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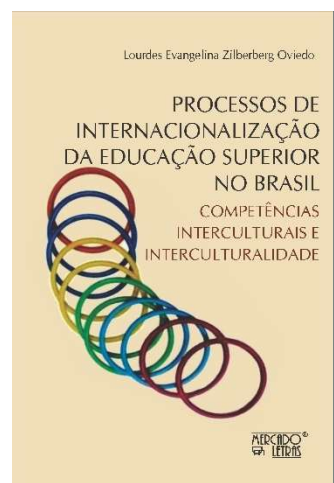


Processos de internacionalização da  
 educação superior no Brasil: competências  
 interculturais e interculturalidade

Processes of internationalization of higher  
 education in Brazil: intercultural competencies  
 and interculturality

Procesos de internacionalización de la  
 educación superior en Brasil: competencias  
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OVIEDO, Lourdes Evangelista Zilberberg. **Processes of internationalization of higher education in Brazil: intercultural competences and interculturality.** Campinas, SP: Mercado de Letras, 2023. ISBN 978-85-7591-762-6.

This is a review of the book entitled *Processes of Internationalization of Higher Education in Brazil: intercultural competences and Interculturality*.

The internationalization of higher education has been on the central agenda of higher education policy for several decades. Recently, the international dimension has been incorporated into the daily lives of higher education institutions at the regional and global levels. For numerous decades, the internationalization of higher education has begun to develop strongly at the global level, in Latin America in general, and in MERCOSUR in particular. Here we present a review of a recently published book that focuses precisely on the processes of internationalization of higher education in Brazil. The book is entitled "*Processes of Internationalization of Higher Education in Brazil: Intercultural Competences and Interculturality*", written by Lourdes Evangelista Zilberberg Oviedo and published by Mercado de Letras in 2023 as part of the series "*General Education, Higher Education and Continuing Teacher Education*".

The book arises as a product of the author's doctoral thesis within the framework of the Doctorate in Higher Education Policy and Management of the Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero in Buenos Aires. The thesis, defended in 2020, was entitled "*Contributions of the Internationalization Process of Higher Education to the Development of Intercultural Competencies in Students. Perspective of Brazilian Higher Education Institutions*" and expressed the concern that Dr. Zilberberg Oviedo has long held about the contribution of internationalization to interculturality. I emphasize this aspect because of the novelty of the approach and the willingness to contribute to the improvement of university management from this perspective.

Second, I believe it is appropriate to present some ideas about the value of a book dedicated to the internationalization of higher education in the contemporary world. The strategic role of the internationalization of higher education in today's world can be based on several perspectives. On the one hand, in an environment characterized by global interconnectedness and interdependence, internationalization enables educational institutions to prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of an increasingly globalized world. By exposing students to diverse cultural perspectives, values, and ways of thinking, internationalization fosters the development of intercultural competencies essential for effective communication, collaboration, and leadership in multicultural contexts. At the same time, by facilitating and enhancing mobility, internationalization enables students, faculty, and researchers to access resources, research opportunities, and learning experiences in different countries and cultures. This mobility contributes to the transfer of knowledge, the creation of international networks, and the promotion of the personal and professional development of individuals. Finally, the contribution of international cooperation in research, the offer of international study programs, and the creation of strategic alliances between institutions are just a few examples of how internationalization promotes innovation and quality in higher education. The internationalization of higher education in Latin America is presented as a fundamental component for the development and continuous improvement of university

systems in the region. Therefore, it is valuable to publish a new book that continues to reflect on these issues in the Latin American context.

In particular, this book addresses the complex relationship between the internationalization of higher education and interculturality. It presents the results of a study conducted in the Brazilian context, which sought to analyze the possible contributions of internationalization to the development of intercultural competencies among students of member institutions of the Brazilian Association of International Education (FAUBAI). The work is divided into 6 sections: the prologue, written by the renowned Argentine academic Ana Cambours de Donini; the introduction to the work, written by the author herself; Chapter 1, entitled "Internationalization of Higher Education"; Chapter 2, entitled "Intercultural Competence and Interculturality in Higher Education" and Chapter 3, entitled "Contributions of Internationalization of Higher Education to the Development of Intercultural Competences of Students" and the conclusions that close the work.

