one to hold you accountable, and it is very difficult for professors to catch cheaters and even harder for them to prove academic dishonesty if they suspect it.
- There is no way to monitor it and there are more opportunities for cheating to occur.
- If no one is watching you take the exam, there is little chance you will get caught looking up the answers.
- There is less oversight in distance learning courses.
- Testing is often not proctored or monitored. Some students may use resources that are supposed to be forbidden.

Such responses agreed with the near universal faculty view, evidenced by the study's quantitative data, that cheating, or at the least the opportunity for cheating, was more prevalent in online courses due to the inherent difficulties of monitoring student behavior in such courses.

Responses coded into the Scenario 2 *Unclear Boundaries* totaled 169, or 31 percent of the total responses coded, assumed a shared general concept of cheating, but also indicated some confusion as to the application of the shared definition in certain specific instances. Sample of directly quoted comments include:

- Most of the time professors don't define cheating.
- The boundaries of what is and what is not cheating become blurred.
- Students are encouraged to seek input from others.
- Cheating in distance learning classes is no different than if we were given the same 'take home' assignment in a traditional classroom setting.
- Groups can collaborate.
- Depends upon the rules, guidelines and preventative measures put in place.
- If it is an online course and you are doing it on your own time, then anything is fair game.
- It can hardly be called cheating when it's distance learning – if the time and resources are available, they'll be utilized.
- Not sure what you could define as cheating in an online class.
- I have never been monitored during distance learning courses so I am allowed any sources I choose.
- There is not a barrier to prevent students from doing assignments/tests together.
- Just because teachers don't specifically say, "Don't use the internet to help. Don't call other people." Without those restrictions, people think it is okay.
- Humans need and use references every day so it's not a big deal as long as the comprehension is there.

Responses in this category suggested that students share a similar definition of academic honesty with faculty, but are often uncertain in online classes if certain specific behaviors are ultimately considered fair or foul in regard to the shared definition of academic honesty.

Scenario 3 *Open Source* accounted for 18 per cent (99 out of 541 responses) of the student responses and suggested students and faculty operate from significantly different definitions of academic honesty as it relates to online courses. This category of responses relates to the third scenario for explaining discrepancies in using open source resources between faculty and student perceptions of cheating in online courses. Directly quoted responses in this category include:

- Most of the work is done and submitted online and a student can give anyone their sign-in information, look-up answers on the internet, or have help from an additional person.
- Data can be looked up in real-time and applied immediately without knowledge from a professor.
- I know of some people who will have a second window up on their computer to search for answers while taking an online test.
- Able to use a book, family member, friend, or the internet on exams, papers, and projects.
- Because if it's taken on the internet there's no stopping anyone to look on google for the answer or to ask someone sitting next to them the answer to a question.
- You can look up material on the internet that you would not originally know during a test.
- Because you have the book right in front of you and can look at class notes.
- You have more resources around you that tempt students more than a traditional structured class room would be in a traditional course.

- Because you can look up everything online. Even with things like Respondus Lockdown, it is simple to bypass or use another computer.

Responses in this category implied that students, due to generational differences toward the open sourcing of information made possible by digitalization, operate in online courses with a fundamentally different view of intellectual property and, by extension, a fundamentally different set of assumptions about academic honesty in online courses than faculty.

Responses coded into the *Other* category totaled 103, or 16 per cent of the total responses, dwelled on a myriad set of responses having to do with ethical beliefs about cheating, instructor techniques used to prevent cheating, and students' perceptions of their instructor's ability to design and administer distance learning assignments and tests. Samples of quoted comments from this category include:

- If someone has integrity issues and is going to cheat, it doesn't matter if it's in a classroom or not.
- There are time limits set on tests to make looking up information a little more difficult.
- Teachers don't know how to use their own computers and make it easy to cheat. For example, Art History – place pictures on test to identify, but pictures are file named with what they are so it's easy to get points on test.
- Most of my teachers allow open book and make the questions more difficult.
- The instructor cannot control whether or not you use outside resources.
- If there is not a camera on the person taking an online test, someone else could complete the test.
- Somebody else has already taken it usually, & can tell other people what's on it. I knew one time that someone even put a digital recorder in their shirt, went into a testing center and quietly read every question to himself & then gave the recording of the final exam to their friend.
- A few years ago, yes, it would have been extremely easy. Now, it would be slightly less so, due to the advent of things like Turnitin, though I question their effectiveness, because effectiveness of a program like that is based on volume of samples available, and I seriously doubt that the volume is sufficient to truly do what they claim to do.

