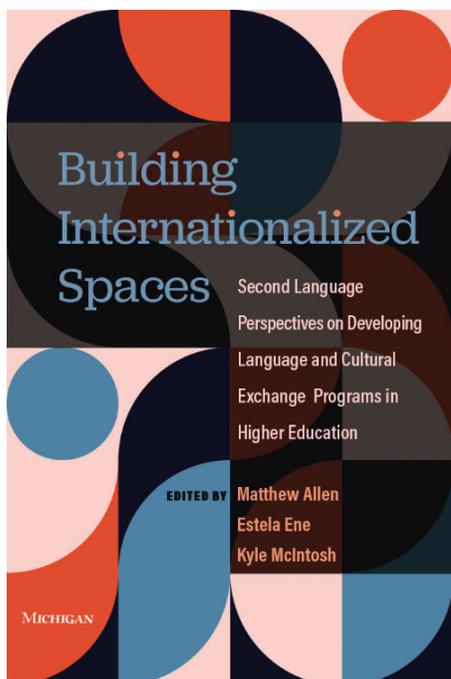


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Review of Building Internationalized Spaces: Second Language Perspectives on Developing Language and Cultural Exchange Programs in Higher Education

Marisa Lally
Lynch School of Education and Human Development, Boston College



Building Internationalized Spaces: Second Language Perspectives on Developing Language and Cultural Exchange Programs in Higher Education (Allen et al., 2022) offers case studies of higher education contexts, where the intersection of English language education and internationalization of curriculum at colleges and universities is in evidence. The central argument of the book is that educators should cultivate international/global perspectives among all students, but should simultaneously dedicate attention to the specific needs of unique student populations and learning contexts. By exploring various cases that offer practical insights into expanding the boundaries of “traditional” second-language education, this volume aims to “refine internationalization in terms of praxis and indicate how to

coordinate curricular and pedagogical efforts to achieve meaningful learning outcomes for all students” (p. 10).

Scholars and practitioners of second-language acquisition and internationalization of curriculum in higher education will benefit from accessing the successes and challenges associated with the innovative practices presented in this book by the educators. The cases represent not only intervention strategies for internationalizing formal classroom curricula but also for the informal curriculum (Leask, 2015), including a university’s support services and extracurricular activities that facilitate learning.

The book is divided into two parts: Part I: Revising the Curriculum and Part II: Internationalizing Composition. The first part consists of case studies of various interventions to support English language learners, either international students at American universities or participants in a virtual exchange between American and international universities. The second part explores challenges faced by administrators and educators working with L2 writing and cross-cultural composition programs.

The introduction of the book confronts the evergreen challenge of acknowledging problems with the positioning of English as the dominant language across internationalized higher education systems, while also highlighting its centrality to the process of internationalization given the expectation that university students be proficient in the English language. The editors of the volume argue that scholars have paid little attention to the crucial role that English language professionals and training programs play in the process of internationalization. This theme remains present throughout subsequent chapters, in which contributors to this book (both practitioners and the researchers of relevant programs) explore successes, challenges, and emerging best practices.

Of the nine chapters included in this volume, six focus on programs housed at U.S. universities, one at a Canadian university, one at a Sino-US institution based in China, and one of them at a Colombian university. Although the editors aim to have an intentionally global focus in the volume at hand, readers will find that the book has an explicitly American focus in that the programs highlighted often explore international students’ experiences with L2 curriculum in the United States, and with an emphasis on cross-cultural engagement between international and domestic students in extracurricular programs and student support services, both on campus and virtually.

The editors’ decision to include chapters that explore the successes and challenges of English language education in virtual spaces is timely, given the dependence on virtual education during the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus on digital education also underscores opportunities for institutions that may be limited in resources such as classroom space and/or travel budgets. The two contributions regarding virtual exchange explore programs that encompass vlogs, digital storytelling, and video conferencing between exchange students. The chapters found that students experienced gains in both cultural understanding such as pragmatic communication strategies in English as well as confidence in their

English language abilities. These pieces not only support the argument that English language instruction is essential to internationalization of higher education but they also demonstrate the efficacy of Internationalization at Home (IaH) strategies through gains in students' self-efficacy in cultural understanding and greater engagement in internationalization from stakeholders across campuses.

The chapters that comprise Part II make a strong case that there should be a scholarly and practical conversation between the areas of internationalization of higher education and English writing and composition. The courses analyzed in these studies often featured “distinct pedagogical features” (p. 158) from their non-internationally focused course counterparts, such as an explicit focus on culture in assignments, applying a multicultural lens to content and grading, and interdisciplinary and “multi-local” engagement for graduate students. Students in these studies expressed that there was a diversity of perspectives present in the classroom and that the course assignments helped them consider cultural values outside of their own in a new way. These findings support Leask's (2015) argument that internationalization efforts have educational benefits to all students and therefore university stakeholders should consider a local implementation of an internationalized curriculum.

While the researchers highlighted the various positive outcomes of interventions in their writing curricula, such as students' increased confidence in their writing skills and expressed gains in various cultural competencies, they also provided potential practical implications for their work. To synthesize the practical implications of the studies in Part II, the scholars argue that practitioners supporting English composition programs should engage stakeholders such as students, academic advisors, and the institution's registrar in participatory curriculum building activities. For example, these stakeholders can provide input on the specific needs of the student population at the HEI, including ESL pedagogical concepts in cross-cultural composition classrooms, and intentionally providing appropriate support services to students like the ones explored in Part I of the book.

Readers of this collection can expect to learn about internationalization in degree and non-degree English language education and cross-cultural engagement among university students in “*contact zones*,” or “social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or other aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today” (Pratt in Gerwash, 2022, p. 171). This book will be particularly useful for higher education professionals who engage with issues of internationalization and cross-cultural pedagogy, especially in the context of the United States. Its primary contribution is highlighting the crucial connection between English language education and internationalization of higher education.

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MARISA LALLY, M.A., is a doctoral student at the Lynch School of Education and Human Development at Boston College. Her research interests include national identity, educational diplomacy, and the internationalization of higher education. Email lallyml@bc.edu
