

Internationalization and Democracy

A Critique of Canadian Higher Education in Light of John Dewey's Philosophy

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Abstract

Universities all over the world have been greatly transformed by the modern process of internationalization of higher education. However beneficial this phenomenon may be for both students and institutions, much harm could be done if the purposes of education are taken for granted, especially when aiming at a democratic education. Thus, in light of John Dewey's philosophy of education, one of the most renowned scholars in the area, this paper offers a critique to Canadian higher education based on a qualitative research conducted with ten professors of a mid-sized Canadian university, who reflected upon their graduate international students and internationalization. Findings evoke not only the pertinence of Dewey's ideas to the 21st century, but, above all, an appeal for philosophy of education in the pursuit of a meaningful and democratic internationalization process.

Keywords: philosophy of education; internationalization of higher education; democracy; graduate international students; post-secondary teachers' beliefs

Introduction

Although travelling abroad to pursue a degree is not a new phenomenon, the modern process of internationalization of higher education has been rather distinguishable due to its pace and range. Canada, for instance, has been one of the most popular destinations among interna-

tional students in the 21st century (Andrade, 2006; Wadhwa, 2016). In 2017, the country received 494,525 international students, coming from more than 180 different nations (Canadian Bureau for International Education, 2018). Although there might be differences among terms, in this study the concept of *higher education* will be used interchangeably with *post-secondary* to refer to education in universities. Additionally, *international student* is defined as individuals who left their home countries to study at a university abroad, either for the whole degree or just part of it, and, for the purposes of this research, professors were to focus only on graduates.

Many can be the benefits of such process, especially for universities and international students themselves. Besides being a fundamental source of revenue for universities (as international students' tuition fees may sometimes be four times that of Canadians'), the Association of Canadian Deans of Education (ACDE, 2014) points that the internationalization of higher education can "create opportunities for collaborative knowledge production, exposure to different contexts and worldviews, more complex and nuanced analyses, and improved capacity to respond to change and diversity" (p. 5).

Nonetheless, the potential risks involved in this constantly-evolving process must also be taken into account. As stated on the Accord on the Internationalization of Education (ACDE, 2014), exploitative practices emerging from an unbalanced focus on profit maximization, systemic exclusion, and the consequent emergence of a neo-colonization of epistemologies are some of the potential threats involved in the internationalization of higher education. Additionally, when we analyze the fundamentals of democratic education, its purposes, and ideal modus operandi, as elaborated by both traditional and contemporary philosophy of education, many aspects of the process of internationalization are worthy of attention.

One of the most renowned exponents of philosophy of education of the 20th century, John Dewey, has consistently warned about the dangers of formal education, arguing that not every experience is genuinely educative. For him, education is not merely formation or storage of knowledge, and is only democratic to the degree that it promotes an active interaction of human beings, one in which everyone participates with shared purposes. An education shaped by a one-sided intellectuality, one that accepts standards as final and seeks to fit students to it, then, is not truly educative.

On a similar vein, Derrida (1998, 2000; Fagan, 2013) and Ruitenberg (2011a, 2011b, 2016), based on the hospitality metaphor, argue that the mere presence of the *other* is not enough to ensure that they feel welcome.

True hospitality, for those authors, is unconditional and entails more than tolerance of diversity: it requires the complete decentralization of the host (i.e. the teacher) while allowing the guest (i.e. student) to make changes in the environment.

Therefore, in the midst of a process that may involve so much money and time, as is the case of modern internationalization of higher education, and especially in a country that takes so much pride in their multiculturalism policies, such as Canada, it is crucial that students are not treated as mere commodities, but receive the education that has been widely advertised: one shaped by well-informed goals and conducted in such a way that value international knowledge. Thus, based on some of Dewey's seminal ideas, this paper is a return to the roots of a philosophy of education while also seeking to make a dialogue with contemporary philosophers of education who may also contribute to modern Canadian higher education in the pursuit of a democratic internationalized education which is meaningful for all those involved.