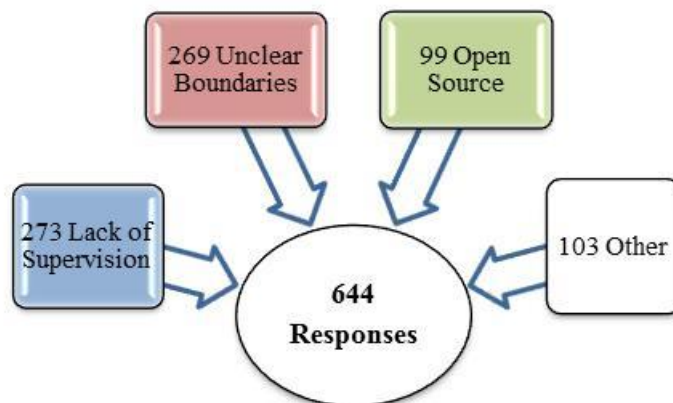


Figure 1: Why Students Cheat in Online Courses

Conclusions

Public institutions are being pressured to compete with for profit virtual campuses by offering more online courses and degrees. There are critical challenges and barriers to any online course or program (Tanner, 2007 and Yang & Cornelious, 2005). The challenge of upholding high academic standards, specifically academic honesty, becomes arduous. Faculty and students know and admit that cheating is occurring in online courses (Tanner & Piper, 2010, Piper & Tanner, 2011 and Tanner, Hartsell, & Piper, 2012). However, faculty are at a distinct disadvantage as there is still a “generational digital literacy divide” (Tanner, 2007, p. 126).

Based on analysis of student answers in the qualitative part of the study, it would appear that a primary question raised by the findings of the study's quantitative data “Does dishonesty exist in online courses?” is definitively answered

in the positive. The fact that responses coded into Scenario 1 *Lack of Supervision*, the category most suggestive of a common definition of cheating among students and faculty, were almost the same in percentage as the responses coded into Scenario 2 *Unclear Boundaries* and Scenario 3 *Open Source* combined, assumes that online courses are exposing a digital divide between faculty and students over the parameters of academic honesty. Moreover, the fact that both Scenario 1 *Lack of Supervision* and Scenario 2 *Unclear Boundaries* presuppose a common definition of academic honesty only serves to further advance the assumption of a shared definition. Because the distinction between Scenario 1 and Scenario 2 rests on how a shared definition of academic honesty is operationally applied in different circumstances, not on different concepts of academic honesty, it would require that responses coded into Scenario 3 be greater than responses coded into Scenarios 1 and 2 combined before it could be stated that a majority of responses indicated students and faculty operate from different notions of what constitutes cheating in online courses. Thus, at least based on the study's student responses, if digitalization and the open-access to information it provides is indeed forcing, as Pfannenstiel suggested (2010), a generational redefinition of the concept of individual versus community ownership of intellectual property, such a redefinition has yet to create a fundamental divide between faculty and student definitions of academic honesty.

