

The impact of globalization on the teaching of communication skills in tertiary education: is inclusivity dead?

Carmela Briguglio & Fernando Porta
Curtin University

In the recent past we have considered that diversity in teaching and learning is catered for through an 'inclusive curriculum'. 'Inclusivity' has been the catchword of sensitive educators and those who seriously seek to address the needs of all students. However, inclusivity can lead us astray as we, in our attempts to include diverse students into our curriculum, slip into paternalism.

The new global world order means that our tertiary student populations are increasingly diverse, and that this is the new norm. This is particularly the case when we speak of developing communication skills for higher education. What exactly does it mean to study in a foreign country, in a second or third or other language in a culture that may be alien to a significant proportion of students? Can an inclusive curriculum bridge the gulf that faces, in particular, international students? Do we not need to review inclusivity and move to a new rationale based on an internationalised curriculum for all students?

The learning and assessment tasks for an internationalised curriculum should develop students' cultural and linguistic skills for the globalised world in which they live and move. It should prepare them for the global workplaces in which they will operate. It should prepare them for the super complexities they will face (Barnett).

The workshop will allow participants to examine and compare aspects of a university curriculum in the current tertiary context. It will challenge some common assumptions about inclusive curriculum and make a case for an internationalised curriculum that does not just 'include' but reflects diversity, and that aims to develop students' linguistic and intercultural skills for the 21st century.