Methodology and Limitations

Ten professors of six different faculties of a mid-sized Canadian university were recruited for a qualitative research. A semi-structured interview was conducted through Skype with each participant with the purpose of comprehending how they perceive their graduate international students, internationalization, and the impact of this process to their practices. While there may be a plethora of studies which seek to analyze how international students themselves experience their education, the purpose of this phenomenological research was to understand the essence of internationalization "from the vantage point of a pure or transcendental ego" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 33) of professors, whose voices have been rather absent from the literature despite being so fundamental to this process.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants through their digital or printed signature. At the time of the interview, professors had between 13 and 34 years of experience in that institution. Each interview was transcribed verbatim and analyzed by the researcher following Moustakas' (1994) phenomenological approach. In order to protect participants' privacy, pseudonyms have been attributed to each of them, and any information that could reveal their identities (such as one's faculty) was omitted and replaced by something in brackets so as to maintain the sentence's meaning.

I recognize that this research is limited in many ways. First of all, I am aware that most of Dewey's writings which I discuss here were not originally focused on the higher education level. Nonetheless, I

believe his arguments evidence clear parallels and transferrable ideas to the present context, which could be greatly valuable in the pursuit of democratic education.

I also recognize that my participant population is quite disproportional in terms of faculty, having 8 from sciences and 2 from social sciences. Although the invitations to potential participants were sent to a broad range of faculties and to more than a hundred professors, it was only the 10 recruited participants who responded willing to participate. However, this low rate of response not only should alert the reader of the way in which findings may have been potentially skewed, but also leads one to wonder why it was so. Was it because the interview would be conducted online, which may be uncomfortable from some people? Was it due to a lack of interest in the topic? Although I can only conjecture reasons for this low rate of response, I acknowledge that different participants, whether from other faculties or universities, could have different views on the issue. The findings, therefore, should not be generalized to the whole country, although I believe it conveys relevant aspects to be observed in every higher education institution that aims at internationalization.

Findings and Discussion

This article offers a critique to the internationalization of higher education in Canada in light of John Dewey's philosophy of education as well as contemporary scholarly work that greatly speaks to the issues which Dewey pointed long ago. Professors were originally asked about their perception of their graduate international students and internationalization, and the impact of this process to their practices. I present and discuss now the most relevant data generated from the interviews, together with a parallel of Dewey's take on each matter, which serves to illuminate aspects worthy of attention when aiming at a democratic internationalized higher education.

The Purposes and Dangers of Formal Education

After distinguishing between indirect, one that may happen simply by living with others, and formal education, that of schooling, Dewey (2011) acknowledges that, with the development of societies, formal teaching becomes more and more necessary. However, he alerts that the risk of dissociation with life also increases: "There is the standing danger that the material of formal instruction will be merely the subject matter of the schools, isolated from the subject matter of life experience" (p. 9). For Dewey, education must be connected to life and work

for human growth because it is “a freeing of individual capacity in a progressive growth directed to social aims” (p. 56). Hence, the student must be “the starting-point, the center, and the end” (Dewey, 1902, p. 13). Conversely, when I asked participants about the benefits of the process of internationalization for the university, there was an overall agreement that graduate international students mostly bring money and conduct lots of research in the name of the university.

Daniel: Well, the university stands to make a lot more money [laughs]. So monetary gains are probably one of the most, how can I say? It's the foremost thing in some of the administrators' mind, I would guess. It's because the fees charged by the university to international students is very very high as compared to national students.

Mary: Honestly, all I can say is without international students, at least in my department, there wouldn't be any graduate program [laughs]. So, [our university] does need international students.

Noah: So without those international students I don't know how we're gonna run our graduate program [laughs]. That's just, you know, the basic stuff. And the other, I think, more important, benefit to the university is to enhance our reputation internationally.