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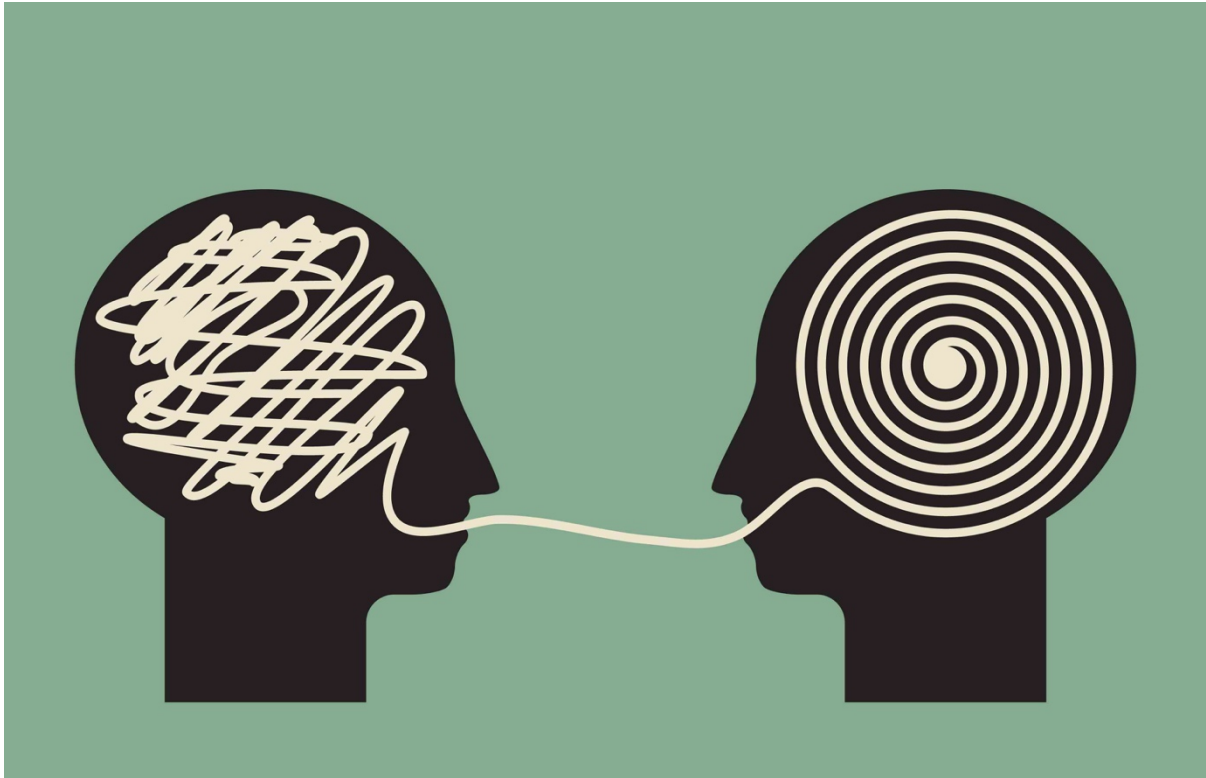
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Critical Thinking as a Tool for the Development of Interdisciplinarity in University Education



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Abstract

In this essay the relationship between critical thinking and interdisciplinarity is examined. Critical thinking is explained as a multilayer phenomenon that should be examined systematically on interdisciplinary platform. The basic issues linked to an interdisciplinary research of critical thinking are: relations between critical thinking and language, logical and cognitive operations in the process of critical analysis, methods of critical thinking and their anchoring in the methodology of science, the process of critical thinking in relation to personal dispositions and attitudes, possibilities of development and evaluation of critical thinking within educational and learning processes.

An interdisciplinary approach is a synthesis of two or more disciplines that result in establishment of a new scientific discourse, while the knowledge that results from it has an integrative character. Basic goal of interdisciplinary research lies in the deeper level of analysis, creation of a new explanatory frame (research paradigm) and identification of new operative causes. These enable us to offer unified explanation of seemingly heterogeneous phenomena. Meaning and importance of the interdisciplinarity is illustrated through the example of formation and development of cognitive sciences.

Fundament of the education at the level of higher schools or universities should not lie only in the transfer of factual information, but also in intentional and purposeful development of cognitive abilities of students. The ability of critical thinking is one of the interdisciplinary skills. Education in the area of critical thinking is associated with the interdisciplinary approach. Therefore, critical thinking and interdisciplinary approach are contingent on and stimulate each other.

Keywords: critical thinking, interdisciplinarity, research, cognitive science, education

Introduction

The ability to think critically is indicated as a key competence of the 21st century by many authors (compare Halpern, 2003, Huitt, 1995, Thomas & Smoot, 1994, Howell & Kemp, 2002 and others). Also development in the area of interdisciplinarity can be considered as an important principle participating in massive advancement of science and technology at the beginning of this century. Both of these phenomena are mutually pertinent and contingent on each other. It is the role of university (general or all-embracing) education to reflect systematically both the improvement in critical thinking as well as development of interdisciplinary relations in the frame of scientific-technological study and research. In this contribution we deal with:

1. Defining and clarifying the terms *critical thinking* and *interdisciplinarity*
2. Enlightening the mutually conditional relation between critical thinking and interdisciplinarity, particularly:
 - 2.1 interdisciplinary research in the frame of critical thinking
 - 2.2 critical thinking in the area of interdisciplinary research
3. Introducing the critical thinking as a tool for development of interdisciplinarity in the frame of higher education

