

Internationalisation of Higher Education and Language Policy: Questions of Quality and Equity

by

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Three major drivers of internationalisation in higher education are student mobility, staff mobility and offshore delivery. All have increased rapidly over the last 20 years and a high-end estimate suggests that 6 million students will be studying abroad by 2020. Anglophone nations have dominated this process: four English speaking countries deliver more than fifty per cent of programmes involving students studying abroad. English-medium universities also have a strong influence in particular geographical regions: seventy per cent of all Asian students studying abroad are received by three main English speaking countries (the US, UK and Australia).

This leads to questions of equity and quality at national, institutional and individual levels. At national level, non-Anglophone countries may be unable to attract and retain the “brightest and best”. For institutions, the skewing of the market by language affects both intellectual/IP capacity and financial health. Finally, for the individual, educational achievement may be constrained by the capacity to function in an alien language and academic culture. Institutions without a robust language policy, adequate preparatory training and ongoing support may, therefore, damage more than the quality of teaching or their own global brand.

Building on the work of Hatakenaka (2004) this paper discusses the issues involved in the Anglophone asymmetry outlined above. In particular, the implications of the move towards teaching in the medium of English in non-Anglophone countries are outlined. The paper draws on work carried out in the University of Nottingham, Ningbo, China by the Centre for English Language Education.

Introduction

Around the world higher education is under pressure to change. It is growing fast and its contribution to economic success is seen as vital. The universities and other institutions are expected to create knowledge; to improve equity; and to respond to student needs – and to do so more efficiently. They are increasingly competing ... both with the private sector and internationally. (OECD, 2003, p. 60)

The presence of international students and faculty is no longer an optional, mildly exotic, welcome ingredient of campus life. It is quite simply what makes it possible for the academic enterprise to continue. (Crewe, 2004)

The proportion of foreign students in tertiary enrolments provides a good indication of the magnitude of internationalisation in different countries and key trends in this respect. (OECD, 2005, p. 249)

There is little doubt that the internationalisation of Higher Education is increasing pace, shifting its geographical spread, and that it is a phenomenon bringing benefits and immense new challenges to governments and institutional policy makers worldwide. Aside from the local financial imperatives highlighted in the quotation above from Professor Ivor Crewe at a *Universities UK* conference in 2004, the benefits and challenges attached to cross-border mobility of students, and, more recently, mobility of institutions and programmes, include not only those for individuals, but for institutions and nations.

Incentives for countries to internationalise are generally categorised under four broad areas: growth in mutual understanding, the migration of skilled labour, revenue generation, and capacity building (OECD, 2004). Different countries with different domestic challenges are drawn to participate differently in the internationalisation process. Small OECD members such as Luxembourg or Iceland or larger developing nations such as China may see internationalisation as a means of adding capacity to limited higher education availability in the country. In small OECD countries this may be in a particular sector, for instance postgraduate provision; in emerging nations it may be that programmes at all levels are unable to match provision to the growth in demand in their societies. On the other hand, Anglophone countries with established records of higher education provision have been able to capitalise on an influential *lingua franca*, capacity, and reputation. Therefore, while, theoretically, all the incentives to internationalise are available to all nations, the actual drivers to act on this reflect a far from level playing field. In addition, it could be argued that the benefits of mutual understanding and of the migration of skilled labour can be subsumed under and flow, automatically, from the powerful drivers of national policy that can be calculated and built into plans more objectively *viz* capacity building and revenue generation.

However, whether as net senders or receivers, capacity builders or revenue generators, the remarkable increases in mass student mobility are a fact for life for countries in the 21st Century. A few highlights will show the size of the phenomenon:

In 2001, 2.1 million students were studying outside their home countries, and some forecasts take this number as high as 6 million by 2020. Between 1995 and 1999, numbers of foreign students in OECD countries grew at nearly twice the rate of domestic students, and has doubled in total in the last 20 years.