Notwithstanding, when asked about what they perceive to be benefits of this process for international students themselves, the recurrent responses would mainly be to develop one's English skills, improve credentials, and potentially immigrate to Canada. Dewey, however, pointed that “it is nonsense to talk about the aim of education—or any other undertaking—where conditions do not permit of foresight of results, and do not stimulate a person to look ahead to see what the outcome of a given activity is to be” (Dewey, 2011, p. 58). In that way, while Dewey sees education like art, it seems that professors may sometimes be carrying a stereotyped and limited vision that blinds them to envision each student's subjectivity and potential.

But what is the purpose of education after all? Dewey (2017) argues that “to set up any end outside of education, as furnishing its goal and standard, is to deprive the educational process of much of its meaning” (p. 37). Indeed, reaching a consensual answer to such intricate question might not be an easy task, but one possible way of looking at the matter is Biesta's (2009) three functions of education: qualification, socialization and subjectification. While qualification is related to “the ways in which education contributes to the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that qualify us for doing something”, socialization comprises “the ways in which, through education, individuals become part of existing sociocultural, political, and moral orders” (p. 355). Despite the emphasis

given to these two domains, Biesta claims that it is only through subjectification that education can provide the space for students' subjectivity (or uniqueness) to flourish. Rather than specifying what the child has to be, subjectification aims at freeing individuals from existing orders (Biesta, 2009), it calls for a spontaneous curriculum (Dewey, 1902, 2017) which does not appear to be a common view among professors:

Adam: the length of my experience has taught me what to expect from different international students... has maybe given me a better appreciation of their background that they are coming to the class with... and what different, graduate students what kind of strengths they have, for example, certain kinds, certain countries produce students with very good math skills, some of them with you know, different programming skills or poor programming skills, and so I think this has just given experience on what to expect from, from the students... so I'm not at a surprise anymore, so I guess I just have more experience dealing with them now.

When it comes to the purposes of education, then, professors' perspectives seem to clash with what Dewey proposes: an education that is meaningful and connected to one's life, allowing the opportunity to grow in endless and unpredicted ways.

The Place of Growth in Education

Dewey (2011) claims that intentional education should involve the providence of an environment with materials and methods which aim at promoting growth in a desired direction. The danger, however, is to assume that learning will happen through passive absorption rather than an active and constructive process. In fact, Dewey views education as a process in which both teachers and students will learn from each other. For him, growth comes once there is immaturity, which should not be seen as something negative, as what someone lacks, but as a potential to develop: "Growing is not something which is completed in odd moments; it is a continuous leading into the future" (p. 34). To a certain degree participants recognize that domestic students may benefit from the presence of international ones:

David: ...there are some fantastic things about international students, especially at the graduate level, which is that they challenge a lot of the possible preconceptions that a lot of the Canadian students have.

Samuel: So you have a foreign student and a Canadian student working together on the same paper or the same, you know, project of some

sort. And they have to collaborate, they have to bring their worldviews together and make them work together in some meaningful way. And that often involves a lot of learning, in both directions.

On the other hand, some professors recognized that education has often been unilateral, with an institution that does not seek to learn from the other's perspectives. As this participant claims:

Anna: One would be looking at what the students who come to our campus bring. And we don't always do that. We sort of say "come join us and we'll fill you full of our ideas," and we never ask "what do you bring," like "what ideas do you bring?" So if we were more attentive in our pedagogical approaches to what the university could learn from the international students, I think it would be a better experience for everybody.