Relationship between Critical Thinking and Interdisciplinarity

The term *critical thinking* can be described as a set of formal operations that influence the processing of information and reaching the planned goals and desired outcomes. Critical thinking is a suitable tool for work with a set of factual information (in a similar way as Aristotle's work on logic was called the "pipe organ" of thinking). Critical thinking can be determined either from the epistemological point of view as a logically correct way of thinking (that enables us to distinguish between logically correct and incorrect arguments) or from the practical point of view as a condition for efficient and purposeful action (that is not determined by extreme manipulative tactics). Many definitions of critical thinking are based on this dual understanding of its meaning:

1. Critical thinking as a tool for correct cogitation:
 - "... *active, systematic process of understanding and evaluation of arguments*" (Mayer & Goodchild, 1990, p. 4);
 - "... *ability to analyze facts, generate and organize ideas, defend opinions, make comparisons, make inferences, evaluate arguments and solve problems.*" (Chance, 1986, p. 6);
 - "... *involving analytical thinking for the purpose of evaluating what is read*" (Hickey, 1990, p. 175);
 - "... *the cognitive competences most relevant to critical thinking are metacognitive rather than cognitive-competencies. In contrast to first-order cognitive skills that enable one to know about the world, metacognitive skills are second-order meta-knowing skills that entail knowing about one's own (and others') knowing.*" (Kuhn, 1999, p. 17);
2. critical thinking as a tool for making good decisions:
 - "... *the ability to analyze people's attempts to persuade ... and evaluate whether or not they are giving a good argument.*" (Howell & Kemp, 2002, pp. 2-3);
 - "*Critical thinking is the use of those cognitive skills or strategies that increase the probability of a desirable outcome.*" (Halpern, 2003, p. 6);
 - "*Critical thinking is reasonable and reflective thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do.*" (Norris & Ennis, 1989, p. 1)
 - "... *challenging a claim or an opinion (either one's own or another person's) with the purpose of finding out what to believe or to do.*" (O'Hare & McGuinness, 2009, p. 123).

Critical thinking as a tool for processing information can be characterized by its "keystones" - the thought operations. There are some calculations and classifications of these fundamental thought operations in practice; for example, *interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, self-regulation* (Facione, 1990, p. 6); *purposes, question at issue, interpretation and inference, concepts, assumptions, implications and consequences, point of view* (Paul and Elder, 2008); metacognitive monitoring, verbal intelligence, analysis of arguments, testing of hypotheses, estimation of probability and making decisions (Halpern, 2003, p. 20). We propose following way of classification of fundamental thought operations that create and support the ability of critical thinking:

- *Cognitive operations (CO)*: analysis, synthesis, comparison, abstraction, idealization, generalization, concretization, analogy, classification, modelling and others,
- *Formal-logical operations (FLO)*: implication, equivalency, conjunction, disjunction, negation and others,
- *Complex operations of critical thinking (COCT)*: argumentation, evaluation, interpretation, inference (in broader sense), deduction (in broader sense), induction and others.

This system of classification is organized in hierarchical order (from basic cognitive operations up to complex operations of critical thinking). The next two categories are contingent by the first one: so that we are able to understand the FLO and COCT we must be able to master the CO. Difference between CO and FLO lies in the possibility of their formal script. Whilst the formal-logical operations use exact conditions for setting the verity (validity), in case of cognitive operations there is no exact formal algorithm which can serve as a criterion for the verity or validity. COCT deal with the vast informational units what makes them difficult to be identified both from the point of view of their formal algorithm and conditions of their validity.

Critical thinking as a tool for creation of reasoned decisions supports the following abilities: *be open to criticism and argumentation, look for alternatives, take into account the total situation, be well informed* (Ennis, 1985, pp. 46–47); *truth-seeking, open-mindedness, analyticity, systematicity, critical thinking self – confidence, inquisitiveness and maturity of judgment* (Facione et al., 1995, p.6); *intellectual humility, autonomy, empathy, integrity, perseverance, fair-mindedness, intellectual courage, confidence in reason* (Paul & Elder, 2008, p.15).

The abovementioned abilities and attributes help to transfer critical thinking from the epistemological level into pragmatic one and thanks to this transfer we can apply the outcomes of critical analysis to reach the desirable aim.