As a grouping, OECD countries receive 85% of students studying abroad. In Britain, the early adoption of a strategy to market the higher education opportunities and engage in a broadly revenue generating policy had immediate effects. Numbers of international students in UK Higher Education rose dramatically from the mid-1990s. Over 30,000 more international students were being accepted into the UK system by 2002, a sharp rise of around one third since 1997. The industry in the UK is estimated to be worth £23 billion annually.

However, the impact on an educational system cannot always be measured in raw numbers and tangible costs and benefits. While the US continues to rank highest internationally in terms of raw totals of students going there, in terms of these numbers as a total of the HE sector nationally it ranks 15th (OECD, 2004). In debates of the impact of internationalisation on an education system, suddenness of change and the increase in total numbers in relation to domestic capacity may be more significant. In New Zealand, for instance, the situation has recently been particularly dramatic. Between 1994 and 2001, numbers of foreign fee paying students in tertiary education rose 295%. Although the raw numbers are low, moving from 3 199 in 1994 to 12 649 in 2001 (source: www.minedu.govt.nz), the impact on the relatively smaller overall student population was powerful and led to some problems of integration on the part of international students, particularly young Chinese. In a small country that is proud of its warmth of hospitality, the situation was a painful and alarming one, and headlines resonated with this feeling: for instance *Exodus from the Land Of Disillusion* (Dye, 2004), *Lack of Kiwi Friendships Depresses Asian Students* (Walsh, 2004).

Like New Zealand, Germany, Sweden, Norway, Canada and Iceland are noteworthy in that they rank above the US in terms of proportion of international students in their systems and have also seen rapid upward movement between 1998 and 2001. This paper will suggest that, whereas fee level is often cited as a factor in student mobility, reputation/perceived quality, established capacity and systems, and teaching in an influential *lingua franca* may outweigh straightforward cost-driven choices.

While capacity building and reputation establishment are very long term processes, changing the medium of instruction can take place relatively rapidly and can have rapid effects. It has been suggested, for instance, that the large increases between 1998 and 2003 of international student enrolments in Sweden, Norway and Iceland may, in part, be ascribed to their adoption of a policy of greater English-medium instruction (OECD, 2005, p. 255). This being the case, and in the light of the potential impact on quality of provision, a careful examination of the trade-offs between fee level, language of instruction, and capacity to welcome and communicate with a diverse student body (as opposed to capacity to accommodate as expressed in sheer places) need to be carried out in cost-benefit analyses.

This paper suggests that the internationalisation of higher education has far reaching consequences for relationships between curriculum development, teaching and learning expectations and access policies and that these are under-debated in the face of the realities of mass inter-country student, programme and institutional mobility. The paper takes issues around the language of the medium of instruction as a particular aspect of the complexities faced by the internationalising education provider, and suggests that these bring into sharp focus questions of equity, access, and quality. The discussion offers a brief review of the state of play for the most influential medium of instruction, English, and the potential effects of the dominance of the higher education field in internationalisation of the Anglophone nations.

The dominance of Anglophone institutions

With certain notable exceptions, such as the 400 plus member *Université Virtuelle Francophone* launched in 1998, English speaking nations have tended to dominate both student and programme/institutional cross-border mobility and to have a growing “market share” in the international scene. One reason for the importance of the English language in this market can be summed up as follows:

The growing global markets are constituted above all by two factors: on one hand, the economic and cultural weight of the United States; on the other hand, the economic/demographic weight of China, India and the rest of South Asia, and Southeast Asia. The United States pulls the world towards it, taking in a growing number of the rising generation and those who can invest in their own mobility and for whom an English language and American education represents an entry to the global labour market. In the wake of the United States, the other English-speaking countries also benefit from the demand for English-language education. The largest concentrations of this demand are found in the Asia-Pacific countries, where there is also a growing capacity for private investment. (OECD, 2004, p.148)

