(creative)
Internationalization of Higher Education: Between Rhetoric and Reality

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Starting with:

• Terms, definitions and meanings
• Context
• What to do and how to do it

A conceptual understanding of internationalization and globalization is needed to make sense of the varied and complex ways they are affecting higher education in the worldwide.
Keywords

• Flow of goods, ideas
• Diminishing importance of boundaries of time and space
• Diminishing importance of nation-state
• Connections, interdependence
A matter of meaning
What do we call Flows?

One side of the moon

“...the closer integration of the countries and people of the world, which has been brought about by the enormous reduction in the costs of transportation and communication, and the breakdown of artificial barriers to the flows of goods, services, capital, knowledge, and (to a lesser extent) people across borders.” (Stiglitz, 2002)
A matter of meaning
What do we call *Interdependence*?

*One side of the moon*

“...bringing all of *humanity* into a single ecosystem of embedded, overlapping networks. Borders, boundaries, delineations, and walls of any kind are slowly giving way to the compelling force of integration and interdependence.” (Jim Garrison, 38, 2004)
A matter of meaning
What do we call Internationalization

One side of the moon

“...the complex of processes whose combined effect, whether planned or not, is to enhance the international dimension of the experience of higher education in universities and similar educational institutions.” (OECD)
A matter of meaning
What do we call Internationalization

The same side of the moon

“The process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, function, or delivery of postsecondary education.” (Knight 2003)
We use the term globalization to represent neo-liberal economic ideology and its material strategies that aim to increase profits and power for transnational corporations, and similar strategies enabling government agencies to gain economic advantages and be competitive.” (Currie et al, 2003)
A matter of imbalance

The context:

map of GDP per capita in the world in USD (PPP = a parity of purchasing power) in 2015, according to IMF forecast.

Source: scenari economici.it. Gennaio 2016
A matter of imbalance

The context:

Top universities by region

Source: THE WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKING

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A matter of imbalance

The context:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Country</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>10</td>
<td>University of Chicago</td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: THE WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKING
The question that still remains

How to achieve within this imbalanced context the integration of an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, function, or delivery of postsecondary education.” (Knight 2003)
Different hierarchical positions

- Upper class Universities
- Middle class Universities
- Lower class Universities

Different needs

- Attractiveness for incoming students/staff
- Advantages for outgoing students/staff
- Opportunity to access funds for research
- Opportunity - and usefulness - to publish in high impact journal

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81% of the universities in Africa vs 58% of those in North America, indicated the importance and existence of risks related to Internationalization.

Latin America attributes higher importance to brain drain, elitism, and loss of cultural identity.

In the Middle East, the loss of cultural identity is definitely the number-one risk attached to the process of internationalization.

Source: The IAU Internationalization Survey (Knight, 2015)
Gap between developing and developed countries in terms of the importance attributed to the benefit of:

- more internationally oriented students and staff.
  
  1° benefit for developed countries
  4° benefit for developing countries

- academic quality, research, and curriculum
  
  1° benefit for developing countries

Source: The IAU Internationalization Survey (Knight, 2015)
The top three risks associated with internationalization are

- commercialization and commodification of education programs
- the increase in the number of foreign “degree mills” and low-quality providers
- brain drain

Source: The IAU Internationalization Survey (Knight, 2015)
A matter of assumption

Higher education conceived as

**Business**

- Education = a Product
- Purpose = a profit

- Internationalisation =
  - >strong competition between the parties
  - >exacerbates existing inequalities
  - >risk of hegemonic cultural domination
  - >Risk of reduction in the quality of education

**Common good**

- Education = a Tool
- Purpose = upgrading of knowledge and skills for the good of all

- Internationalisation =
  - >allows for collaboration among the parties
  - >favors a reduction of existing inequalities
  - >promotes intercultural exchanges
  - >collaborations and exchanges should strengthen the quality of education worldwide

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A matter of assumption

these two conceptions of the higher education

• have very different consequences both on knowledge and development as well as on international relations.
• are supposed to be conveyed by different and opposing discourses

Nevertheless

when we talk about internationalization of higher education we tend to propose indifferently some elements of these two discourses within in the same argument.
However we think ... we have responsibilities

A possible joining point:
conceiving internationalization within the framework of Corporate Social Responsibility

- Initiatives to assess and take responsibility for the company's effects on environmental and social wellbeing.
- The term generally applies to efforts that go beyond what may be required by regulators of social wellbeing or environmental protection groups.
- CSR may also be referred to as "corporate citizenship" and can involve incurring short-term costs that do not provide an immediate financial benefit to the company, but instead promote positive social and environmental change.

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Cooperation at work

- Senegal: integrated development program from health to education through microeconomics enterprise.
- Tanzania: Stage for students in Overworld program

Teaching program for students and for trainers in medicine and social/health workers
In progress

- Congo
  - Incoming strategies for meritorious and poor students from Congo
  - Exchange of skills in the care and protection of children
  - Training of trainers courses for child care and protection
In progress

- Brazil, Portugal, Italy

*International research on medicalization of education*

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