Redefining Internationalization at Home

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Redefining Internationalization at Home

Jos Beelen and Elspeth Jones

1 Introduction

Internationalization at Home (IaH) may be thought of as a rather narrow concept when the broader notion of internationalization of the curriculum is becoming increasingly the focus of attention in universities. This paper will argue that, nevertheless, IaH remains a useful concept in certain contexts and for certain purposes. For this reason a new definition will be proposed, which the authors hope will support its implementation.

We begin with a discussion of three concepts and their accepted definitions: those of internationalization, 'Comprehensive Internationalization' and internationalization of the curriculum. We then consider other, more contested issues.

We do not discuss a number of other notions that could be considered elements within an internationalized curriculum, such as Global education, Global learning, Education for global perspectives and Education for global citizenship, to name but a few. Those are subjects for other papers. Another aspect beyond the scope of this article is discussion of the term 'curriculum' itself, which has been variously interpreted (e.g. Biggs and Tang 2007; Webb 2005). We use the terms formal and informal curriculum, and accept that the formal curriculum includes pedagogy (teaching, learning and assessment) as a vehicle for its delivery.

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2 Accepted Definitions

2.1 Internationalization

The most frequently cited and most widely accepted definition of internationalization is that by Knight: "The process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education." (Knight 2004, p. 11).

Strong elements of this definition are the articulation of internationalization as a process, and the mention of the international and intercultural dimensions of the curriculum. These two aspects were important features at the time. The definition is also sufficiently broad as to encompass all activities of a contemporary university.

This paper takes as accepted Knight's definition, given its frequent and widespread usage.

2.2 Comprehensive Internationalization

Recent debates around comprehensive internationalization (CI) have sought to make clear the full extent of internationalization if an institution is to take seriously the challenges it poses. In effect, then, the concept of CI is an extension of Knight's broad-based definition. Hudzik provides an extended 'definition' of CI which encapsulates the concept: "Comprehensive internationalization is a commitment, confirmed through action, to infuse international and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research, and service missions of higher education. It shapes institutional ethos and values and touches the entire higher education enterprise. It is essential that it be embraced by institutional leadership, governance, faculty, students, and all academic service and support units. It is an institutional imperative, not just a desirable possibility. Comprehensive internationalization not only impacts all of campus life but the institution's external frames of reference, partnerships, and relations. The global reconfiguration of economies, systems of trade, research, and communication, and the impact of global forces on local life, dramatically expand the need for comprehensive internationalization and the motivations and purposes driving it." (Hudzik 2011, p. 6).

A shorter version is offered by NAFSA: "Comprehensive internationalization" is the planned, strategic integration of international, intercultural, and global dimensions into the ethos and outcomes of higher education (NAFSA 2014, p. 1).

It is clear that CI goes well beyond the curriculum itself, but that this is a key element of a comprehensive approach, just as it is implied in Knight's definition of internationalization in 2004. Whitsed and Green (2013) go so far as to argue that CI cannot exist without internationalization of the curriculum.

2.3 Internationalization of the Curriculum

Leask's recent work sees curriculum internationalization being enacted not only through the formal, assessed curriculum, and the teaching, learning and assessment required to deliver it, but also through the informal curriculum. Formal curriculum is defined as: "The syllabus as well as the orderly, planned schedule of experiences and activities that students must undertake as part of their degree program." (Leask 2015 in press, p. 8).

While informal curriculum is described as: "Various support services and additional activities and options organized by the university that are not assessed and do not form part of the formal curriculum, although they may support learning within it." (Leask 2015 in press, p. 8).

Leask's most frequently cited definition of the process of internationalizing the curriculum (IoC), concentrates on the formal, assessable curriculum: "The incorporation of an international and intercultural dimension into the preparation, delivery and outcomes of a program of study." (Leask 2009, p. 209).

Throughout her work, Leask has stressed the importance of the careful construction of learning environments and made specific reference to teaching, learning and assessment processes, thus accepting their importance in delivering the internationalized curriculum. A new definition therefore makes this even more explicit and updates the 2009 definition: "Internationalization of the curriculum is the incorporation of international, intercultural and/or global dimensions into the content of the curriculum as well as the learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods and support services of a program of study" (Leask 2015 in press, p. 9).