Thought operations and personal dispositions are mutually conditioned and create the ability to process information and to reach specified goals. Character and degree of this mutual influence has not been defined exactly so far. Thought operations hand in hand with personal dispositions are developing in the frame of ontogenesis of an individual human being more or less in exactly demarcated phases. Kuhn (1999) defines three forms of so called metacognition (second stage cognition) which condition the human ability to think critically: metacognition (getting to know the process of cognition), metastrategy (development of criteria that are used to judge the validity of cognition) and the form of epistemological attitude of an identifying subject (there are four categories of human attitude towards reality – realist, absolutist, versatile person and evaluating person).

Metacognitive strategies are systematically orientated on the cognitive process, on its subject and object, criteria of correctness, error correction and evaluation of cognition of other people. Metacognition conditions the origin and existence of a consistent file of evaluating criteria that are applied systematically, notwithstanding particular object, subject or situation. The possible improvement and implementation of the principles of critical thinking is conditioned by the development of the second degree cognition and the existence of evaluating criteria (p. 23).

According to Piaget and Inhelderová (2010, p. 45–68), any development of cognitive abilities is conditioned by the existence of so called symbolic function which emerges thanks to the developed motor-sensory intelligence at the age of approximately two years. It is based on the ability to present or imagine something, or to create conceptual schemes. Basic principle of the symbolic function is defined by the existing difference between identified and identifying. Complex representative (semiotic or symbolic function) is a crucial condition for the possibility of creation of a symbolic gesture, figurative image and speech. Children usually do not use figurative images in their motor-sensory period. Progressive commencement of new cognitive functions at the beginning of the second year of human life should go along with the child's capability to imagine the object and consequent ability to create the image of such object when that is not present anymore. Symbolic function goes across phases of so called distant imitation (for example imitative gestures), symbolic or fictional play (pretended sleep) and drawing or graphic visualization (which presents the crossover from play to figurative imagination). This is followed by the visual image (in sense of the interiorized imitation) and the whole process is finally topped by the creation of a language sign. Step by step the imitating act is setting apart from the current context and is becoming a generalized marking symbol – an image in human mind. Mental image is separated from the outer acts and by its generalized and formal nature it becomes the base for further development of higher cognitive functions. Nowadays, interdisciplinarity is being more and more put into effect in contemporary research practice. It is important to define it in relation to multidisciplinary and transdisciplinarity. The term multidisciplinary refers to systematic accumulation of knowledge from various scientific disciplines, while the subjects of their research do not overlap and the final outcome of their connection has the additive character and not the integrative one.

In case of multidisciplinary research there are some scientific disciplines participating in examination of the common research subject. Accumulation of knowledge is peculiar to this type of approach, borders between particular scientific disciplines, as well as their terminological vocabularies and methodological apparatuses remain mutually exclusive. According to Frodeman (2010, p. 234-245) knowledge obtained through the multidisciplinary approach is juxtapositional, sequential and coordinated. Cognitive processes in living organisms had been the subject matter for variety of scientific disciplines (philosophy, psychology, linguistics or neuroscience) even before genesis of cognitive sciences, but this type of research was only of multidisciplinary character. There was not any unifying, conceptual or methodological frame (common paradigm) for creation of theories about cognition.

On the other hand, interdisciplinary approach leads to the implementation of a new scientific paradigm which integrates methodological apparatus and terminological vocabulary of different scientific disciplines. Deployment of various mathematical models in the process of explanation the principles of how social or economic sciences work, can serve as a good example (game theory, chaos theory and the like). And what about the implementation of knowledge from the area of nuclear physics in medical diagnoses. Interdisciplinary approach frequently leads to the creation of a new scientific discipline (as it is in case of cognitive sciences, biochemistry, biotechnologies, eco-philosophy and so on).

The aim of interdisciplinary approach is to explore the limits of explanatory frames of different scientific disciplines towards their consecutive approximation. Multidisciplinarity is characteristic by its outer coherence (common research subject), whereby the final goal is to reach as high level of complexity of knowledge as possible. Interdisciplinarity leads us towards deepening of internal coherence (beside common research subject there is an obvious unification of methodology and terminology). Basic goal of interdisciplinary research lies in the deeper level of analysis, creation of a new explanatory frame (research paradigm) and identification of new operative causes. These enable us to offer unified explanation of seemingly heterogeneous phenomena.

