

PERSPECTIVES OF EFL INSTRUCTORS ON PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT IN INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INDICATORS FOR PREPARING STUDENTS TO BECOME KNOWLEDGE WORKER

Wipanee Pengnate
College of General Education and Languages,
Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology
E-mail: pengnate.wipanee@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to investigate EFL instructors' points of view and their teaching strategies towards the performance assessment in internationalization employed by English instructors, College of General Education and Languages, primarily in three aspects: curriculum; research; and teaching-learning strategies. The study, moreover, focused on the imperative of internationalization and globalization within the context of knowledge -based in order to prepare students for knowledge-based working context. Globalization can be considered as the catalyst while internationalization is the response in a proactive way. These lead to a question of the growth in knowledge-based sectors as work become more skillful across industries and within individual occupations context.

The study employed qualitative research by using in-depth interview with 14 participants divided into two categories: two English instructors with Executive position and twelve English instructors. The research findings were analyzed through the theory of ethnographic research which aims on investigating the insight thought of the participants and exploring classroom environment in international context. Related documents on as teaching materials and teaching styles were used for analyzing in this study. Multilateral frameworks of main driving forces influencing the internationalization process, globalization and knowledge economy were analyzed throughout the research discussion.

INTRODUCTION

The notion of knowledgeable worker has been defined by Powell and Snellman (2004), Shapiro and Varian (1998), and Graham (2005) in a rapid obsolescence where knowledge-intensive activities contribute to an accelerated pace of technical and scientific advance and where intellectual capital and exploits in a dynamically changing future is created. Drucker (1993) and Nonaka and Takeuchi (1996) further stated that in the knowledge-based economy, the successful

individuals are those who possess of creativity ability to innovate and continuous learning. This relies on the suggestion indicated by OECD (1996) that government policies should focus on upgrading human capital through promoting access to a range of skills, especially learning capability. A more radical approach is moreover advocated by Brown, et. Al. (2008) stated that Britain has promoted the creation of a high-skilled, high-waged economy by upgrading the education and skills of its workforce. The creation of

world-class skills, thus, is assumed to be a route to economic prosperity, reduced income inequalities and social cooperation. Such policy prescriptions rest on the idea of a knowledge-based economy where innovative ideas and technical expertise is in the new global competitive challenge.

Since TNI English instructors are faced with limited student contact time with can meet their instructional objectives and facilitate learning, they are often forced to make instructional decisions between content coverage, depth of understanding, and critical analysis of course material. To address this dilemma, it is imperative to integrate instructional strategies and techniques that can efficiently and effectively maximize student learning and critical thinking to become them to knowledgeable workers in knowledge-based content.

While educational opportunity and literacy have long been key elements in programmes committed to human development (Norton Peirce, 1995) the increased status of English within a global economy of languages has meant that English language education has also begun to be promoted as an important factor in international development programmes. In recent works exploration, the relationship between development and language education, development is defined as the process of reducing poverty while also expanding people's choice, with its ultimate aim being to increase participants' control over their own development (Norton 2000).

There is an argument that the globalization of higher education means the internationalization of higher education and

that both can be used interchangeably. According to the former is a product of the development and impact of economic and cultural globalization, the internationalization of higher education is an inevitable and significant counter measure and action. Seargent (2008) further contends that the approaches to internationalization, especially in the age of globalization are how to address the globalized society and how to proceed with international exchange from diverse and historical perspectives.

The internationalization of higher education is basically the process of presenting exchange activities in education and research of various kinds among universities and institutions in different countries. The current internationalization of higher education mainly comprises: (1) human exchange, mainly of students, teachers and researchers; (2) the exchange and accreditation of programs, course and degrees, including the sharing of curriculums and especially the development of transnational programs, and (3) research project activities, including the organization of international conferences and joint research, mainly for presenting research results and academic exchange.

The research questions that assisted guiding the exploration process were:

1. What are the significant aspects of generating Internationalization in English teaching?
2. In what ways were individual characteristic of the teacher promote Internationalization in the education?
3. What are teachers' attitudes towards the incubation of students' knowledge worker through the application of Internationalization?

METHOD

This study employed ethnographic research involving participant interviews and observation to investigate the points of views of 14 English instructors. The research design for this study comprised 4 phases:

1. Interviews with 14 English instructors
2. The collection of site documents and associated materials.
3. Analysis and synthesis of data derived from the ethnography.
4. The interpretation and tabling of findings from the ethnography.

This study employed ethnographic research which aimed at understanding the social and cultural context of the participants' behavior and decisions. The ethnography is a description of events that occurs within the life of a group concerning both social structure and individual behaviors relevant to group membership and culture- that is to study a particular culture including customs, beliefs and behavior. The study was based on an in-depth face-to-face interview with 14 English instructors.

Question 1: What are the most important dimensions of internationalization in the field of higher education?

Question 2: What are the significant components of English teaching to develop the idea of internationalization?

Question 3: What are the key performance indicators to prepare students to become knowledge workers?