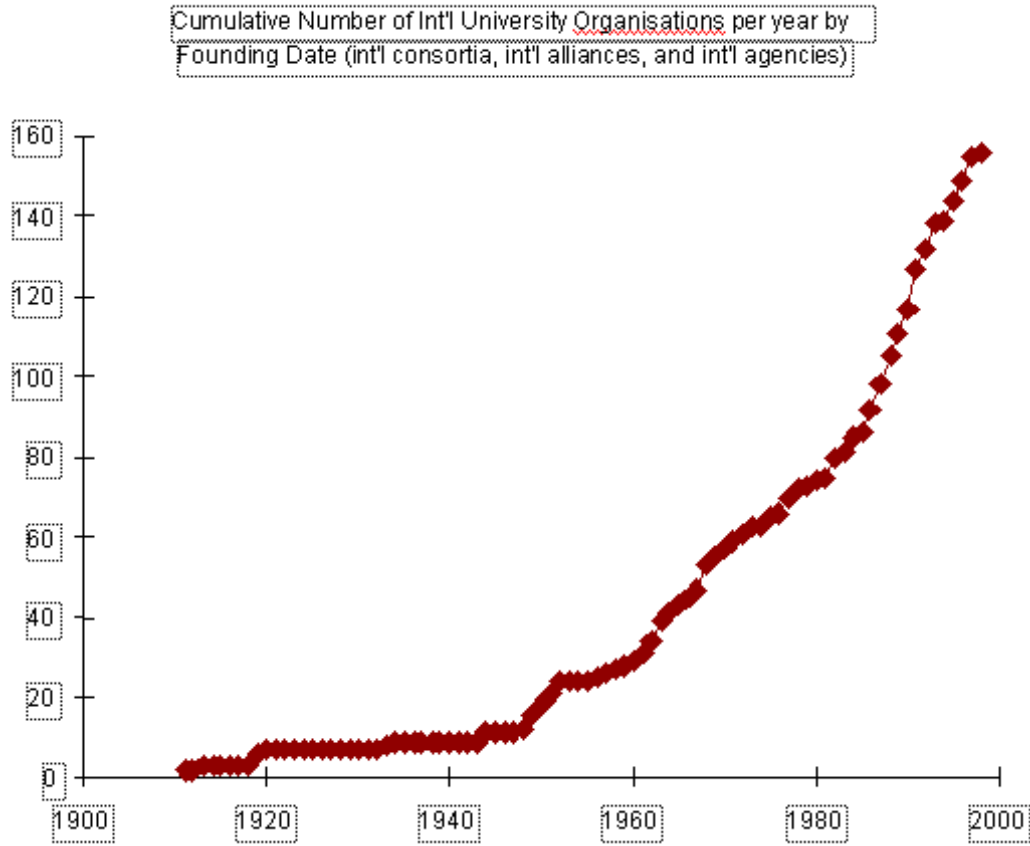
What are the effects, then, in terms of the choices made by parents and sponsors of the “pull” of English-medium programmes? Indicative statistics lend support to the picture of a market in international education in which it is massively advantageous to be Anglophone (unless otherwise stated data from OECD, 2004):

- Despite revenue generating approaches to fee setting in the receiving countries, 70% of all Asian/Oceanian students studying abroad are in three main English-speaking countries (US, UK and Australia).

- Four English-speaking countries (the US, UK, Australia and Canada) account for over 50% of the students studying abroad.
- 40% of European students studying abroad go to English-speaking countries.
- The UK has the highest number of international postgraduates in Europe.
- The US recruits more PhD students than the rest of the OECD put together.
- Research-led universities in the UK attract the highest number of international researchers in Europe, with English language being cited as one reason for attractiveness (European Commission, 2001).
- About 50% of skilled migrants live in the US (Docquier and Marfouk, 2005).