This paper takes as accepted Leask's (2015 in press) definition of internationalization of the curriculum, as shown here.

3 Contested Definitions

3.1 Internationalization at Home and Abroad

In a later discussion of key concepts, elements and rationales, Knight (2006) distinguishes Internationalization at Home as one of two streams in internationalization, which she sees as interdependent rather than independent. She asserts that Internationalization Abroad consists of all forms of education across borders, mobility of students, teachers, scholars, programs, courses, curriculum and projects. Internationalization at Home, on the other hand comprises activities that help students develop international understanding and intercultural skills. This is a problematic distinction, apparently suggesting, for example, that Internationalization Abroad does not develop international understanding and intercultural skills, and that curriculum is not directly included in Internationalization at Home.

However, in further explanation, Knight does mention as "Internationalization at Home-related factors": the international/intercultural dimension of the curriculum, research collaboration and area and foreign language studies (Knight 2006, p. 128). Elsewhere, she includes curriculum as one of a 'diversity of activities' that constitute Internationalization at Home: curriculum and programs, teaching/learning processes, extra-curricular activities, liaison with local cultural/ethnic groups and research or scholarly activity (Knight 2006, p. 27). The authors feel that this undervalues the fundamental role of curriculum in the enterprise of Internationalization at Home, and that it is neither a 'related factor', nor an 'activity', but is at the heart of the concept.

3.2 The OECD Definition of an Internationalized Curriculum

Prior to the definition of IaH (Crowther et al. 2001) and IoC (Leask 2009), an internationalized curriculum had already been defined by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development: "A curriculum with an international orientation in content and/or form, aimed at preparing students for performing (professionally/socially) in an international and multicultural context and designed for domestic and/or foreign students." (OECD 1996, p. 6).

There was a prior version of this definition (Bremer and Van der Wende 1995, p. 10), which included only international content, but it was later modified to this 1996 version which includes "the form" of the curriculum as well. Having two very similar versions has led to some confusion, with both definitions being frequently used until this day.

Rizvi (2007, p. 391) criticizes the OECD definition in its original version (Bremer and Van der Wende 1995), which he finds represents a "neo-liberal imaginary of global processes". Beelen (2014) considers the OECD definition unworkable, since it stimulates a very narrow view of an internationalized curriculum, for example that it could be a curriculum with international content for international students only. Moreover, it does not appear to recognize intercultural opportunities in a domestic context. The authors believe that the OECD definition is no longer fit for purpose.

3.3 Campus Internationalization

Campus Internationalization, although frequently used in the context of universities in the United States, is poorly defined. Green and Olson (2003), in a work that bears the title 'Internationalization of the campus', discuss a range of terminology without defining campus internationalization as such. Nevertheless, it continues to be used often, confusingly, as a synonym for Comprehensive Internationalization. An example of this is in the online resources for internationalization of the curriculum

by The American Council on Education, which are presented under the heading 'campus internationalization' and based on the six interconnected target areas from CIGE's Model for Comprehensive Internationalization (American Council on Education 2013).

Campus internationalization focuses on creating a learning environment on campus that may encompass both the formal and the informal curriculum, but seems mostly aimed at the latter, i.e. the non-assessed elements, and yet it also includes Study Abroad. It includes both providing a welcoming environment for international students as well as stimulating outgoing mobility. This broad focus is demonstrated by the Andrew Heiskell Awards for Innovation in International Education, which recognize "outstanding initiatives" in different categories, including "internationalizing the campus". These have been awarded by the Institute of International Education since 2001. Dutschke (2009, pp. 70–72) mentions two winning practices, one of which involved a year of study abroad, while the other consisted of a short-term study trip. He therefore concludes that study abroad is still the main component of internationalization at most American universities and, moreover, that on-campus activities are often dependent on and linked to study abroad. Recipients of the 2014 Heiskell awards appear to represent a similar pattern (IIE 2014).

