

Critical reflection and web-enhanced pedagogy: Consolidating international learning



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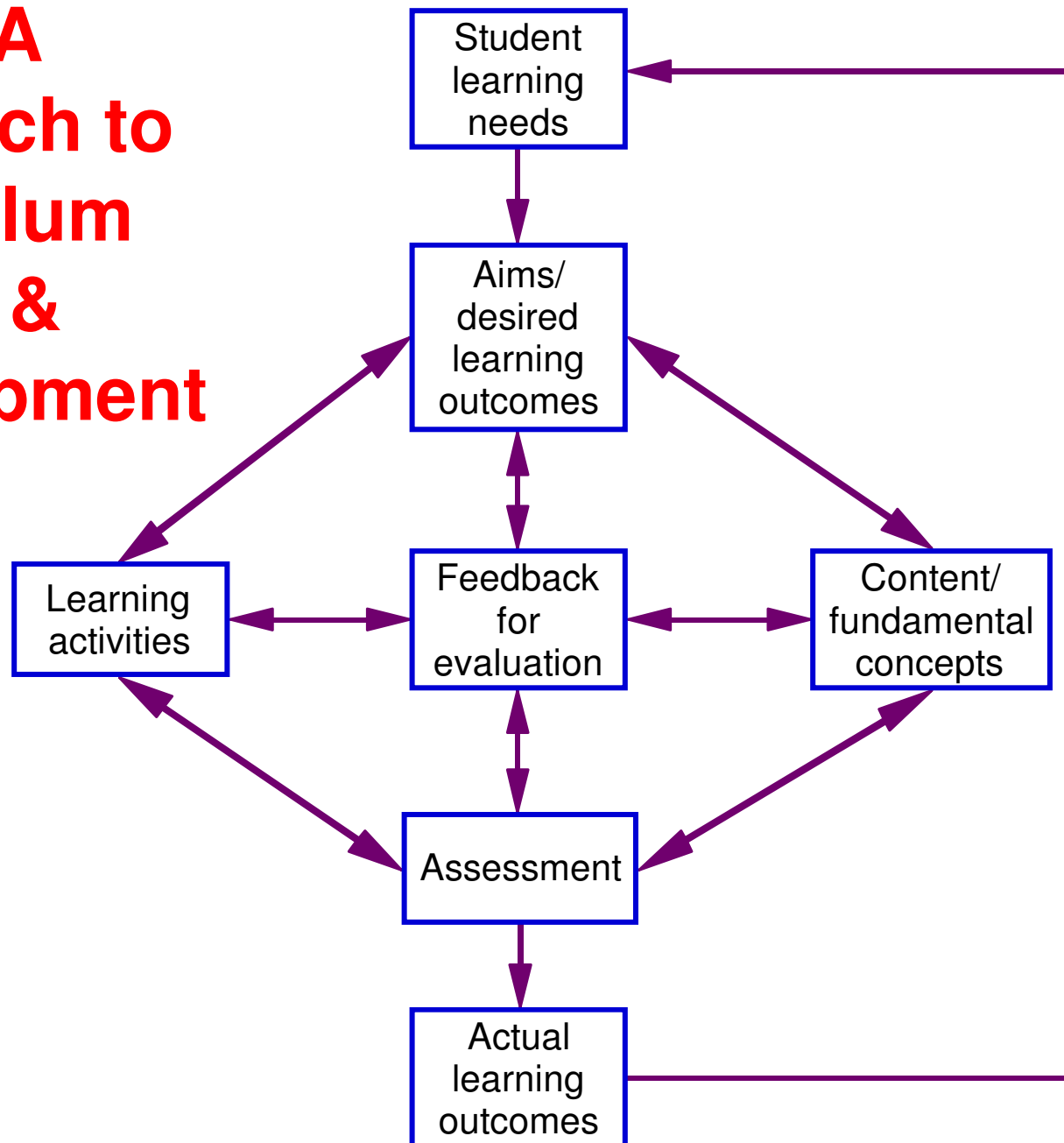
Outline of presentation

