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Theoretical Background

Literature Review

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- strategic level
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- unternational students'

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Teaching, Learning and Assessment

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Challenges

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Integration with home students and building campus community

Methods

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A 'Roller Coaster' experience?



An exploration of Postgraduate International Students' perceptions of teaching, learning and assessment and integration with home students and building a campus community

Tomasz John



My spin

This presentation is a part of a wider PhD research study which aims to contribute to an understanding of the international student experience from the perspectives of teaching, learning and assessment as well as social participation



jornasz John

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Shift of the focus of study

- more and more in-depth studies which make use of stories from the field and accounts of the experience of both students and practitioners dealing with internationalisation
- such research involves allows to explore the complexities of interactions between international students, home students and academics in constantly changing intercultural higher education landscape
- there is still a strong need for cultural sensitivity in pedagogical approaches

Where does my research fit?

- EU MA and PhD student in the UK studying with international students
- EAP Lecturer working with international student and staff
- response to diverse students' needs of an increasingly internationalised university
- this study allows a deeper understanding of the impact of internationalisation
- a tool to maximise and benefit from the opportunities for intercultural learning



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Explorations of the experiences of international postgraduate students

Areas:

Teaching, learning and assessment Student support services/living Integration with home students and building campus community

4 focus groups
23 postgraduate international students (including 2 EU students)
4 different campuses of the university
April and June 2013.

Why focus groups?

- used increasingly in educational research, have proved to be a valuable tool to generate data in the form of facts, opinions, experiences and feelings
- the interaction procedure can inspire recollections and discussion which is less likely in an interview situation
- home students and staff placed in separate focus groups to reassure open expression of opinions

Design, recruitment and

data analysis

- study is based on a qualitative critical ethnographic case study
- the research has taken a form of an in-depth investigation of a purposive sample
- opportunity sampling and snowball technique was used to recruit participants through university website, social networks and emails
- the primary data focused on content rather than conversation analysis or discourse analysis tradition
- finally both thematic analysis and narrative analysis were conducted to gain an in-depth understanding of issues under investigation



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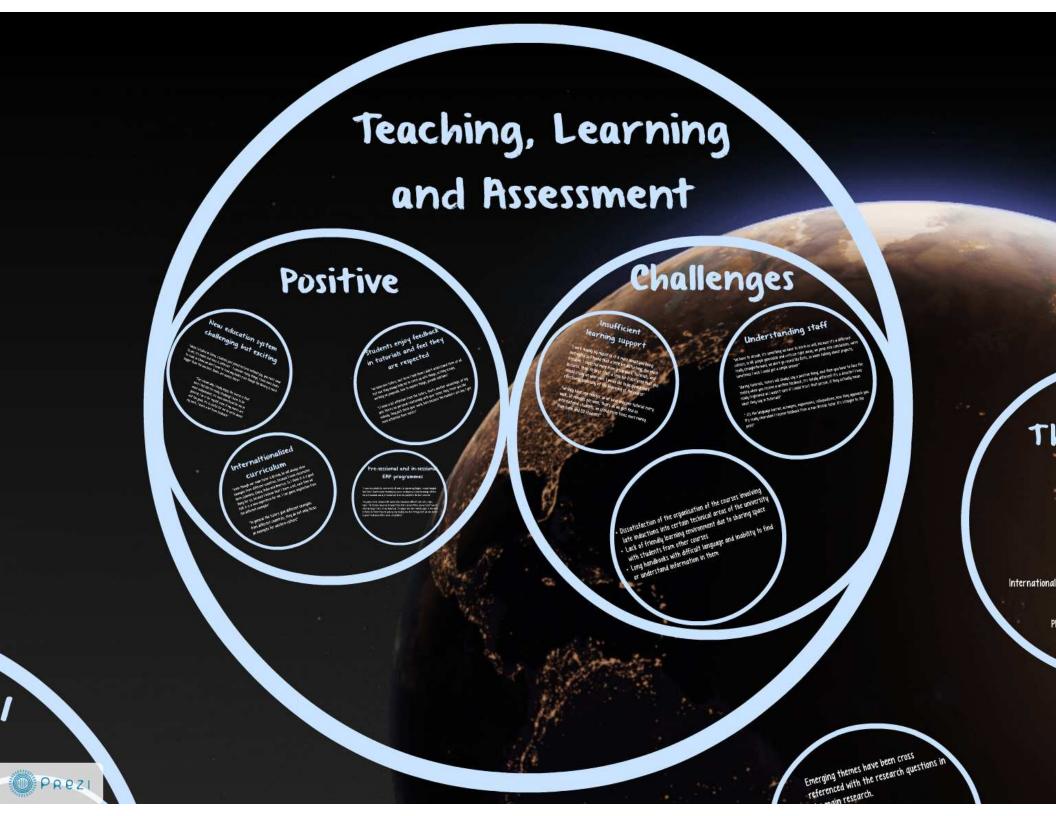