NAFSA's annual Senator Paul Simon awards for Campus Internationalization reflect a similar confusion of terms, as these also include Comprehensive Internationalization (see NAFSA 2014 for this year's recipients). However it is stated that the awards recognize 'excellence in integrating international education across all aspects of college and university campuses', which suggests they are intended to focus on the domestic campus.

As far as we can ascertain, Internationalization at Home differs from Campus Internationalization, according to these examples. For Internationalization at Home, international and intercultural teaching and learning on the domestic campus is the main aim, irrespective of whether the student experience is enhanced by mobility.

4 Internationalization at Home

4.1 What Internationalization at Home Means

While the context and delivery of Internationalization at Home need to be considered from organizational and academic viewpoints, the ultimate beneficiaries are the students, in this case all students, not simply those who have a mobility experience, and it is their perspective which is key in conceptualizing its meaning. IaH is distinctive through this explicit focus on all students in the core (compulsory) curriculum. This means that locating internationalization of the home curriculum in electives alone is insufficient, since such electives do not reach all students. In addition to the formal, assessed, curriculum, Internationalization at Home is also delivered through the informal curriculum, the non-assessed elements of the student experience, which are nevertheless provided by or associated with the institution.

Beelen and Leask (2011, p. 5) stress that Internationalization at Home is not an aim or a didactic concept in itself, but rather a set of instruments and activities 'at home' that aim to develop international and intercultural competences in all students. Just as with internationalization of the curriculum in general, IaH is specific to the context of a discipline and, within that, to a program of study in a given university (Leask 2012).

Internationalization at Home does not require the presence of international students, although that can be a benefit. If a broad concept of 'culture' is accepted (e.g. Jones 2013b; Jones and Killick 2013; Loden 1996), then every classroom has a diverse range of students. This can be the basis for exploration of the international and intercultural dimensions of the curriculum, whether or not international students are present.

Thus in, for example, the western European context, the language of instruction is not a relevant consideration in understanding or delivering IaH. Simply providing a program in English is insufficient for it to be considered an internationalized curriculum. If the program content and learning outcomes are not internationalized, and remain the same as in the original language, merely changing the language of instruction will not make them so.

A variety of instruments can be used to internationalize teaching and learning: comparative international literature, guest lectures by speakers from local cultural groups or international companies, guest lecturers of international partner universities, international case studies and practice or, increasingly, digital learning and on line collaboration. Indeed, technology-based solutions can ensure equal access to internationalization opportunities for all students.

The same is true for engagement with local cultural and international groups, which may also be available to all students, and can be considered a distinctive element of Internationalization at Home. Engagement may be as part of the formal curriculum through guest lectures and educational activities or part of the informal, non-assessed curriculum. However, it must be acknowledged that such arrangements may not be possible in all contexts.

Nonetheless, these types of activity are simply pedagogic tools and fundamentally, the internationalization of learning outcomes, pedagogy and assessment are at the heart of Internationalization at Home, just as for curriculum internationalization in general.

Internationalization at Home may look different in different contexts. In the geographical circumstances of Western Europe it operates on the assumption that students who do not go abroad for a traditional study period or placement may still travel to countries with different cultures and languages for personal reasons, which is not always the case in other parts of the world. Furthermore, in Western Europe, where distances between countries are small, short (even 2–3 days) faculty-led study visits to neighbouring countries are on the increase, facilitated by cheap air travel (Beelen 2014). This means that, geography permitting, universities can add short-term mobility within the curriculum, although this is not an option for all countries in the world. In the case of short-term mobility, although the actual time spent abroad may be relatively limited compared with traditional one or two semester credit mobility

programs, nevertheless it is the foreign country setting (customs, languages, lifestyles and so on) which provides the opportunity for intercultural learning.

The experience of mobility in general, whether short or long term, can however make a meaningful contribution to Internationalization at Home by extension into the domestic curriculum. This may be achieved, for example, through exploration of what students had learned from the experience, alternative perspectives they had gained or other dimensions of intercultural competence developed. By sharing their views with others who had not been mobile, all students can benefit, rather than simply the mobile minority.