A feature dominating the rapidly evolving international Higher Education scene is that of offshore delivery. For example, all of Australia's 38 public universities are involved in this, and, one estimate suggests that in 2000, approximately 4% of the world's universities were explicitly involved in international delivery (Denman, 2002). Anglophone countries again dominate the process with UK, US and Australia tending to be leaders in this field. Some estimates suggest that 200 000 students are following UK programmes in countries other than Britain (OECD, 2004). In 2002, IDP Australia estimated that over 45 000 students were being taught under programme or institutional mobility arrangements and forecasts a significant increase in this mode (to around 300 000) by 2025.

Figure 1



Source : Denman, 2002

Offshore delivery, or “Programme and Institutional Mobility” (PIM) to use the OECD terminology, adds a further layer of complexity to the analysis of relationships between language of instruction, equitable access to programmes and the quality of the teaching and learning environment. What effect, for instance, will the increased delivery of programmes in the medium of English, but in a non-Anglophone country have on the perceived desirability of the courses? Will this process create global citizens with highly desirable and marketable communicative abilities and high levels of inter-cultural understanding? On the one hand, this development should, theoretically, foster truly “international Englishes” (*i.e.* forms of the language that develop between speakers of the language who may never have contact with a native speaker, nor spend time immersed in Anglo-Saxon cultures). On the other, questions of the range, depth, nuance, accuracy and comprehensibility in the highest levels of academic debate may emerge where the language has to be constrained by mutual intelligibility among a range of language proficiencies in the *lingua franca*. Ability to communicate sophisticated ideas to a range of peers lies at the heart of academic discourse, and the debates about the medium of instruction sometimes mask this, presenting it as a simple matter of basic proficiency on the part of students (and, increasingly, Faculty) – something perhaps on a par with IT skills.

Very often the institutional policy or regulations address the minimum requirement for study (often expressed as one of the internationally benchmarked tests of English, such as “IELTS 6.0” or “TOEFL

550”), but these levels were developed for a very different international educational landscape and may be seriously challenged when, for instance, a student is working towards an award taught in English, offered partly or wholly by a non-Anglophone institution, where the first language of the Faculty is not English, and the teaching is physically located in an Asian country. This is the case in the German Institute of Science and Technology, GIST, a link up between *Technische Universität München* and the National University of Singapore, one of several links that allow Singapore to “hit above its weight” internationally and play off the historic strength of English in the country.

In a variation on the theme, language and educational context are also unusually mixed in my own University (University of Nottingham, UK) on the campus in Ningbo, China. Here, as on the UK campus, Faculty are recruited internationally and we have lecturers of a range of first language backgrounds (Britain, Germany, Canada, New Zealand, Ireland, Malaysia, Mexico, to name but a few) delivering teaching in English to Chinese students. The very notion of educational mobility, of countries and institutions facilitating the entry of students from a range of countries, and of countries welcoming partnerships or links with international providers adds other permutations to the “mix”. While the dominant national group in the student body may be local, the spirit of internationalisation and other factors mean that the offering institution will welcome students from a range of countries. Thus, in the University of Nottingham, Ningbo, there is a target of 25% “international” students which, in this context, means non-PRC students – and we already see small numbers of British, Russian, Thai and North Koreans studying for a UK award in the medium of English in Southern China.

In some cases, where blended, face-to-face, and distance teaching can combine with linguistically diverse Faculty and students, these emerging contexts truly are new teaching and learning environments, and ones where it is imperative that the communicative ability does not fall towards the “lowest common denominator”. In addition, while a move towards instruction in an international language or provision by an international partner can bring benefits, these need to be considered in the light of a complex set of effects and unforeseen costs that can emerge when bringing students, an “alien” language, and a learning culture that has not evolved hand in hand with the secondary system into contact with one another. Issues will be both practical and ideological and include:

- Questions around the quality and resourcing of language preparation, integration and support.
- The need for explicit links between the higher education medium of instruction and the teaching of this language in schools.
- The need to foster and maintain first language development, both oral and written.
- An increased need for awareness of possible mis-matches of teaching and learning expectations among different academic communities (for instance the value placed on creativity versus the display of knowledge).
- The need to ensure that internationally educated nationals of a country are able to integrate and are employable in local contexts.
- Awareness of the potential for Anglophone tuition to be a medium, unconsciously, for the promotion of “Anglo-Saxon values”.
- Awareness of the potential for the commoditisation of teaching as it becomes disengaged from established academic communities.

