

AL student adjustment at HEIs: A leap through the dragon's gate.

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Abstract

This presentation reports from a study on how English as an Additional language (EAL) students adjust to a new educational system and new socio-cultural environment, using a second language. It also covers internationalisation at higher educational institutions (HEIs).

A broad holistic picture of EAL/international students' adjustment, and their second language identity development, emerged in this qualitative longitudinal ethnographic study, with data gathered through a range of sources; interviews, observations, focus group discussions, and study of HEI documents.

The findings show how students' socio-cultural adjustment influences the academic adjustment, and the role of language for adjustment. It was found that internationalisation at the HEI had a dual function - income and provision of excellent education - which created a tension amongst staff around fulfilling students' needs and adhering to the prevalent teaching and learning approach. The study also showed how mutual adjustment can become an undertaking by HEIs and EAL students.

Bio

Kerstin has undertaken PhD studies at Macquarie University in the research area of adjustment and second language identity development, and how these presently are dealt with, by English as an Additional Language (EAL) students and Higher Educational Institutes (HEI). She is currently the co-ordinator of the Language Self Access Centre (LSAC) at Ara Institute of Canterbury, in New Zealand, where she has worked for the last nineteen years. She has previously been an English language teacher in Sweden and New Zealand and has a language advising qualification, a Master of Arts in Language Learning and Technology, through the University of Hull, UK.