Within internationalization, the focus is shifting from input and output to outcomes and these are not dependent on location (Aerden 2014; Leask 2015 in press). An example is in the online delivery of education which may cause a student to be enrolled in a foreign university while remaining 'at home' or in another location. A second is that in some western European countries, students may live in one country and be enrolled in a university across a geographical border. This is the case, for example when Dutch students study in Belgium or German students study in The Netherlands.

Transnational education (TNE), defined as 'Award- or credit-bearing learning undertaken by students who are based in a different country from that of the awarding institution' (O'Mahony 2014), is also problematic for traditional distinctions between home and abroad. Specifically, it poses questions for Internationalization at Home, since an international student enrolled in an offshore university campus may neither be at home, nor in the country of the awarding university. An example of this would be an Indonesian student studying in Singapore on an Australian degree program or a Vietnamese student studying in Malaysia at the campus of a UK university. Such students must not be forgotten in the drive to internationalize the curriculum.

In reviewing the origins of IaH, Teekens points out that, 'The main concern of internationalization at home remains just as relevant today: what do we do with the vast majority of students who are not exposed to intercultural learning and an international experience?' (Teekens 2013, p. 1).

4.2 Internationalization at Home: The Emergence of the Concept

The emergence of Internationalization at Home in 2001 can be interpreted as a response to the dominant practice of equating internationalization with student mobility, supported by generously funded programs like Erasmus. Yet, the first version of the Erasmus program (1987) stimulated individual lecturers to learn about curricula and teaching methods through meetings with colleagues in other countries. This enabled the development of curricula, modules, teaching materials and other educational products, which extended the focus to European and intercultural dimensions in education.

With the introduction of Socrates I (1994), responsibility for the administration of partnerships shifted from academics to administrators, for example in the International Office, which gradually led to the mobility aspect gaining ground over curriculum. This development was criticized by both administrators and academics as a top down method, compared to the bottom up approach of the first phase of Erasmus (De Wit 2002, p. 56). The shift from collaboration between individual academics to institutional collaboration and student mobility caused De Wit, looking back at 25 years of Erasmus, to express the wish that Erasmus would rekindle its previous "focus on curriculum and learning outcomes", which would also increase the engagement of academics (De Wit 2012). This move away from viewing the role of mobility as just one element of curriculum internationalization is particularly important. Lack of engagement by academics, in combination with skills deficits are acknowledged by many as the main obstacles to internationalization (e.g. Egron-Polak and Hudson 2014, p. 68). The more mobility is seen as an administrative task rather than as part of the academic curriculum, the less focus there will be on the learning outcomes arising from mobility and, in consequence, less engagement of academics in the process.

More recently, however, an increasing concentration on internationalizing learning outcomes is drawing attention to the need for structured and purposeful delivery of the international and intercultural dimensions of the curriculum (Aerden 2014; Egron-Polak and Hudson 2014; Leask 2015 in press). This means that academic staff are the key players once more, just as in the days of the first Erasmus program. The difference being that the focus is on internationalized learning outcomes and curriculum internationalization, in contrast to international partnerships. In the European context, the Bologna process was at the basis of the learning outcomes approach as a means of making programs more transparent. While Bologna was specifically aimed at structural reform, it may be argued that it has ultimately had an impact on the content and delivery of programs as well.

Yet, the articulation and assessment of internationalized learning outcomes remains relatively under-reported. For this reason, Jones (2013a, p. 113) concludes that the literature only contains a limited number of studies into the achievement of internationalized learning outcomes, and notices a "relative lack of research into the outcomes of an internationalized curriculum for all students". Another issue that will require sustained attention in the years to come is the alignment of internationalized learning outcomes with their assessment in a domestic context and across the years of a program of study (see Jones and Killick 2013).

4.3 Existing Definition

The only existing definition of Internationalization at Home is fairly short and narrow. "Any internationally related activity with the exception of outbound student and staff mobility." (Crowther et al. 2001, p. 8).