- Awareness of the potential for “maximal inclusivity” in academic discourse to drive down the quality of that discourse.

The “Anglophone asymmetry”: questions of equity and quality

The above situation leads to practical and ethical questions at a variety of levels. At country level it can be argued that non-English-speaking nations find it difficult to compete in terms of the benefits of HE internationalisation – the market is simply skewed against them. A fundamental effect of the dominance of English as a language of instruction is neatly summed up by Sachi Hatakenaka:

...[O]ne critical factor that separates the two approaches may be the language of instruction. Non-English speaking countries have much greater difficulties in competing against English speaking countries, which dominate the scene. (Hatakenaka, 2004, p. 22)

Anglophone nations have had a twenty year advantage in developing policies around revenue generation. They dominate the list of OECD nations that charge a higher rate for international student fees (OECD, 2005:256 and see box below) and yet still tend to be massively net receivers rather than senders of students. The UK sends only 1 student for education abroad for around every 9 students incoming, the US 1 for each 16 incoming, and Australia leading the field with a ratio of 1:23 (OECD, 2004:26).

**Box C3.2. Level of tuition fees in public universities
for international students compared to domestic students (2003)**

| Tuition fee structure | Countries |
|---|---|
| Higher tuition fees for international students than for domestic students | Australia, Austria ¹ , Belgium ¹ , Canada, Ireland ¹ , Netherlands ¹ , New Zealand, Slovak Republic, United Kingdom ¹ , United States ² |
| Same tuition fees for international and domestic students | France, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico ³ , Portugal, Spain, Switzerland ³ |
| No tuition fees for either international or domestic students | Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, Poland, Sweden |

1. For non-European Union or non-European Economic Area students.
 2. In public institutions in the United States, foreign students pay the same fees as domestic out-of-state students. However since most out-of-state students enrolled by public institutions are foreigners, it can be considered that foreign students pay higher tuition fees than most domestic students in practice.
 3. A few institutions charge higher tuition fees for international students.
 Source: Updated table. See OECD (2004d).

Source : OECD, 2005, p. 256

It would seem at first sight that that mass flows of students would bring benefits of mutual understanding. However, as the statistics suggest that Anglo-Saxon cultures dominate the receiving market and are weak in terms of sending, the relationship is not a level one in terms of cultural contact, with the Anglo-Saxon societies and education systems playing the role of “host” and the incoming students “guests”. While the guests may feel the need to adjust culturally to the hosts as they live and study in a country for perhaps three or more years, there is little incentive for the hosts to accommodate their social norms to the guests or attempt to understand their culture.

Furthermore, even the numbers of students flowing from Anglophone nations may not indicate extensive contact with a new culture as, for example, 90% of US students who study abroad actually do so for only one semester, or a shorter time (OECD, 2004, p. 52). Statistics suggest that, all things being equal, students would choose culturally and linguistically similar home and receiving educational contexts. For

example, Nordic countries and Anglophone countries are, respectively, the top choices for Nordic and Anglophone students.

This latter fact reinforces how powerful the incentives must seem to say, the parents of a Chinese postgraduate who send her across the world to an alien culture and to study in a language that is linguistically “distant”, and pay three times what they would to a local provider for the privilege.

In terms of the migration of skilled labour, again, and perhaps unsurprisingly, the process favours nations with established capacity, and reputation. Highlights again will show this (Docquier and Marfouk, 2005, p. 28):

- 85% of the world’s skilled migrants are located in a small group of developed nations – US, Canada, Australia, UK, Germany, France – with 50% living in America.
- Guyana, Jamaica, Haiti, and Grenada have outflows of skilled workers running at over 80% and five African nations see it at over 50%.