Such difficulty in being open to learn from the other while promoting a more student-centered pedagogy may perhaps be explained by a notion that Dewey calls *artificial uniformity*, one which defines standards and inflexible aims based on the dominant society, diminishing deviances and thus impinging on individual flourishing. Because the content taught is already taken as being legitimate, the focus often shifts mainly to *how* to teach students, rather than asking what to teach them (Egan, 1978). For Dewey, however, growth must not be regarded as a definite goal, because it is not something static. The consequence of misunderstanding this is assimilation and conformity: the teacher starts to "draw out" from students what is desired, and when that does not happen it is regarded as a problematic situation, as this participant illustrates:

David: ... at least in [my department], what we found is that student[s] from other countries often don't have the background that we would expect students from Canada have. And so students are coming in with equal worth degrees to a domestic student, but the training that goes into that degrees is quite different. And in some ways it's stronger, so often technically, mathematically students are quite good... but in terms of other things like critical thinking and formulating research questions and organizing thesis statements, students are often not as good. And so... what we expect students to come in with often they don't have. And that places some real challenges both on the students themselves who struggle to catch up, and the professors as well where trying to deal with... domestic students who have certain skills and certain problems and then international students that often have other skills and problems.

Teachers may have the tendency to maintain the status quo if the situation is already comfortable as it is—which might be a common characteristic of every human being. Or, in Dewey's (1964b) words, teachers "strive to

retain action in ditches already dug” (p. 76), an argument that is still also reflected on Ruitenberg’s (2016) work. In fact, Ruitenberg notes that democracy, for Dewey, “is not just open to revision but in fact centrally concerned with the processes of ongoing revision and reinterpretation” (p. 117). Thus, Ruitenberg (2011a, 2016) argues that it is necessary for teachers not only to open the door for the other to arrive, but to also be comfortable with the changes they may do in the environment. As Dewey (2011) summarizes, “the criterion of the value of school education is the extent in which it creates a desire for continued growth and supplies means for making the desire effective in fact” (p. 32), which includes both students-teachers and teacher-students, and should not be constrained to aims received from above to be imposed on students.

Culture and Education

After making clear that democratic education is one connected to a student’s life experience, Dewey (2011) asserts that culture represents the development of one’s personality, “the capacity for constantly expanding the range and accuracy of one’s perception of meanings,” which works towards social service. So “it is the particular task of education at the present time to struggle in behalf of an aim in which social efficiency and personal culture are synonyms instead of antagonists” (p. 69). Social efficiency means using one’s native capacities with social meaning, which is something Dewey explicitly claims to have been neglected in higher education in the name of “higher and more spiritual ideals” (p. 67).

During the interviews, professors affirmed to appreciate international students’ presence in their classes and that it is important “to recognize the wisdom of the students in your class”. But when I asked them how the presence of international students has influenced their practices a common answer would be:

Noah: To my class? Well, they’re just like a normal student, right, in my class. And then whatever the contribution made by other students be, they contribute to my class. And I know there’s sort of this idea of bring international student to the classroom and they can share their experience from their own countries, but my courses are mostly technical courses, we deal with technical issues so there are no sort of boundaries between [laughs] countries, between cultures.

Matthew: Not at all. In terms of course content, not at all. I mean, I, you know, deliver course-content based on the science not the student body. And the students are there because they’re interested in the course content not because there’s, you know, maybe more or less international students in that class. At least that’s what I would hope of, that’s why I’m for [laughs].

Dewey is, however, emphatic that isolating the mind from subject matter is a huge problem for education. He points that:

The act of learning or studying is artificial and ineffective in the degree in which pupils are merely presented with a lesson to be learned ... this connection of an object and a topic with the promotion of an activity having a purpose is the first and the last word of a genuine theory of interest in education. (Dewey, 2011, p. 75)

For Dewey, education must be connected to personal experience regardless of students' age and of subject, because "It is not the subject *per se* that is educative or that is conducive to growth" (Dewey, 2015, p. 46). The common argument that professors brought to the interviews, that of the impossibility of merging science with culture, is clearly debunked by Dewey:

With respect then to both humanistic and naturalistic studies, education should take its departure from this close interdependence. It should aim not at keeping science as a study of nature apart from literature as a record of human interests, but at cross-fertilizing both the natural sciences and the various human disciplines such as history, literature, economics, and politics. Pedagogically, the problem is simpler than the attempt to teach the sciences as mere technical bodies of information and technical forms of physical manipulation, on one side; and to teach humanistic studies as isolated subjects, on the other. For the latter procedure institutes an artificial separation in the pupils' experience. (Dewey, 2011, p. 156)