One of the issues with the definition is that it does not indicate what Internationalization at Home actually is, concentrating rather on what it is not. Another is that it does not mention the intercultural dimension or the acquisition of intercultural skills, while these were intended as key elements of IaH from the outset (Crowther et al. 2001).

4.4   Critiques and Appreciation

Over the years, Internationalization at Home has been criticized in the literature. It stands out as a western concept and has therefore been approached with criticism by African scholars (Brewer and Leask 2012, p. 247), and is not high on the agenda of universities in Asia.

Internationalization at Home has also been called a "movement", criticized for focusing on means rather than aims, and shifting into "instrumental mode" (Brandenburg and De Wit 2010, p. 16); for a tendency to focus on "activity and not results as indicators of quality" (Whitsed and Green 2013); or pretending to be guided by high moral principles, while not actively pursuing them (De Wit and Beelen 2014, May 2). Rizvi (2007, p. 391) refers to Internationalization at Home as an "activist network".

Yet, on the whole, internationalization of the curriculum at home has positive connotations, which led the (International Association of Universities 2012, pp. 4–5) to call on all universities to "affirm internationalization's underlying values, principles and goals" through "pursuit of the internationalization of the curriculum as well as extra curricula [sic] activities so that non-mobile students, still the overwhelming majority, can also benefit from internationalization and gain the global competences they will need."

4.5   Continued Relevance of IaH as a Concept

In spite of the imperfect definition of Crowther et al. (2001), the concept of Internationalization at Home still seems to play a useful role in certain contexts, particularly where the emphasis of internationalization efforts has traditionally been on mobility. By including IaH in the recent European Policy statement, *European higher education in the world* (European Commission 2013), it might even be said that IaH has gained momentum, and has moved into the centre of the debate on the internationalization of higher education. It has made its way into the policy agendas of many universities, and is also on the way to becoming part of the educational policies of some member states. For example, in The Netherlands, Nuffic has published two studies (Van Gaalen et al. 2014a, b), which form the basis for a Dutch national policy for Internationalization at Home. This increased attention is not limited to Europe, but it is also gaining traction for instance in South Africa and Latin America.

The continuing popularity of Internationalization at Home is enough reason in itself to explore the concept, definition and development in more detail. However, and more importantly, IaH is still used as a contrast to mobility within the broader concept of internationalization of the curriculum, particularly in situations where mobility has been the dominant approach to internationalization. In such cases, IaH emphasizes the point that internationalization of the curriculum 'abroad' reaches relatively few students in contrast to the non-mobile majority, who thus need the opportunity to benefit from internationalization of the curriculum at home. All of this adds weight to the requirement to re-address some of the issues.

It may be seen from the above that Internationalization at Home is essentially a subset of internationalization of the curriculum in that it shares a focus on both the formal and informal curriculum. But IaH excludes student mobility across borders, which is, in contrast, one element of curriculum internationalization. Internationalization at Home operates on the assumption that not all students will have mobility opportunities and that, while mobility can bring additional benefits for the mobile few, this should not be at the expense of internationalization for all.

Perhaps one of the key, and as yet unrealized, contributions of Internationalization at Home lies in framing a context for the development of employability skills. Many studies have shown that international experiences are instrumental in developing the kind of transferable skills which employers are looking for (Black and Duhon 2006; Crossman and Clarke 2010). Jones (2013b) calls for 'further exploration of the domestic intercultural context as a vehicle for the kind of transformational learning evidenced through international mobility' (Jones 2013b, p. 8), and argues the need for additional studies which confirm its value. This is supported by the *Erasmus Impact Study* (European Union 2014) which drives the message home that the non-mobile majority of European students depend on the domestic curriculum for the acquisition of the employability skills that mobile students acquire through study, or perhaps more importantly, internship abroad.

Internationalization at Home is thus a concept in need of a good definition, which may help to support its implementation.