Question 4: What is the connection between internalization and global trends?

Question 5: In your opinion, what is the most important factor in developing the learning skill?

Question 6: What are the significant problems you face in English teaching?

Question 7: Are Internet and Web technologies important in teaching-learning process?

Question 8: What is the most important thing you would like to see happen in Thai education?

Question 9: How well equipped do you think Thai students are when they leave the university?

Question 10: Where do you think Thailand is heading in the future? And how Thai education can assist?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Research findings were categorized into four groups:

1) Global language indicator

According to the ethnography, the majority of participant interview revealed that English language is broadly associated with international development as a vital tool for better access to the world economy. Some indicated that the emergence of English is as the new beginning for diverse varieties and differential access to linguistic resources in different contexts. Few participants contended that English language could bridge the gap in the workforce and will help the country become more competitive in both internal and international labor markets. However, there was less indication of the method the support a student-driven in demand for international placements.

This is reliant on the Tan (2005)'s statement that in the era of globalization, there is pressure on universities to become more international in character. Thus, the requirement of graduates who possess broad international knowledge and strong intercultural skills in addition to the more traditional disciplinary knowledge acquired a result of a university education. Hence, Internationalization is an essential key in creating an environment that is international in character- in teaching, in research, in outreach. This might be concluded that to teach English language by focusing on the development of Internationalization might support students' knowledge from different parts of the world as well as prepare them to communicate and work with people from other cultures and countries.

2) Economic value indicator

The majority of the participants described that English-speaking countries were currently among the nations with the highest GDPs. Thus, it was significant for education to sustain the illusion of English as a tool of economic and social advancement. Some participants indicated that the labor salary premiums rise along with competency in English. English appeared to provide access to enhance the opportunity of economic and employment development.

According to Graham (2005), he advocated the notion of knowledge economy as a shift control of education from the state to the global knowledge economy. Education, therefore, need to embrace an educational policy that involves thinking about knowledge differently from the industrial model- that is to require the

adoption of student-centred pedagogy to realize the shift to applied knowledge. The lack of encouraging students to express their insights through various teaching materials, therefore, was not enough for students to be a critical thinker. The structure of rote learning in Thai education, thus, should be eliminated and employed student-centred approach instead. According to Browne and Freeman (2000), the notion of developing critical thinking in teaching-learning process is to think more controversially which required students to do meaningful learning activities and think about what they are doing as the core evaluation of critical thinking focuses on an engagement of the students divided into four categories of learning process: the evaluation of information and reasoning; the evaluation of ideas as a part of creative problem solving; the evaluation of their own observations and the evaluation of their thinking.

3) Teaching- learning indicator

The majority of participants demonstrated that internationalization is the factor to an improvement in the country's overall education system. However, some participants argued that the learning pedagogy for learners needed some changes by applying these following criteria: mobility of student and academic staff; internationalization in the substance of teaching, learning and research; knowledge transfer and policies for internationalization in higher education. Few participants contended that it was significant to think about enhancing the attractiveness of higher education in other countries such as the USA, Australia, Canada or Japan in response to an increasingly competitive global environment.

This is reliant on OECD's theory who advocates that motivation and incentives for internationalization include recruiting "the best of the best" in order to enhance and institution's international profile as a world class institution in teaching and research. A further radical approach is moreover argued by Stevens (1996) who states that UK students' lack of language ability accounts for their low outward mobility to non-English speaking countries, but mobility is still greater than students from English-speaking countries, such as the USA and Australia.

4) Technological indicator

The majority of the participants revealed that teaching English was very significant as a language for Internationalization. Therefore, the students could access to technology by using English as a means to updated news, articles, journals and various kinds of research. Some teachers asked the students to do their assignment by searching information from the Internet. However, few participants responded that the students always copied and pasted the information without using their own ideas to analyze.

Lauder, et. Al. (2008) indicate significance of technological accessibility in education as essential tool for both teachers and students to search for new information, to share their ideas and to open up to the world they never know. Haddad and Jurich (2002) further support that digital technology is used to shift people from the passive cogs of the manufacturing economy to the active choreographers of the creative knowledge economy by way of speed and flexibility. Applying ICT in any curriculums, they

believed to be the high potential to transition developing countries into the global economy. Books and papers involve limited interaction, while the Internet facilitates the highest interactivity for both teacher and students to access updated multiple sites at anytime. As the available educational technologies continue to grow, the challenge for instructors is to identify tools that facilitate existing learning objectives. Several emerging technologies (including blogs, wikis, and podcasting) offer distinct instructional advantages in the promotion of students' critical thinking skills.

CONCLUSION

According to the ethnography, Internationalization is applied to process and outcome. As a process, the ethnography revealed that it is significant for teachers to be concerned about the mobility of staff members and students should have more opportunities to exchange ideas and learn from other people in different learning contexts so they broaden their global countries. Moreover, teacher participants suggested that research is one of the most significant factors to enhance idea sharing. As an outcome, it is clearly presented from the ethnography that Internationalization develops more positive attitude by assisting students to retain their knowledge longer than rote learning system. However, the eradication of global competition might have effect on greater connectivity between education and global economy in terms of preparing the students for the knowledge economy. It might be recalled that the findings from the ethnographic research revealed four essential aspects as: Global language indicator; Economic

value indicator; Teaching- learning indicator; and Technological indicator.