The picture is, however, a complex one, as the choices made by individuals to leave their country of origin permanently depend on many factors. Despite being a large player in student mobility, for instance, China does not have a large “brain drain” and neither does the former USSR, India nor the main Islamic and Arab nations.

The effects of the flows outlined above affect not only nations, but higher education providers. Both in terms of potentially being able to gain higher fee income, and attracting the “brightest and best” a University may be disadvantaged, however strong the intellectual capacity or the teaching, if it is isolated from the processes of internationalisation in education. It is in this area that we can see “hybrid” learning contexts emerging.

In this perspective, it is worth noting that in addition to student mobility across borders, the cross-border electronic delivery of flexible educational programmes and campuses abroad are also relevant to the internationalisation and cross-border dimension of higher education, although no comparable data exist yet. (OECD, 2005, p. 252)

While many families are interested in an English language education offshore for its own sake, foreign education is needed in most countries to augment local provision, not just to substitute for it. (OECD, 2004, p. 146)

However, providers and policy makers in non-Anglophone countries are coming to realise the leverage that delivery in an influential international language that is taught in many schools worldwide can bring.

...Developed or intermediate nations with inadequate domestic capacity, active as both importers and exporters. This group includes Singapore and Hong Kong, China, Chinese Taipei and Malaysia, which falls between groups 3 and 4. India has an export role but is closer to group 4. (China and others in group 4 may become exporters in future.) All of these nations are relatively competent in English, especially Singapore and Hong Kong, China, and this helps them to be active cross-border players. Chinese Taipei is building a domestic capacity in English-language education and can export English teaching to China. (OECD, 2004, p. 147)

Of particular interest in relation to the discussion in this paper is a move towards “home” institutions disengaging the medium of instruction from the language of the country. While historically the tendency

has been for PIM to be dominated by Anglophone institutions delivering in non-Anglophone countries, there is a rapidly emerging variation on this: non-Anglophone institutions delivering in the medium of English in non-Anglophone countries. The box below gives details for OECD countries delivering courses in English.

Box C3.1. OECD countries offering tertiary programmes in English (2003)

| Use of English language in instruction | Countries |
|--|--|
| All or nearly all education programmes in the country are offered in English | Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States |
| Many education programmes in the country are offered in English | Canada, Finland (about 400 programmes), Netherlands (over 1 000 programmes), Sweden (about 200 master programmes) |
| Some education programmes in the country are offered in English | Czech Republic (about 50 programmes), Denmark (about 150 programmes), France (about 250 programmes), Germany (about 300 programmes), Hungary (about 160 programmes), Iceland (about 270 courses), Japan (about 80 programmes), Korea (about 10 English-only universities), Norway (about 100 programmes), Poland (about 55 universities and tertiary institutions), Slovak Republic, Switzerland, Turkey (about 45 universities) |
| None or nearly no education programmes in the country are offered in English | Austria, Belgium, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Mexico, Portugal, Spain |

Note: Assessing the extent to which a country offers a few or many programmes in English is subjective. In doing so, the size of the countries of destination has been taken into account, hence the classification of France and Germany among countries with comparatively few English programmes, despite having more English programmes than Sweden in absolute terms.
Source: OECD, compiled from brochures for prospective international students by OAD (Austria), CHES and NARIC (Czech Republic), Citrus (Denmark), CIMO (Finland), EduFrance (France), DAAD (Germany), Campus Hungary (Hungary), University of Iceland (Iceland), JPSS (Japan), NIIED (Korea), NUFFIC (Netherlands), SIU (Norway), CRASP (Poland), Swedish Institute (Sweden) and Middle-East Technical University (Turkey).

Source : OECD, 2005, p. 255

One of the major sending nations, China, is also moving towards English medium instruction. In 2004, around 34 Chinese universities were delivering programmes at postgraduate level in English. At the elite university, Fu Dan, in 2005, 13 out of 92 undergraduate programmes will be taught in English. The target expressed by the Chinese Government is for 10-20% of undergraduate programmes to be eventually taught in English at Chinese universities.