The first chapter contains a historical review of the development of the internationalization of higher education. It presents its main characteristics, challenges, and trends while discussing the relationship between globalization and internationalization. It also recalls the classic definitions of internationalization, among them that of Knight (2004), who presents it as the process of integrating international, intercultural, or global dimensions into the purpose, function, and delivery of higher education. Thus, the idea of internationalization appears as a continuous effort that must be transformed into a plan and strategy with resources to achieve the objectives. The chapter also analyzes the main actors involved in the internationalization of higher education, the strategies they employ, and the different ways of constructing the international dimension of a higher education institution. The chapter concludes with an analysis of the internationalization of the Brazilian education system according to the considerations of Lima and Contel (2011), who carry out a detailed analysis of the different stages of the development of internationalization in Brazil.

The second chapter focuses on the issue of interculturality, introducing the concept of intercultural competence and highlighting the difficulty of reaching a consensus on the theoretical categories to be used: intercultural competence, global competence, global mindset, global learning, and global education, among many others (Bennet, 2009). Obviously, the author chooses the category of intercultural competence, which gives the title to the work, and considers the theorization built by Deardoff (2008) on intercultural competence. She defines intercultural competence as the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations and activities. This chapter also analyzes some models for the development of intercultural competencies and the contribution that internationalization can make to this process (Spitzberg; Changnon, 2009). Finally, the last pages of the chapter are devoted to possible forms of evaluation of internationalization processes and the building of intercultural competences.

The third chapter describes the research carried out by Zilberberg Oviedo, the objectives of his work, and the methodological framework of the research carried out. The work presented is based on a sequential explanatory study using a mixed method with qualitative

predominance, which allowed the combination of initial questionnaires with semi-structured interviews. This chapter describes the steps of the research carried out (questionnaires, initial interviews, semi-structured interviews, and validation of results) and presents FAUBAI, an association whose member institutions constitute the study universe. At the end of the chapter, some key ideas regarding the analysis of the results obtained are presented.

At the end of the book, there is a section entitled "Final Reflections," which details the conclusions of the study, what has been achieved, what remains to be done, and some of the author's ideas on the subject. Undoubtedly, one of the main contributions of this work to practice is precisely its focus on the development of intercultural skills as a result of the internationalization process. In addition, its compilation of the theoretical discussion on the link between internationalization and interculturality creates a new precedent in the construction of the state of the art. Thirdly, the contribution of the field research carried out by the author to explain the contribution of internationalization to the construction of intercultural competences is highlighted.

The internationalization of higher education is a phenomenon of growing relevance in today's global context, with important implications for the development of students' intercultural competencies. In this sense, internationalization is not limited to the physical mobility of students and academics between different countries but encompasses a wide range of activities that promote interaction and cooperation between different cultures within the academic environment. First, internationalization promotes direct and ongoing contact between individuals from different cultural backgrounds. This contact fosters mutual understanding, respect for differences, and the development of intercultural communication skills. Students exposed to international academic environments learn to navigate the complexities of cultural diversity. In addition, this can foster the development of a global perspective in students, enabling them to understand and appreciate the many facets of contemporary global issues.

By studying in an international environment, students have the opportunity to examine issues from different cultural perspectives, which enriches their critical thinking and their ability to find creative and collaborative solutions to complex problems. Another important aspect is that internationalization fosters the development of empathy and cultural sensitivity. Students who participate in international programs are exposed to new ways of thinking, values, and practices, allowing them to challenge their own cultural assumptions and develop a greater tolerance for diversity. This ability to put oneself in the shoes of others is fundamental to building meaningful interpersonal relationships and succeeding in the increasingly interconnected and diverse work environments of the globalized world. We can consider this to be a contribution of internationalization not only to the education of university students but also to the construction of global citizenship.

In today's world, an intercultural perspective is an invaluable asset due to the increasing interconnectedness and diversity that characterize global society. In a context marked by migration, economic globalization, communication technologies, and transnational flows of

information and people, the ability to understand, appreciate, and communicate effectively across cultural boundaries is essential. An intercultural perspective not only promotes mutual understanding among people of different ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds but also fosters peaceful conflict resolution, strengthens social cohesion, and enriches creativity and innovation. At a time when war is ravaging many countries around the world, thinking about interculturality is also a commitment to peace and dialogue. A profound understanding of intercultural dynamics allows us to address complex and global problems more effectively and to generate interdisciplinary and contextual knowledge.

A final point to consider is the link between the need to consolidate the processes of internationalization in higher education and the future perspective. Internationalization is considered fundamental in future globalized scenarios. The challenge of building an intercultural perspective is undoubtedly one of the pillars for the development of conscious and ethically committed global citizens capable of facing the challenges of cultural diversity with empathy, respect, and adaptability. In this way, internationalization, in terms of its contribution to interculturality can contribute to the construction of a more just, inclusive, and sustainable world.

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