For him, the participation of the learner in the formation of purposes (and thus actively participating in education through a process of construction, reconstruction and deconstruction) is what differentiates it from slavery or mere training. The contrary creates great artificiality in schools, where students treat subject matters as something to be tackled for tests purposes only. Moreover, when methods are isolated from subject matters the result is an imposition of a mechanical uniformity which tries to fit everyone based on mechanically prescribed steps, creating harder conditions to learning and consequently lack of interest among students. Perhaps one of the consequences of such dissociation in higher education may be seen in the numerous occurrences of plagiarism among international students. Many professors believe it has been a more common practice among international students either because they are not fully aware of what plagiarism means, because they see it as a shortcut for completing their tasks when they struggle with language, or simply because it is a "bad habit" they bring to Canada:

Noah: ... some students from some countries they brought in their, sort

of, bad habits to Canada. And one issue I've realized[is] probably the academic integrity and the plagiarism. All those things in other countries probably not considered to be a serious issue, but they brought those issues here. We do have to, sort of, tell them, you know, educate them and say "this is the way how things are supposed to be done."

Such a complex and somewhat blurred term for many, the widespread phenomenon of plagiarism seems to haunt international students as soon as they enter the gates of a Canadian university. Pennycook (1996) claims that it is necessary to understand how these concepts of authorship and ownership are not only contradictory in many ways, but how they have developed through history and quickly dominated the post-modern Western academia and framed our current educational practices. On a similar vein, Sterzuk (2015) argues that an internationalized higher education institution has also to be shaped by a global way of communication, which "include policies and practices that incorporate an understanding of the historical and colonial link between language, race and education in settler societies" (p. 64).

In any case, what is remarkable is how graduate students are either being punished by something they were not aware to be wrong or feel they ought to cheat to achieve success due to insecurity or simply a disconnection to the subject matter. Dewey (2011), notwithstanding, clearly points out that "idiots" are the ones who imitate ends whereas the imitation of means is what makes an act intelligent. Hence, the depth of an act of plagiarism should make this quite an urgent issue to be tackled by higher education institutions—not simply punishing, but by clarifying expectations to students beforehand, while also being understanding and tolerant of different learning styles differences and approaches to learning that students may bring before calling it a crime. Moreover, how much of this situation could be a result of uninterest? Dewey points that interest and discipline are not only connected, but that interest is a requisite for executive persistence. Indeed, many participants perceive a great lack of interest among their students, as if they were using education merely as a tool for immigration.

Mary: ...many people want to come to Canada. So sometimes international students are using that as an immigration tool, more than anything else. So when they come, it feels [that] maybe [they] are not focused on the studies but [on] what they can quickly get themselves instead of this Ph.D. So I have it, some students I had to discontinue because they were not even around. They were my students but they were not even around because they were chasing other things. They're not into this Ph.D. to begin with.

While Dewey sees interest as the moving force of education and that students' past and future are (and must be) inevitably shaping their present education (Dewey, 1964a), it is possible to see how this deep void between education and experience in a modern Canadian university can be already showing some of its negative consequences. Dewey (2015) perceived it as a vicious circle: "Mechanical uniformity of studies and methods creates a kind of uniform immobility and this reacts to perpetuate uniformity of studies and of recitations, while behind this enforced uniformity individual tendencies operate in irregular and more or less forbidden ways" (p. 62). The result of such impersonal and mechanical education, shaped by fixed aims and a lack of social purpose has also been experienced by professors themselves: after a laborious recruitment process, participants feel under the burden to make their graduate students succeed, no matter what.