Intercultural Transitions: A reflective course for students with recent or current international experience that has been developed following an outcomes-based approach to curriculum design

- Brief overview of OBA elements
- Rationale for course/Needs analysis
- Syllabus design and development
- Modes of assessment
- Evaluation
- Implications for revision



AN OBA approach to curriculum design & development



Research-driven & Theory-based

- Ethnographic & experimental-design studies of sojourners (Jackson, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012);
- Critical reflection & experiential Learning (Bennett, 2008; Kolb, 1983; Meyer-Lee, 2005; Moon, 2004, 2008);
- M. Bennett's (1993) *Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity*, (DMIS);
- Adult education as potentially transformative (Kauffmann et al., 1992; Mezirow, 2000);
- Poststructuralist notions of identity expansion (Block, 2007).

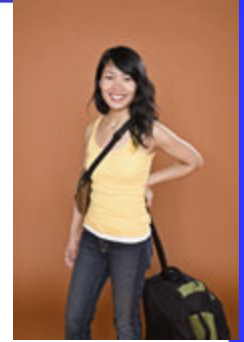


Without guided, critical reflection, sojourners may...

- become frustrated and overwhelmed by (re-entry) culture shock & identity misalignments;
- ‘shoe-box’ their international learning once they return home & become re-immersed in campus life;
- miss opportunities to deepen, extend & share their L2/international learning with others (Jackson, 2012; Johnson, 2005; LaBrack, 2004; Meyer-Lee, 2005; Thebodo and Marx, 2005; Szkudlarek, 2010).



‘Experience-to-theory -to-practice’ pedagogy



- Links student experience with that of others (e.g., classmates’/published sojourner accounts)
- Relates personal (oral & written) narratives to research publications (less personal)
- Brings student data into conversation with existing theories:
 - uses theory to illuminate
 - draws on data to challenge & build on existing understandings of international/intercultural learning
 - raises awareness of multiple views of situations

By the end of the course, participants should be able to:



- describe theories/models of culture shock/ (re)adjustment, identity reconstruction, intercultural competence & global citizenship;
- test these theories & models using their own and others' international/intercultural experiences;
- assess their international/reentry experience & its impact on their sense of self, worldview, L2 use, intercultural competence & career plans;
- identify ways to draw on their international experience in their other courses & set realistic goals for further international experience and the enhancement of their intercultural competence.

Content/Fundamental concepts

- Intercultural adjustment and adaptation:
Culture shock and recovery
- Different 'cultures of learning'
- Intercultural competence in interpersonal relationships
- Homecoming, reentry, and identity issues
- Intercultural contact and identity reconstruction
- Cultural marginality/Feeling in-between
- Intercultural (communicative) competence
- Intercultural, global citizenship
- Marketing international experience/
intercultural/L2 communication skills



Learning activities



- Discussions, analysis of readings & some interactive lectures
- Weekly online reflective postings/blogging (Instructor, Ss & TA)
- Reflective writing portfolio
 - In-class writing workshops & peer reviews
 - Reflective essays (gradually linking international experience with theories/ research/readings)
- Group presentations (sharing sessions at the end of term)



Assessment scheme

- Participation 10%
- Online reflection (Forum postings & blogs (ejournal) 35%
- Reflective writing portfolio -essays & peer reviews 40%
- Group presentation (Interactive, sharing session) 15%

*Linked to course philosophy/activities

****Rubrics** to assess reflective writing/blogs/oral presentations

*** Peer reviews throughout & self-evaluation

Course participants (1st cohort)

Sex: 13 (72.2%) female 5 (27.8%) male

Ethnicity: 18 (100%) Chinese

Year of study:

1 (5.6%) Second year

9 (50.0%) Third year

8 (44.4%) Fourth year

Faculty:

Arts 15 (83.3%)

Business admin. 2 (11.1%)

Social science 1 (5.6%)

International experience on entry:

8 (44.4%) micro- or short-term sojourn

2 (11.1%) semester-long sojourn

8 (44.4%) yearlong sojourn (or longer)

1 International exchange student from Canada

Evaluation of 1st Offering

Qualitative data

(Analysis aided by specially-designed rubrics)

- Forum & blog entries (online)
- Reflective writing portfolio (3 essays & peer reviews)
- Oral presentation
- Post-course interview

Quantitative data

- Pre- and post-surveys (the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), a cross-culturally validated, psychometric instrument linked to the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (Hammer, 2009)).

Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)

Denial	Inability to construe cultural difference
Defense	Other cultures viewed as threats
Defense/ Reversal	Other cultures exalted at own culture's expense
Minimization	Recognition of common humanity regardless of culture; a transitional orientation
Acceptance	Recognition & appreciation of cultural differences in behavior & values
Adaptation	Able to consciously shift perspective/ behavior in different cultural contexts

Pre-course Overall IDI Profile

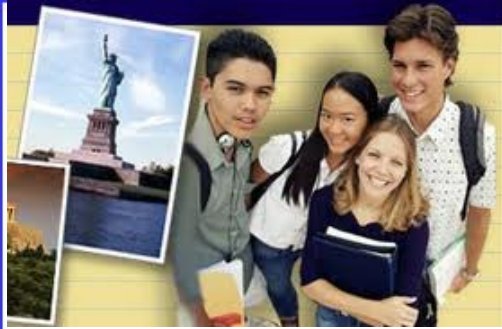
- **Perceived Orientation (PO):**
121.71 (Acceptance)
- **Developmental Orientation (DO):**
92.42 (Low end of Minimization)
- **Orientation Gap (OG):**
29.29 (Great overestimation of intercultural competence)
- **Trailing Orientations (TO):** Minimization, Acceptance/
Adaptation in transition
- **Leading Orientations (LO):** Acceptance and Adaptation

Post-course Overall IDI Profile

- **Perceived Orientation (PO):**
126.22 (Acceptance)
- **Developmental Orientation (DO):**
102.00 (Minimization)
- **Orientation Gap (OG):**
24.22 (Great overestimation of intercultural competence)
- **Trailing Orientations (TO):** All worldviews resolved
except Minimization
- **Leading Orientations (LO):** Acceptance and Adaptation

A comparison of pre- and post-course IDI results

- The group as a whole shifted in the direction of greater intercultural sensitivity, **gaining 9.58 points (a significant gain)**;
- They moved from the low to the high end of 'Minimization', a transitional phase;
- While somewhat reduced, they retained a very inflated perception of their level of intercultural sensitivity/competence.



Findings



- A content analysis of the qualitative data revealed that the students had become more mindful of the impact of their attitudes and behavior in intercultural interaction, and more aware of strategies to enhance intercultural communication;
- The IDI results & qualitative findings suggest that guided, critical reflection had a positive impact on their ‘intercultural worldview’.



Benefits of course

- Helps students make the most of their international experience & enhances their intercultural competence;
- Fosters the habit of critical reflection and self-monitoring;
- Encourages the setting of realistic goals for further self-enhancement (e.g., intercultural/L2 competence/travel);
- Provides an opportunity for intercultural interactions between local and international students;
- Offers direction for the design & delivery of pre-sojourn/sojourn courses/workshops/orientations for students who will venture abroad in the future.

Lessons learned

- Most students are new to critical reflective writing & 'experience-to-theory-to practice' pedagogy so ample guidance must be provided;
- Facilitators must be sensitive to the participants' actual level of IC sensitivity (as measured by the IDI/analysis of qualitative data) and select/sequence material/activities accordingly;
- It is important to share their learning. (The winning essays in **CUHK's Annual Study Abroad Essay Contest** are now showcased on OAL webpages);
- Although a considerable amount of time is required for this learner-centered/elearning course, it is well worth the effort.

CUHK's Annual Study Abroad Writing Contest

<http://www.oal.cuhk.edu.hk/index.php/study-abroad-a-exchanges-for-cuhk-students/term-time-exchange/returned-from-exchange/student-sharing>

**Thank you for listening!
Any questions?**

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