

**Dr. Jasper Hsieh, Educational Design Services, Pro-Vice-Chancellor
(Education) Portfolio (Communities)**

The roles of interculturality in Chinese-speaking international students' identity transformations. An auto/ethnographic inquiry.

Asia's booming economy provides Chinese-speaking international students (CHIS) a context where they can efficiently transform their internal "desires" into external "identities" within a short period of time. These desires tend to relate to becoming 'international and multi-cultural' linguistically, professionally and personally. Drawing on the political sense of interculturality (Lavanchy, Gajardo & Dervin, 2011), this study discusses the complexity of CHIS's identity transformations through Australian higher education. Scholarly attention has been concentrated on two research directions in terms of CHIS's identity transformations in western higher education. One is to orient CHIS's academic and social challenges in an English-speaking context. The other is to document how homecoming students use their acquired interculturality in their home context. While the complexity of identity development has been emphasised in both research directions, a linear and causal pattern between the completion of western higher education and the acquisition of interculturality is perceived. This auto/ethnographic study followed three Taiwanese international students' lives for over 12 months and documented their identity transformations throughout their postgraduate education in Australia. Working with a rearticulated, post-structuralist Bourdieuan notion of habitus, the stories happened to them, to me, and between us were compared, categorised and reflected on as the empirical evidence to elucidate the complexity of identity transformation. The findings suggest a variety of identity transformations resulting from the participants' evaluation of their past, present and future situations. Their post-Australia transformations were not only shaped by individual Australian experiences, but also by both personal choices and home context's influences. While the implications for the divide between homecoming students and locally-educated students were suggested, this study wishes to do in this forum is to bring in provocative questions for UNSW staff and educators: What does it mean to be "intercultural" in the Australian setting? As the professional/academic members of UNSW, how should we draw the line between being multicultural and intercultural? And how can technology facilitate students' and our sense-making work for what it means to be intercultural?