



Connecting the Promising Practices for Teaching Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students with Student Satisfaction

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Editorial Comments

Connecting the Promising Practices for Teaching Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students with Student Satisfaction

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Partially due to the increasing enrolment of international students, colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada are becoming more culturally and linguistically diverse. According to the Canadian Bureau of International Education (2021) and the Institute of International Education (2021), more than 1.6 million international students chose to study at Canadian and American post-secondary educational institutions in 2020.

Culture shock may be the first big discomfort faced by international students when they arrive in the new host country; even so, this will not be the only challenge they face. As soon as they move abroad to study, international students must adapt to new social and academic environments. Beyond living arrangements, socialization, language barriers, changes in eating practices, and in communication, international students must also face issues regarding their academic life. They will not only deal with unfamiliar methods of teaching used by their instructors, in a foreign language, but they will also have to alter their learning strategies and preferences to a new learning environment. Unfortunately, though, few instructors have received training for teaching international students (Paige & Goode, 2009; Tran, 2020), which results in a less than optimal environment for intercultural learning.

Since 2020 and the outbreak of COVID-19, most students have experienced a change in the way instruction is delivered to them. It is estimated that approximately 90% of learning was online during the COVID-19 timespan (Radcliff et al., 2020). Yet, even before the pandemic, there had been a rise in the popularity of online education in North America. Online learning is increasingly being favoured by a growing range of students of various ages and diverse backgrounds, including international students. However, several gaps have been found in online teaching, including challenges faced by first-time online students, the impact of various course-loads, and learning effectiveness for additional-language students.

As a result, to achieve higher-student satisfaction and perceptions of learning, instructors should analyze their roles and implement new teaching strategies to facilitate international



students' learning experiences. With the aim of enhancing their academic performances, both offline and online, it is essential for educators to apply more promising teaching practices that include measurable results, and report successful outcomes for students with diverse language and cultural backgrounds.

Our recent research provides insights from three distinct studies regarding the promising teaching practices. The first study (Smith et al., 2019) found that the most promising teaching practices identified as having elevated levels of student satisfaction also have medium/high student perceptions of learning. In the second study (Smith et al., 2019), the researchers examined different preferences of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and non-STEM international students on twenty-two promising teaching practices. Slight difference was found in the two groups regarding their most, and least, preferred teaching practices, or recommended teaching practices' changes. The major differences occurred in some specific areas, like knowledge transmission and culturally responsive teaching. The last study (Smith et al., 2022) explored the connection between the promising practices for teaching online international students with international student satisfaction and perceptions of learning. It found that many teaching practices, such as communication, sense of belonging, and marking schemes, are essential factors in meeting students' needs. Our 2022 IGI-Global edited book, *Handbook of Research on Teaching Strategies for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse International Students*, collected further research from across the globe focusing on promising teaching practices, teaching about academic integrity, student challenges and support, and online teaching and learning.

The literature remains deficient, however, regarding investigating the experiences of international students in the post-secondary educational context. Therefore, the six papers in this special edition focus on amplifying the student voice through student satisfaction and student perceptions of learning associated with the teaching of culturally and linguistically diverse international students which is the focus of this special issue of the *Journal of Teaching and Learning*.

First, Takhmina Shokirova, Lisa Ruth Brunner, Karun Kishor Karki, Capucine Coustere, and Negar Valizadeh, in the paper *Confronting and Reimagining the Orientation of International Graduate Students: A Collaborative Autoethnography Approach*, suggest that international student orientation should be understood as a fluid, ongoing process rather than one with rigid boundaries and timelines. Further, orientation programming should more deeply consider the intersecting identities and positionalities of international students as multifaced individuals, as well as the implicit expectations of one-way integration into settler-colonial Canadian society.

Linyuan Guo-Brennan, in the paper *Making Virtual Global Learning Transformative and Inclusive: A Critical Reflective Study on High-Impact Practices in Higher Education*, reports a critical reflective study on virtual global learning and shares high-impact, evidence-based strategies to make virtual global learning more equitable, inclusive, meaningful, and relevant to all learners in higher education.

Dhruba Neupane, in the paper *Rethinking Methodologies: Implications for Research on International Students*, exposes the weaknesses of the deficit models of language, culture, and competence and stresses the need to reshape international student studies in higher education as a field of inquiry by foregrounding appreciative models and methodologies.

Elaine Khoo and Xiangying Huo, in their paper *The Efficacy of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy for Low-Proficiency International Students in Online Teaching and Learning*, found that students' willingness to engage in high-impact language practice in a reading and writing program and their perceptions of significant transformation show the benefits of the personalized

support amplified by the application of culturally responsive pedagogy in online teaching and learning settings.

Edward Cruz, Rosario Quicho, and Edwin Ibañez, in their paper *Education Environment and Role Transition of Internationally Educated Nurses Enrolled in a Bridging Program in Ontario, Canada*, reported that internationally educated nurses had a generally positive educational experience within the bridging program they were attending. They also found a significant relationship between the respondents' perceptions of the teaching process within their bridging program's education environment and role transition.

Finally, Haojun Guo, Ju Huang, and Qitong Zhou, in their paper *A Narrative Inquiry of Three Chinese International Students' Academic Adjustment Experiences at Canadian Universities*, revealed the importance of native languages and how past experiences before coming to Canada influenced students' academic adjustment.

These six papers report the most recent studies in international student education, focusing on different aspects from student orientation to language development, and from bridging program to virtual learning environments. These papers also open up more research topics for future studies. For example, the nature of student orientation itself needs more reflections from educational scholars and practitioners. To step out of the deficit model mentioned by Neupane in this special issue, we may think of using the word *negotiation* to replace the word *orientation*. Helping students to be orientated to Western education should not be the central goal of university services. Rather, culturally responsive services and pedagogy should be the action post-secondary institutions need to take.

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