The effects of these changes are difficult to tease out from other developments, but in some cases where there have been clear national statements in this area, there appear to be related changes in, for instance, student flows. For example, after a policy change in 2000, the German government has launched a set of programmes taught in English to be attractive to the international market and now stands as the second highest receiving nation in Europe, behind the UK. France, in third position, also has a nationally unified approach towards attracting international students and researchers, and is developing programmes focusing on fostering bilingual level communication skills in French and English and English-medium delivery.

The previous sections have focused on the national and institutional effects of the medium of instruction and the “levelness of the playing field”. There are also effects, inevitably, for individuals. These include barriers to choice of receiving institution and questions of parity of access. They also lead us to the issue of whether there should be more debate about the potential effect on quality and equity where the

language of instruction is not the language of the majority of the population, or where the learning environment is different to that which students are prepared for by the school system. As well as the lack of two-way development of mutual understanding, on a practical level students may be disadvantaged if they are not well-prepared for the experience of being taught in a foreign language or helped to understand the learning expectations.

Among students from OECD countries who study abroad, Japanese and Korean students systematically enter foreign language environments. In 1998, 92.2% of Japanese students and 63.1% of Koreans studied in English. The majority from Australia (78.3% in 1998) and New Zealand (96.4%) enter other English-speaking systems. Of the 21.7% of Australians going to other linguistic environments nearly all enter French (9.4%) or German (7.0%) universities. Only a handful of Australians study in Asia-Pacific universities where Chinese languages, Japanese or Bahasa are spoken. However, this may change in the future as it becomes more common for Asian languages to be studied in Australian schools. This pattern is similar for the United States and the United Kingdom, where more than half the students studying abroad enter English-speaking institutions, and the rest mostly speak French or German, particularly American students. This may limit the English-speaking universities' current capacity for internationalisation in the Asia-Pacific region. (OECD, 2004, p. 154)

Setting aside individual language proficiencies, one may imagine that the Australians entering English speaking systems are in a better position, as a group, to study than are the high percentages of Koreans and Japanese entering the same systems. There may be a "tipping point", however, at which the institution, for reasons of maintaining quality and protecting brand, must adjust to the internationalised student body.

Internationalisation of tertiary education also yields costs and benefits at the level of institutions. From the perspective of institutions, foreign enrolments constrain the instructional settings and processes insofar as the curriculum and teaching methods may have to be adapted to a culturally and linguistically diverse student body. These constraints are, however, outweighed by the numerous benefits to host institutions. (OECD, 2005, p. 252).

Discussion and Conclusion

The last twenty years has seen the market in international students provide massive flows towards high tuition fee charging, Anglophone nations. The data for student flows suggest that the HE playing field is rather uneven for those in countries and cultures that are "distant" from the Anglophone nations. This matters not only for the individual, but also produces a market that may be skewed by the language advantage/barrier. Excellent non-English speaking institutions cannot compete to train "global citizens" and this works to exclude their educational and national values as a potent force for promoting international understanding.

The value of these educational experiences and outcomes is (or was) high enough for families and sponsors to feel that it outweighed costs. Therefore, these nations, and particularly the 3 countries which have dominated the "receiver" nations lists (US, UK, and Australia) have not had much pressure to change the nature of their teaching and learning, despite the fact that some programmes contain more international students these days than "home" students. Key to this dominant position is perceived quality.

The students [Chinese students studying abroad] separated English-language countries into two tiers. The first tier, the United States and the United Kingdom, was associated with institutions of high reputation. Australia, Canada and New Zealand constituted the second tier, providing attractive environments and a cheaper English-language education. Australia also benefited from geographic proximity to Asia. Selection of the United States, especially at postgraduate level,

was strongly affected by reputation despite perceptions that the environment was not fully safe. There was a widespread assumption that a US education was the optimum choice. (OECD, 2004, p. 173).

