Chapter 3
Pedagogical Opportunities to Foster Interaction and Deep Understanding Between International and Domestic University Students:
Teaching Critical Reflexivity Through Interaction

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ABSTRACT

Diverse friendships established in college can significantly impact students' lives and affect cognitive development, learning, retention, and college success. The encouragement of meaningful interaction through curriculum design and teaching practices as part of internationalization efforts can positively impact the campus and social structure of society. Opportunity exists within institutions of higher education to foster reflexivity and interaction in classrooms composed of individuals from around the world. The variety of experiences can provide a foundation for a trans-formative educational experience. This context may be a key component to reducing prejudice because perceptions and behavior result from enculturation. The author describes data collected over a five-year period from a 16-week undergraduate mixed nationality Anthropology course that attempts to hone skills in reflexivity and global awareness. The results exemplify teaching practices and curriculum design for internationalization within the classroom and outcomes indicate significant lifelong learning for students.

INTRODUCTION

The high level of interaction in the mixed nationality *Connecting Across Cultures* Anthropology class is evident from the initial class meetings. Conversations begin when students walk in the door. The unique dynamic is indicative of those who choose the class, the intentional recruitment method, and the learning objectives for the class. It becomes an academic space where students from different cultural backgrounds can engage in meaningful conversation, reflect on enculturation, share perspectives and encourage one another to dismantle assumptions and stereotypes. The class is designed to be a trans-formative educational experience.

Creating a purposefully diverse learning community specifically aimed to increase interaction through peer education requires intentional curriculum design, instruction and facilitation. This chapter describes a successful example of an undergraduate anthropology course which uses intentional instructional practices and curriculum design to increase meaningful interaction among international and domestic students. The data collected over five semesters reveal the majority of students gained skills in reflection that lasted beyond the course. The ability to reflect on cultural values helped students understand how stereotypes, attitudes, and beliefs are structured. The explicit reflexive examination of the process of enculturation and its effect on one's worldview can be a stepping stone towards deep levels of personal transformation.

BACKGROUND

The increase of students studying in countries other than their own creates an opportunity to foster meaningful relationships, increase understanding of others and ourselves, and cultivate open-mindedness and critical thought on university campuses. Unfortunately, this opportunity is often missed. The lack of meaningful interaction between international and domestic students at university is well documented in many countries that host large numbers of international students, including the United Kingdom (Pritchard & Skinner, 2002), U.S.A. (Trice, 2004), Australia (Smart et al., 2000; Tran, 2009), New Zealand (Ward, 2001), and Japan (Tanaka et al., 1997).

The contradiction becomes evident when examining the research that details the benefits to interac-tion and research that details a lack of interaction. For example, many researchers indicate meaningful interactions between international and domestic students are mutually beneficial in a variety of ways, including social support, skills to work in a diverse workforce, engagement in education, forming re-lationships, and participating in campus life (Hechanova-Alampay et al., 2002; Hurtado, 2005; Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2013; Pritchard & Skinner, 2002; Smart, Volet & Ang, 2000; Thomas et al., 2018; Trice, 2004). Researchers have also indicated that developing face to face relationships between students can play an important role in student learning and retention (Hall & Jaugietis, 2011; Micari, Streitwieser & Light, 2006; Williams, 2011). Peer education between diverse students can also positively contribute to learning and retention (Hall & Jaugietis, 2011; Hurtado, 2005; Longerbeam, 2010; Micari, Streitwieser & Light, 2006; Williams, 2011). Hurtado (2005) found that domestic "student interaction with diverse peers during college results in changes in student cognitive, social, and democratic outcomes" (p. 595).

Creating a learning environment where diverse students, in this case, international and domestic students, are required to interact and cooperate through targeted learning goals can contribute to cross-cultural and global awareness. Trice (2004) focused on social capital in relation to successful interaction,

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