The Teacher's Role in the Pursuit of Democratic Education

Professors are aware of some of the challenges international students go through and claim to try to be sensitive to their needs, especially because of their difficulties with English. So, for most part, professors see themselves spending a lot of extra time helping them with language and personal counseling.

Matthew: Sometimes I have to almost rewrite the thesis...I don't see that as my job but I do see my job as getting the student through the program. And so if that means I have to rewrite things and, so be it, but I don't like doing that, from an academic perspective of it... I want them to get more out of the experience and so I don't like doing it but sometimes I have to.

Elizabeth: It's a lot of homework for me. I don't get credit for that. I've got a PhD. It's their PhD, but I know they will never get a PhD if I don't help them with English. And I'm not an English teacher. I'm an old lady, researcher, who finally learned how to write in English myself and work hard at, you know, at communicating. But it's a lot of work.

David: And so I often, for international students, I find them in my office just telling me about their lives and the challenges that they face being away from home or dealing with domestic issues and stuff like that. So, yes, stuff like that, you know, I think it's really important to sort of be able to listen to students and give them someone to talk to even though, professionally speaking, I'm completely unqualified to deal with their personal issues.

In a similar vein, Dewey (2011) asserts that teachers do not educate directly and cannot impose learning, but they should rather design,

provide, and control the environment that will supply the stimulus for a desired response. He points, though, that an aim has to be flexible, not inserted or imposed from without, it must develop according to students' experience while being tested in action. This is why Dewey believes a teacher needs to "know both subject matter and the characteristic need and capacities of a student" (p. 102). That, perhaps, could be a great challenge at the graduate level, where professors and students might only meet once a week for seminars. It is no excuse, however, for what Dewey sees as an extreme focus on the future to the detriment of the present. He agrees that an outcome of education is the training of faculties, but not as a mere reception and storage of information. After all, "any study so pursued that it increases concern for the values of life, any study producing greater sensitiveness to social well-being and greater ability to promote that well-being is humane study" (Dewey, 2011, p. 157).

As aforementioned, most participants claim that international students' cultures have no direct influence to their classes. Some professors recognize how challenging it is to profit from international students' presence while having to teach necessary content:

Samuel: What hinders [international students' contributions] is the professor [who] thinks they have to get through a huge amount of curriculum and that they don't want anybody asking questions they don't want anybody discussing anything, they don't want anybody working independently and they don't want to hear what other people have to say, they just want everybody to hear what they have to say. Then that gets in the way of... you know, benefiting from the presence of the international students, but other students as well.

Nonetheless, Dewey claims that

Every recitation in every subject gives an opportunity for establishing cross connections between the subject matter of the lesson and the wider and more direct experiences of everyday life ... The best type of teaching bears in mind the desirability of affecting this interconnection. It puts the student in the habitual attitude of finding points of contact and mutual bearings. (Dewey, 2011, p. 90)

Hence, the teacher's role is much greater than curriculum change: it is about making it meaningful to students' lives, connecting it to their present and not just future. Before the reader thinks that Dewey had in mind only small children, it is possible to recall his own words:

Even for older students, the social sciences would be less abstract and formal if they were dealt with less as sciences (less as formulated bodies of knowledge) and more in their direct subject-matter as that is

found in the daily life of the social groups in which the student shares.
(Dewey, 2011, p. 112)

The danger of the aforementioned stereotyping of students based on their origins, assuming their preferences and potentials, is also condemned by Dewey (2015) when pointing that the “failure of adaptation of material to needs and capacities of individuals may cause an experience to be non-educative quite as much as failure of an individual to adapt himself to the material” (pp. 46-47). Most professors claim to be accommodating with tests, deadlines and to be less strict with grammar, as ways of adapting the course to international students, as this participant points:

Anna: Essays, exams, essays, exams, you know, let’s be more creative.... I have gone as much as I can with the powers that are above me [laughs] to no exams, right? No final exams. Which just takes a lot of pressure of students, all students but international students in particular, I think, feel quite stressed by the presence of final exams, and they get a lot of them, particularly in the first and second year. So going, you know, changing the way in which we evaluate has been big.