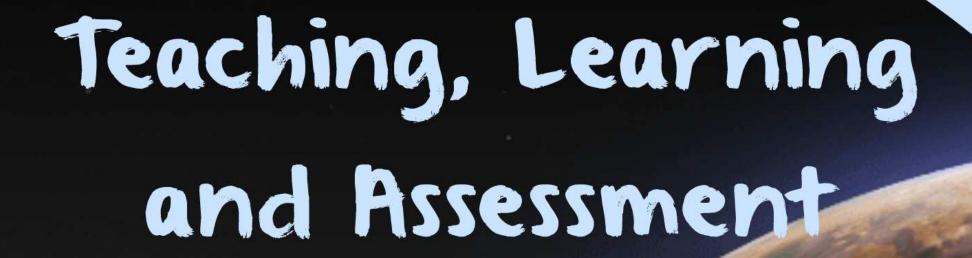
Emerging themes have been cross referenced with the research questions in the main research.

Selection of students views on: • teaching, learning and

teaching, learning and assessment
integration with home students and building campus community







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Challenge





Positive

New education system challenging but exciting To then I studied in China, students just found actures without by several no china we don't have to itself of the seven though the seven that to read any books even though the source books are useful there.

The seven though the source books are useful there. The reason why I really enjoy the course is that have independent really studying I have to be general, but it is that that the short has been also if it is useful even if my marks are my work, I learn a lot from recolouct.

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Students enjoy feedback in tutorials and feel they are respected

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Pre-sessional and in-session EAP programmes

"It was very belyful to come here for 10 weeks to improve my English, I careful magine that time I started understanding my course, vecabulary or some knowledge without

"We joined the in-sessional ERP course where discussed difficult texts with, styles, read the longer texts. It was beneficial. The paper was more than 10 pages, it was hard to finith. So I learn't how to speed up my rending and skim through text. We also learn't

New education system challenging but exciting

"when I studied in China, students just joined lectures without joy, you must come to uni, it's easier, but here is different - I consider many things, I have more books to read, in China we don't have to read any books even though the library is much bigger than the one here. Books are useless there"

"The reason why I really enjoy the course is that here I feel like I'm really studying! I have to be more independent, it's more beneficial for me in general, I do it for myself, even if my marks are not too good, it's is useful for me to write about my work, I learn a lot from feedback"



Internaltionalised curriculum

"even though our main tutor is British, he will always show examples from different countries, because I have classmates form Colombia, China, India and America. So I think it is a good thing for us, because I believe that I learn a lot, each time we talk it is a new experience for me. I can guess inspiration from the different examples"

"in general the tutors give different examples from different countries; they do not only focus on examples for western culture"



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Pre-sessional and in-sessional EAP programmes

"it was very helpful to come here for 10 weeks to improve my English, I cannot imagine that time I started understanding my course, vocabulary or some knowledge without the pre-sessional course, it turned out to be very helpful in the first semester"

"We joined the in-sessional EAP course where discussed difficult texts with, styles, topics. The teacher helped us to understand texts, discuss them, and we learnt how to read the longer texts. It was beneficial. The paper was more than 10 pages. It was hard to finish. So I learnt how to speed up my reading and skim through text. We also learnt to proof-read each others' work, very helpful!"



