Adaptation required by international students in a new learning environment

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Agenda

- Why this study?
- Contextualisation
- Findings
- So what?
In 2012–13 there were almost 300,000 students from outside the EU
125,000 students from non-UK EU countries studying in the UK
China
- 84,000 in 2013
- 88,000 in 2014
700,000 students studying overseas for a UK qualification
Part of the *marketization of H.E. (Brown and Carasso 2013)*
The findings were……

- There are three areas of difficulty for international students when they need to adapt
  - Language
  - Culture
  - Pedagogy
- BUT I could have guessed this without doing the research..........................
Not three equal elements as originally thought (Language, Pedagogy and Culture)

Face impacts upon all students but especially Chinese learners
  • Collectivist/Individualist societies

What does it mean?
The notion of ‘face’

- ‘Self in the view of others’, Qi (2011)
- Collectivist/individualist societies
- Face
  - multi-dimensional notion
  - protecting face
  - giving face
  - winning face
  - losing face
- the importance of esteem (Goffman, 1967; Spencer-Oatey, 2005; Wang, Fang and Teo 2011).
Findings

Student face v Collective face

• Student face can be narcissistic (*Goffman 1967*)
  • Individualistic

• Student face can be difficult for the individual in a Collectivist sense (*Kim and Nam, 1998*)
  • A serious problem, e.g. poor performance or failure reflects upon the family or social group via the student, e.g. collective social face (*Spencer-Oatey, 2005*)
Face is not recognised in relation to some key issues;

- Language, IELTS
- Pedagogy and participation in classroom activities
- Academic support for students
  - Academic writing
  - Essays
So what does it all mean?

- Not generalizable
- If we understand the issue of face we begin to understand our students’ perspectives, especially Chinese learners
- Therefore;
  - Support the learners
  - Lessen the effect of face on students
  - Educate the staff
  - Be available after sessions or in small group meetings
- If we can lessen the fear of losing face students will begin to adapt more easily