In case of interdisciplinary researches, one of the key methodological approaches is so called reductive method. Reductive explanation is about glossing either events, phenomena, attributes and subjects (ontological reduction), or theories, terms, models and schemes (epistemological reduction). Beside this division we can also distinguish between different degrees of scientific reduction: (1) reductions in the frame of the only level (mathematical derivations including approximations), (2) abstract multilevel (inter-theoretical) reductions (explanation of the higher level attribute through the attribute of lower level), (3) spatial multilevel or strong reductions (scientific explanation concentrates on the description of behaviour of elementary particles) (Sarkar 1998, pp. 424 - 434). Inter-theoretical reductions are characteristic feature of interdisciplinary explanation.

“Inter-theoretical reduction is the relation between two different conceptual frames describing the phenomenon itself; nonetheless, sometimes it is confusingly described as a relation between two different attributes of the phenomenon. The very sense of reduction is to show that what we considered to be consisting of two spheres is in fact only one sphere described by two or more different vocabularies.” (Churchland, Churchland 1998, p. 69). A good example of inter-theoretical reduction is the heat theory as an average molecular energy or identification of sound with pressure waves spreading across the atmosphere. The most well-known reduction of modern science is the reduction of Newton’s Laws of Motion into the Einstein’s Special Theory of Relativity. Critical thinking is extremely complex and multilayer phenomenon and that is why we have to examine and explain its principles through the interdisciplinary paradigm. We propose following scheme for the interdisciplinary research of critical thinking:

1. Critical thinking in relation to language (area of cognitive linguistics)
2. Critical thinking in relation to cognitive and logic (both formal and informal) operations (area of logic, cognitive psychology and information science)
3. Critical thinking in relation to methodology of science (area of the philosophy of science)
4. Critical thinking in relation to personal dispositions and social attitudes (area of the personality psychology, cognitive anthropology, ethics and others)
5. Critical thinking in relation to pedagogy and other educational sciences (area of pedagogy and pedagogical sciences)

In the frame of the first three research areas, the critical thinking is examined from the point of view of its epistemological nature. The key factor here is its cognitive function. That what plays the crucial role in this process are the questions regarding relation between thinking and language, regarding validity criteria for logical-formal

thought operations and possibilities for their deployment in the frame of complex (non-formal) operations of critical thinking. Cognitive linguistics is searching for the connection between the structure of language representations, their processing and their neuronal base. One of the up-to-date and quite interesting topics is the issue of the existence of algorithm for cognitive operations (analysis, abstraction, idealization, modelling and the like) which consequently can be simulated by artificial intelligences or by self-learning systems.

The process of critical thinking as an exactly defined way of processing information is based on the methodological progress of science. Scientific method which is the subject matter for the examination in the area of philosophy of science can be generally described in three basic steps: 1. Observation and description of a phenomenon or a group of phenomena; 2. Formulation of a hypothesis that should explain the observed phenomenon through the principle of causality; 3. Based on the predictions in hypothesis, the tests are being created which can either confirm or deny the hypothesis; 4. In the last step, repeatedly confirmed hypothesis is integrated into the system of other confirmed assumptions and laws of scientific theories (Bednářiková, 2013, pp.14-15). Also in case of critical analysis we advance from defining the problem, through collecting the information, inductive or deductive pondering, identifying hidden logical errors or contradictions, up to the eduction of one's own conclusions.

Scientific explanation has a character of deductive or inductive derivation from two premises: general affirmation (natural law, statistical findings) and description of particular occurrence (initial conditions). By subsuming of concretely described occurrence under the general law we are capable of explaining such occurrence and we can define its cause (why the things happen in the way they do, and not in any different way). Critical thinking advances analogically towards the scientific cognition and explanation. Some conclusions can be deduced from premises (assumptions) based on the logical inference rules, others can be obtained by means of generalization (induction) with certain probability measure.

In the frame of last research field we propose to examine possibilities of systematic development of critical thinking hand in hand with its objective assessment. The issues regarding development of cognitive operations and logical thought procedures of students on one side and also the problems regarding the way of upbringing towards desired personal attitudes and social-culture strategies on the other side play the important role in this process that is closely connected to the sphere of critical thinking (see above). More than any other feature, it is just the pragmatic aspect of critical thinking as a tool for correct (reasoned) process of making decisions and actions that is being emphasised at this place.