Challenges

Insufficient learning support

"I work mainly by myself so it is more about you being motivated so I found that a little bit disturbing, too much freedom! I expected more from group work, tutorials, and lectures, Yeah. At first I felt a little bit frustrated that you strongly on your own, I would like to be guided more effectively, especially at the beginning of the course."

We only have one teacher, so we have only one tutorial every week, 20 minutes per week, that's all we get! And as international students, we spend three times more money than home and EU students."

Understanding staff

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"during tutorials, tutors will abways say a positive thing, and then you have to face the reality when you receive a written feedback, it's totally different it's a disaster! I was reality frightened as I works there is I could be such that the same is a second to the s reality when you receive a written texidaes, it's totally different it's a disasters I was really frightened as I wasn't sure it I could trust that person, if they actually mean

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Dissatisfaction of the organisation of the courses involving late inductions into certain technical areas of the university Lack of friendly learning environment due to sharing space Long handbooks with difficult language and inability to find

or understand information in them

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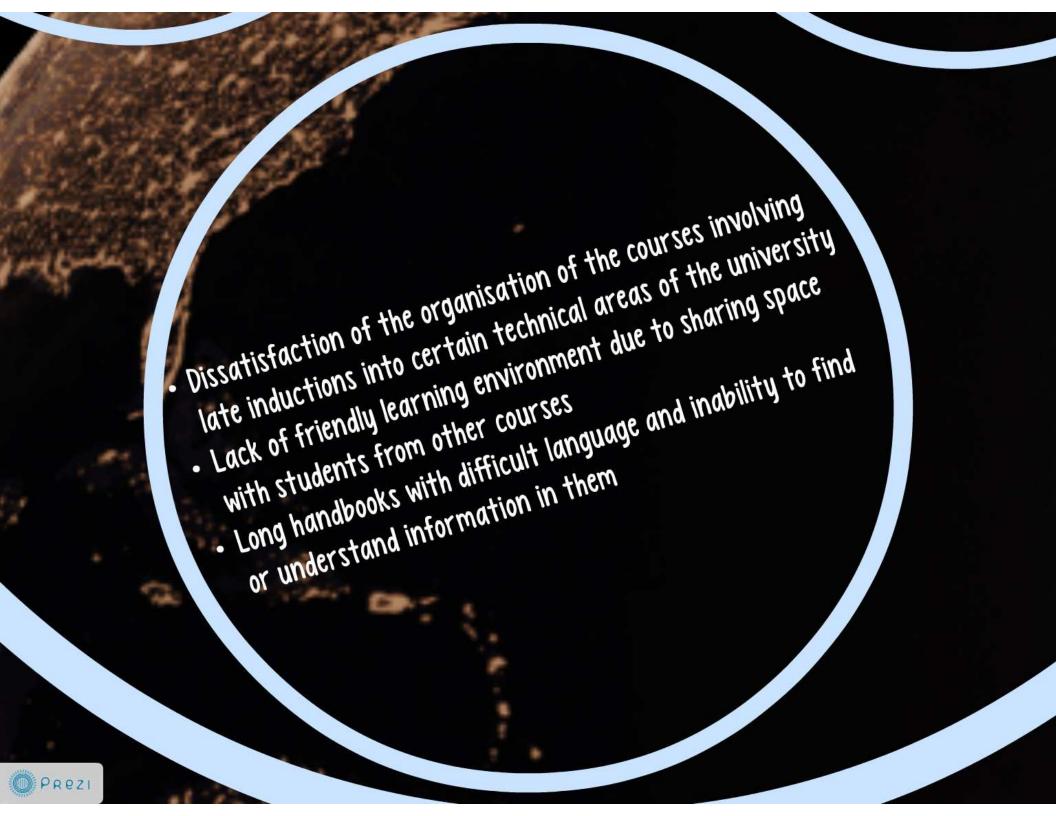
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Integration with home stud and building campus community