With the flows of students go a variety of major advantages, not least the migration of skilled labour noted above. This paper has, however, sounded a note of caution as confident new players such as Singapore enter the market and, sometimes with European partners, begin to challenge the notion that Anglophone tuition and Anglo-Saxon programmes equate to the highest desirable combination for a degree. It may be the case that it is the non-Anglophone institutions that have an advantage here. That is to say, despite the long history and dominance of programme or institutional mobility in Anglophone nations, there is some evidence to suggest that the broader adjustments necessary may not be easy to achieve in institutions that are used to the student accommodating to the system, rather than *vice versa*:

Transnational initiatives... are almost without exception dominated by the partner institution in the north – in terms of curriculum, orientation, and sometimes the teaching staff. ... There is often little effort to adapt offshore programs to the needs or traditions of the country in which the programs are offered – they are simply exported intact. A McDonald’s hamburger in Malaysia is the same as one in Chicago, even if the beef is Halal to meet Muslim religious requirements. (Altbach, 2004, p. 8-9)

The paper has also suggested that caution is called for on the part of those engaging in developing curricula that cross borders and step outside established systems of provision:

...Academic staff and personnel may become reluctant or unable to adapt to the changing tide of curricula development, to a cross-fertilization of ideas, concepts, and theories, as well as to a new student body. (Denman, 2002)

It is difficult to tease out the effects of language policy from others, for instance the reputation of a programme, the cost of living in the receiving country or the fee level of the receiving institution. However, some areas worthy of further investigation might be of use to planners in Higher Education. First institutions may wish to consider the interplay between two key attractiveness factors: low or zero fee levels for incoming students and delivery of programmes in an internationally recognised language. This may be particularly relevant if providers are to avoid sudden influxes which can damage brand unless carefully handled.

While it has been argued that issues of equity and access should be tackled at a national level with improved financial support, or better information about the benefits and costs of student mobility (OECD, 2004, p. 14), consideration should also be given to the actualities of experience of the student and the receiving institution in the face of mass student migration. A curriculum may be extremely high quality in terms of the teaching culture and communicative norms of the country in which it originates. It may be highly inaccessible to a diverse student body with very different expectation and language abilities. The question then is where should the changes be made? Should the institution adapt to the student body, or should the student body adapt to the institution?

There are a variety of possible solutions to the situation and clear evidence that both developed and developing nations are starting to move towards the adoption of an international language as a medium of instruction. This move is not without possible risks. Take the move towards English in Germany, for instance. It has been noted that it may lead to social exclusion as the “elite” are educated in a language that is not the mother tongue, that the requirement for English at university may affect the further development of students’ first language skills, and that English becomes a key skill, even for academics who are not good linguists (Gnutzmann, 2005).

Most of the problems, however, could be addressed if there were a greater understanding and acknowledgment of the risks and if further work at national and institutional level on the impact of hybrid teaching environments was undertaken. For example, an internationalised institution receiving students from a range of linguistic backgrounds and teaching in English could be encouraged to:

- Develop an explicit language policy that covers first and second language users and ensures proficiency.
- Ensure that language entry policies are decided consistently and in separation from marketing and recruitment pressures.
- Accept that language proficiency in relation to the medium of instruction is an integral part of the admissions criteria.
- Provide pre-degree training and acclimatisation programmes to help students adjust to the learning environment.
- Where non-native language is adopted for provision in country, give opportunities of high quality first and second language support.
- Encourage debate and research into the nature of teaching a diverse international community.

As a coda to this paper and for those who fear the dominance of English in academe, we might consider the case of the brilliant German mathematician, Burkhard Heim, whose theories lie at the foundation of the recent American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics prize-winning paper on hyperdrive technology featured in *New Scientist*, January, 2006:

He [Burkhard Heim] never learned English because he did not want his work to leave the country. As a result, very few people knew about his work and no one came up with the necessary research funding. (*New Scientist*, 2006:24)

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