4.6   New Definition of Internationalization at Home

We have argued that IaH offers a valuable reminder that internationalization of the curriculum is not simply about providing mobility opportunities, but that it is also crucial in domestic learning environments, emphasizing the need to reach all students, not simply the mobile few. At the same time, it provides a framework for incoming student mobility to support internationalization of teaching and learning, and also focuses on incorporating local intercultural learning opportunities into curriculum internationalization. The relevance and popularity of the concept of Internationalization at Home contrasts with the current definition which is not particularly enlightening and does not offer much clarification or support for those wishing to implement it. We therefore propose the following definition:

> Internationalization at Home is the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments.

The definition stresses intentional inclusion of international and intercultural aspects into curricula in a purposeful way. This implies that adding or infusing random internationalized elements or electives would be insufficient to internationalize a program. It also emphasizes the role of IaH for all students in all programs.

In talking of 'domestic learning environments', the definition makes it clear that these may extend beyond the home campus, and the formal learning context, to include other intercultural and/or international learning opportunities within the local community. These may include working with local cultural, ethnic or religious groups, using a tandem learning system or other means to engage domestic with international students, or exploiting diversity within the classroom.

It must be highlighted once more that these contexts may be seen as 'learning environments', but it is the articulation and assessment of internationalized learning outcomes within the specific context of a discipline which will allow such environments to be used as a means of achieving meaningful international and intercultural learning.

5 Challenges for Policy and Implementation

The process of internationalizing the formal curriculum at home, just as with other aspects of internationalization, is based on the capability of academic staff to develop, deliver and assess it. Many studies have identified this as a critical success factor and have offered ideas to support staff development for internationalization (e.g. Carroll 2015; Leask 2015 in press).

Additional food for thought is provided by *The Erasmus Impact Study* (European Union 2014) which notes that staff mobility can strengthen Internationalization at Home processes. It found that academics were aware that the skills they acquired abroad would have an impact when they returned home, so that "the Erasmus effect could be extended to non-mobile participants" (European Union 2014, p. 148). The study showed that 95 % of HEI's and 92 % of staff consider outgoing staff mobility an effective tool "to allow students who do not have the possibility to participate in a mobility scheme, to benefit from the knowledge" (Ibid, p. 149, Tables 4–6). A limitation of the study, however, is that academic respondents were those who had taken part in mobility. It is a well-known phenomenon that mobile staff are limited in number, and that the same academics repeatedly take part. We also know that staff mobility is only effective when it is part of a deliberate process of staff development, as noted by Brewer and Leask (2012, p. 251). Until we have further evidence we cannot be sure of the impact on home students. The self reported data from the *Erasmus Impact Study* are thus inconclusive. The impact of incoming staff mobility is equally unknown.

However, it is evident that staff development will be a key factor in making a success of Internationalization at Home. Even those academics who have studied, lived or worked in, or come from another country are likely to need support in adapting what may be limited understanding of internationalization practice to domestic, intercultural contexts. Staff development will need to focus on internationalizing existing, discipline specific learning outcomes within the home curriculum for all students, on appropriate pedagogy and associated assessment. Since the implementation of internationalization of the curriculum takes place at the level of departments and programs of study, staff development will also need to be delivered at that level. The implication for institutional policy is therefore that both implementation and support of academic staff, in relation to internationalization of the curriculum at home or abroad, will need to be embedded within departments.

6   Conclusion

By comparing the concepts and accepted definitions of internationalization, Comprehensive Internationalization and internationalization of the curriculum to those of Internationalization at Home, we have provided context for a new definition of IaH. It has been affirmed that IaH relates both to formal and informal curriculum, and aims to develop international and intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes for all students, regardless of whether they also take part in mobility opportunities.

   In recent discussions on internationalization, the constant introduction of new terms and definitions has been criticized (e.g. De Wit 2011). Although the authors are fully aware of this, they consider that the importance of clarifying the still useful concept of IaH overrides the urge to limit the number of definitions. They have therefore proposed a new definition of Internationalization at Home. Although defining it does not guarantee its implementation, since there are fundamental challenges to be overcome, it is hoped that redefinition might bring implementation a step closer.

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