Positive

Virtual communities

International students bonded well among themselves

Challenges

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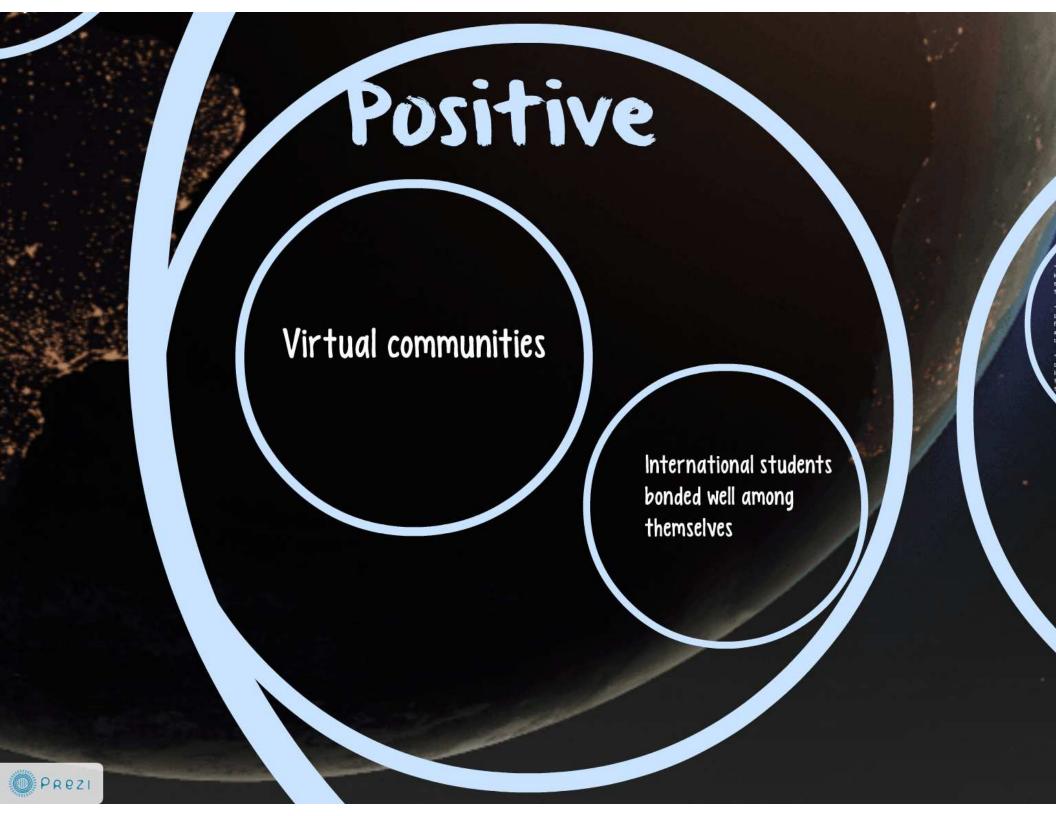
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Challenges

Collaboration with home students

"I think home students have to put more effort towards understanding us and try very hard to opplain things to us. We know, we see that Sometimes, they have never had any experience in collaborating with international student, especially MA degree, and then they see us, get confused with us"

'meetings, parties, events are very helpful because international students are home sick and they only stay in their rooms or walk around and they do not have too many friends. We don't like clubbing that much, maybe ance a month, but I think other kind of activities... cultural exchange and interaction, that would help to make better communication with home students'

"we don't have any British friends. I mean they are nice, friendly and lovely but there is still a barrier. I don't know, maybe it's the English custure. Our British friends getifriend is Chinese, so he's a good example of integration possible! It is difficult to find the sospic with British if you have little in common, it's different cultures. They don't watch the same movies, they don't listen to the same music, we know different eclebrities'

Lack of opportunities to practise English

"I feel that my English is not improving a lot, sorry! It doesn't matter if we are Asian or international, but it's like that, really. And the other thing is that UK postgraduate students are nice and polite but we don't meet quite often as they have their personal lives, they commute to work, they have no time for socialising. In our accommodation there are mostly international students"

Limited choice or lack of relevant clubs and societies in SU

"There was only one event last year! In HK and Berlin they have buddy scheme systems, each students gets a buddy who then is responsible for introducing the student to university life and place. It's really helpful Here, there are not enough groups for socialising. No societies, activities going on! I only walk on the campus, just this"



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Bibliography

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Thank you for attention

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PhD Research Student, University of Reading





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