

## **Stereotyping of Non-Western Students in Western Universities: Applying Critical Discourse Analysis to Undermine Educational Hegemony**

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**Abstract :** This study applies critical discourse analysis to the language used by educators to frame international students of Asian backgrounds in Anglo-Western universities as quiet, shy, passive and unable to think critically. Emphasis is on the self-promoted 'internationalised' Australian tertiary context, where negative stereotypes are commonly voiced not only in the academy but also in the media. Parallels are drawn as well with other Anglo-Western educational contexts. The study critically compares the discourse of these persistent negative stereotypes, with in-class and interview discourses of international students of Asian and Western language, cultural and educational backgrounds enrolled in a Media and Popular Culture unit in an Australian university. The focus of analysis of the student discourse is on their engagement in critical dialogic interactions on the topics of culture and interculturality. The evidence is also drawn from student interviews and focus groups and from observation of whole-class discussion participation rates. The findings of the research project provide evidence that counters the myth of student as problem. They point rather to the widespread lack of intercultural awareness of Western educators and students as being at the heart of the negative perceptions of students of Asian backgrounds. The study suggests the efficacy of an approach to developing intercultural competence that is embedded, or integrated, into tertiary programs. The presentation includes an overview of the main strategies that have been developed by the tertiary educator (author) to support the development of intercultural competence of and among the student cohort. The evidence points to the importance of developing intercultural competence among tertiary educators and students. The failure by educators to ensure that the diverse voices, ideas and perspectives of students from all cultural, educational and language backgrounds are heard in our classrooms means that our universities can hardly be regarded or promoted as genuinely internationalised. They will continue as undemocratic institutions that perpetrate persistent Western educational hegemony.

**Keywords :** critical discourse analysis, critical thinking, embedding, intercultural competence, interculturality, international student, internationalised education

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