Although these findings may not reflect a framework of the English teaching-learning process structure, it could present the notion of instruction changes- there are changes from traditional classroom to a place where students have an opportunity to search for knowledge from technological accessibility; a place where students have an opportunity to learn the different cultures and a place where education is linked to global competition in order to prepare the student to be a creator, innovator and entrepreneur.

RECOMMENDATION

Since the 1990s, progress in economic terms and other forms of globalization has been accompanied by active exchange among universities in various countries within a limited region, such as European countries, while cross-border internationalization and standardization

of curriculums, transnational education, quality assurance of higher education and global linkage and cooperation between higher education institutions are notable. Thus, the following research topics should be considered:

1. University Leadership for Internationalization
2. Internationalization Strategic Plan
3. Institutionalization of International Education
4. Infrastructure- Professional International Education Units and Staff
5. Internationalized Curriculum
6. International Students and Scholars
7. Study Abroad
8. Faculty Involvement in International Activities
9. Campus Life-Co-Curricular Programs
10. Monitoring the Process
11. Quality Management Models in Higher Education
12. An Insight into the Issue of Strategic Management of an Internationalization Process

REFERENCES

Agrawal, V. 2011. "Globalization and Knowledge Economy as Driving Trends in Higher Education- Impact Analysis", **Eighth AIMS International Conference of Management**. January 1-4, 2011

Brown, P., Kayder, H., and Ashton, D. 2008. "Education, globalization and the knowledge economy", **A commentary by the Teaching and Learning Research Programme**. Available January 2011 from <http://www.tlrp.org/pub/documents/globalisationcomm.pdf>.

Browne, M.N. and Freeman, K. 2000. "Distinguishing Features of Critical Thinking Classrooms", **Teaching in Higher Education**. 5, 3: 301-309.

Drucker, P. F. 1993. **Post-Capitalist Society**. New York: Harper Business.

Florida, R. and Inagli, I. 2004. "EUROPE IN THE CREATIVE AGE." Available January 2011 from http://www.creativeclass.com/rfcgdb/articles/Europe_in_the_Creative_Age_2004.pdf

Graham, C. 2005. **Enterprise Education**. N.S.W: Pearson.

Guruz, K. & Pak, N. K. 2002. **Globalization, knowledge economy and higher education and national innovation systems: the Turkish case**. Available February 2011 from http://www.congresslifelonglearning.de/download/5-2-6_doc_gueruez.pdf

H Haddad, W. D., and Jurich, S. 2002. "ICT for education: prerequisites and constraints. In W. D. Haddad and A. Draxler (Eds.)", **Technologies for Education: Potential, Parameters and Prospects**. For UNESCO by Knowledge Enterprise.

Kefela, G.T. 2011. "Knowledge-based economy and society has become a vital commodity to countries", **International NGO Journal**. 5,7: 160-166.

Lauder, H, Brown, P and Ashton, D. 2008. "Education, Globalization and Skill", in McCulloch, G and Crook, D, (Eds.), **The Routledge International Encyclopedia of Education**. London: Routledge.

Nonaka, I., Takeuchi, H., & Umemoto, K. 1996. "A theory of organizational knowledge creation." **International Journal Technology Management**. 11: 833-845.

Norton, B. 2000. **Identity and Language Learning: Gender, Ethnicity and Educational Change**. London: Longman.

Norton Peirce, B. 1995. "Social identity, investment, and language learning", **TESOL Quarterly**. 29(1), 9-31. OECD 1996, "The KNOWLEDGE-BASED ECONOMY", **GENERAL DISTRIBUTION**, Available January 2011 from <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/51/8/1913021.pdf>, accessed on January 2011.

Parker and Chao. 2007. "Wiki as a Teaching Tool", **Interdisciplinary Journal of Knowledge and Learning Objects**. Available January 2011 from <http://ijklo.org/Volume3/IJKLOv3p057-072Parker284.pdf>.

Powell, W.W. and Snellman, K. 2004. "The Knowledge Economy", **Annual Review of Sociology**. August, Vol.30, pp. 199-200

Seargent, P. 2008. "Ideologies of English in Japan: The perspective of policy and pedagogy." **Language Policy**, 7(2), 121-142.

Shapiro, C. and Varian, H.R. 1998. "Information Rules: A Strategic Guide to the Network Economy", **The Journal of Technology Transfer**. 25(2), 250-252.

Stevens, C. 1996. "The knowledge-driven economy", **OECD observer**, June-July 1996, (200): 6-10

Tan, C. 2005. "The potential of Singapore's ability driven education to prepare students for a knowledge economy", **International Education Journal**. 6,4: 446-453.