Relationship between the critical thinking and the interdisciplinarity can be explained in a following way: critical thinking is a primary interdisciplinary phenomenon that cannot be explained at sufficient level in the frame of explanatory framework of a single scientific discipline. On the other hand, the interdisciplinary research that is rapidly moving ahead in many fields of human cognition nowadays, is strictly conditioned by the abilities of critical analysis, assessment of relevance, terminological clarification, identification of connections and analogies, conception of theoretical models and many others, in other words, it is conditioned by the complex operations of critical thinking. A good example of such mutually conditioned relation between critical thinking and interdisciplinary research can be the origin of cognitive-scientific paradigm in the middle of the 20th century. From the very beginning of philosophical analyses it was the phenomenon of thinking or cognition that was one of the most frequently explained as well as one of the least clarified phenomena. Its multilayer character had been beside the possibility of its adequate understanding in the frame of one terminological and methodological explanatory framework. In the moment of establishment of the cognitive science, scientific discourses from the fields of *theoretical linguistics* (analyzing possibilities for language modelling based on its syntactic rules), *artificial intelligence* (explaining the thinking as a calculating process – algorithm for dealing with symbols), and *experimental psychology* (searching for the possibilities of connection of mental operations with mechanical procedures) created a brand new scientific union (compare Wilson, Keil, 1999, pp.15-36). In the 1970s a group of other disciplines subjoined the abovementioned fields which were philosophy, anthropology and evolutionary biology. Also cognitive neuroscience played an important role in the whole procedure. It was moving ahead with giant leaps especially thanks to the invention of displaying methods in the process of brain examination (PET, MRI and fMRI). Nowadays, cognitive science from the point of view of the interdisciplinarity is being systematically unified based on some fundamental axioms. The main goal of cognitive-scientific research is to create empirically testable hypotheses that explain structural and procedural aspects of human cognition. In this context cognition can be understood as a complex of all mental structures and processes of human knowledge and cognition (from sensory perception and behaviour up to the human speech and thinking) and this is what we call the mental knowledge structure. Thinking is in the frame of this paradigm explained simply, but really efficiently: as the ability to process information. Cognitive operations can be understood as the calculations directed by exact

algorithms (by sets of rules for procedures of information processing). The outcome is the transformation from one state of cognitive system into another one. Hypotheses in cognitive research must be eventually empirically falsifiable by the observable psychological and neurophysiological facts. This way of explanation of cognitive operations brought an extensive explanatory power to the new theories and the justness of cognitive-scientific paradigm can be seen also in rapid advance of systems of artificial intelligence and robotics (see e.g. Návrát, 2007).

Conclusion

Fundament of the education at the level of higher schools or universities should not lie only in the transfer of factual information, but also in intentional and purposeful development of cognitive abilities of students. So called metacognitive processes play a crucial role in this procedure. In its frame there are analyses and assessments of all cognitive processes running. Students must be able not only to memorize new knowledge and information, but also to deal with them in the context and evolve them step by step. They also should systematically and critically monitor and verify their thought operations. Only thanks to the education that repeatedly instigates the ability of critical analysis, evaluation, verification, creation of one's own information databases, argumentation or prognosis of future impacts, it will always be possible to apply the principles of permanently sustainable development.

One of the most important attributes of a thinking human being is the effort to think in a broad context of occurrences and facts. This so called systematic approach means preferring the holistic perspective and circular causality to the linear one. An example of this type of causality is the feedback loop that can be illustrated through the relation between a predator and its prey. An over reproduction of predators causes less and less amount of prey per one predator and this consequently leads to decrease in the number of predators. This again causes the effect of an over reproduction of the hunted animals what leads to the increment in the number of predators. (Leonard, Beer, 2003). Application of the systematic approach enables identification of new relationships, connections and causalities and it presents the fundament for the implementation of interdisciplinary approach.

In this contribution we have tried to clarify the interdisciplinary character of critical thinking. Research in the area of critical thinking includes the scientific fields of cognitive linguistics, logic, cognitive psychology, information science, philosophy of science, personality psychology, ethics and educational sciences. So, if we want to improve the ability of critical thinking in the frame of the university education, we inevitably must "work" on more scientific fields at once. On the other hand, if the subject matter of the education is targeting at the cognitive and metacognitive operations, their further development is possible in any particular area of education since it deals with the improvement of formal processes and not with the factual knowledge.

Critical thinking, its improvement and the process of upbringing in the frame of university education goes hand in hand with the development of interdisciplinarity. It leads students towards more efficient division and classification of obtained information in sense of systematization of knowledge from different academic subjects or disciplines. This way of thinking presents a fundamental condition for implementation of interdisciplinary approach which nowadays seems to be most fruitful and very inventive.

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