However, a major contrast between Dewey’s philosophy and professors’ beliefs appears when it comes to the arrival of the other and the *unpredictable* changes they will bring.

Education and Communication: Openness to the Unknown

Communication occupies a great deal of Dewey’s philosophy and is also its key. For him, the connection between the words *common*, *community*, and *communication* is more than verbal. He claims that a society only exists through communication, which means that not merely physical proximity, but the participation in a common understanding is what holds it together. For Dewey, communication is not a one-sided process, but rather the result of an interaction, “the way in which [people] come to possess things in common” (Dewey, 2011, p. 6). For this reason, he sees all communication like art and educative because every part will be affected by the experience: “Only when it becomes cast in a mold and runs in a routine way does it lose its educative power” (p. 7).

Contrastingly, the English language has been posing major challenges for both professors and international students, who are constantly being compared to domestic ones and diminished by what they lack:

Anna: You know, they’re highly educated people, right? [laughs] Yet we tend to view them as... in some instances even a problem, right? Because there may be language issues, there may be, do they know how to write in English, which is the predominant language for sci-

ence. And so instead of saying “ok, what do you bring?” we view them as a problem. That’s not universal but it’s certainly continues to be a theme that you can see, yeah.

Adam: Well, first of all the communication, ability of the students has to be taken into account and how it... how it lowers the, you know, the communication in the classroom and... whether it stalls the class... and that could affect the whole process of education and lower it. But I mean, that’s inevitable if their English skills aren’t as good as Canadian, North-American students then that’s gonna have an impact in a classroom.

David: ... And so when it comes time to turn in a paper there’s a huge disparity between the papers that the Canadian students are turning in, where, you know, the language is good and it’s easy to understand and the structure of the paper is all, perfectly sort of comprehensible and the international students struggle with that, so one of the real difficulties that I face is distinguishing, or attempting to distinguish the students’ level of comprehension versus their level of ability to communicate that comprehension in a written form.

However, as Dewey points, communication is more than words. In fact, he sees the written symbols as an artificial way to bring to surface those social traditions which are not seen on the surface of such complex societies like ours. Human interaction, on the other hand, involves openness to the unknown—and Dewey acknowledges that it is only logical to fear the unknown (1964b, 2011). He alerts, though, that not every relation between human beings is social. In order for it to be, it is necessary shared purposes (i.e., communication of interests) rather than using one another—traits that can be easily absent in the classroom.

For most participants, it was possible to notice a certain unwillingness to consider different perspectives as equally valuable because *the other* is usually regarded as the one who needs to learn from the Canadian perspective. Professors, both from sciences and social sciences, in most cases seem to perceive international students as individuals who come from countries not as developed as Canada, for a better life and education than they would get in their home countries. Only in one occasion could I sense how some openness from a professor actually allowed *the other* to make the difference in the classroom moment:

Anna: *So his ideas, I thought they were at the time a little bit crazy, but he was trying so hard to make that, you know, the projects relevant to the environment that he came from. And I think that was a real gift to sort of try to... broaden what was thought to be important issues, right? ... [Then] I thought “this is brilliant!” [laughs].*

Dewey (2011) explains that intellectual hospitality will only take place with open-mindedness, which he warns is not the same as empty-mindedness: “To hang out a sign saying ‘Come right in; there is no one at home’ is not the equivalent of hospitality” (p. 98). As he explains, it is not as if the teacher would be standing in the class, doing nothing; rather, the teacher provides the environment and directs but learns as well. Rather than seeking correct answers, Dewey asserts that teachers should invest in the quality of mental processes because this will actually be the measure of educative growth. Moreover, “intellectual growth means constant expansion of horizons and consequent formation of new purposes and new responses” (p. 97), which will only take place when the teacher encourages diversity of operation in dealing with questions. Looking at the Canadian academic context, Ruitenbergh (2016) emphasizes the need of fostering dialogues where mutual learning can take place in a true “welcome to new immigrants” (p. 134). For such to happen, there must be an interruption of the host’s self, which is necessary for hospitality. Although this unpredictability might be uncomfortable for teachers who wish to maintain their power,

There is something fresh, something not capable of being anticipated by even the most experienced teacher, in the ways they go at the topic, and in the particular ways in which things strike them. Too often all this is brushed aside as irrelevant; pupils are deliberately held to rehearsing material in the exact form in which the older person conceives it. The result is that what is instinctively original in individuality, that which marks off one from another, goes unused and undirected. Hence both teaching and learning tend to become conventional and mechanical with all the nervous strain on both sides therein implied. (Dewey, 2011, p. 166)

All in all, the major challenge professors seem to be facing, when analyzing it in light of Dewey’s philosophy, is that a teacher’s responsibility must involve more than claiming to appreciate diversity. It should actually represent one’s “disposition to consider in advance the probable consequences of any projected step and deliberately to accept them: to accept them in the sense of taking them into account, acknowledging them in action, not yielding a mere verbal assent” (p. 99). Welcoming the unknown as a unique gift to the classroom is, thus, a vital component of an education that aims at a democratic internationalization.

Conclusion

A plethora of studies have discussed the characteristics and potential benefits involved in the process of internationalization of higher

education, both for students and universities. Nonetheless, the threats involved in such massive flow of students must also have priority in an institution's agenda. As the OECD Guide (2012) states, internationalization must challenge the status quo and open the doors to different ways of thinking. Regardless of the financial contribution international students may bring to an overseas university, it is imperative that such individuals have access to a democratic education. Hence, resorting to the foundations of what it means to be democratic, which is so clearly outspoken by John Dewey and other philosophers of education, turns to be a necessary step at this delicate moment. Afterall, as wealthy or renowned a university might be,

The measure of the worth of the administration, curriculum, and methods of instruction of the school is the extent to which they are animated by a social spirit. And the great danger which threatens school work is the absence of conditions which make possible a permeating social spirit; this is the great enemy of effective moral training. (Dewey, 2011, p. 195)

Universities aiming at internationalization must beware of a possible dissociation between content and experience that may take place in the classroom. The danger of belittling the knowledge the *other* brings to class, rather than encouraging and connecting purposes, may not only make education become overwhelming and discouraging to students, but also pointless. In every practice, it is crucial that professors have in mind that "an ounce of experience is better than a ton of theory simply because it is only in experience that any theory has vital and verifiable significance" (Dewey, 2011, p. 80). That is not an easy task. As Dewey pointed,

A reorganization of education so that learning takes place in connection with the intelligent carrying forward of purposeful activities is a slow work.... But this is not a reason for nominally accepting one educational philosophy and accommodating ourselves in practice to another. It is a challenge to undertake the task of reorganization courageously and to keep at it persistently. (Dewey, 2011, p. 77)

Democracy, Dewey reminds, is more than a form of government. It is a mode of associated living. It is shared communicated experience. Thus, a democratic internationalized education, one that actually breaks down barriers such as language and national territory, will only take place with constant deconstruction, dialogue, and true hospitality.

Recommendations for Further Research

As it is common in research, this study brought forth many new questions. Some of them were already touched upon, such as the low

rate of response from professors. Did professors feel they do not have much to contribute to the topic or was it simply a lack of desire to engage time and effort that prevented so many of them from accepting my invitation? The missing voices from this research are certainly be worth investigating, as they may illuminate many other relevant issues that could greatly contribute to the field.

Another aspect to be further investigated is the extent to which professors' apparent unilateral and dissociated pedagogy from students' lives may also be impacting domestic ones. Although the focus of this research was on professors' beliefs about graduate international students, comprehending the state of post-secondary instruction as a whole is also of extreme relevance for the general improvement of internationalization of higher education.

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