Architectural education in globalization era: considering intercultural learning

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Presentation Structure

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Globalization, inter-ethnicity dan interculturality

- In the modern, interconnected world: diversity of people, culture, and place will continue to increase.
  - Multicultural homes create different atmosphere than single-ethnic and homogenous-culture home.

- Many evident in urban Indonesia show that diversity triggers more diversity.
  - ‘Pecinan’, ‘Kampung Jawa’, create multiethnic and multicultural environs as their ‘locality’.
  - occupied by ethnically mixed families who retained some aspects of their ancestors’ culture, lost others, adopted some of the customs of the local culture, adapted others, but also borrowed from other cultures and/or ethnics.
  - The phenomena of ethno-cultural diversities are not only experienced by Indonesian cities but also other urban areas in global context, which can be observed in Chinatowns in Western cities (Li 1999).
Globalization, inter-ethnicity dan interculturality

- Urban Indonesia, the rise of urbanization and multiethnic communities > stimulating regeneration in some urban centers and causing conflict and pressures for additional social services in others.
  - Bandung city which is historically famous as the national education centre

- These new neighborhoods have a range of special needs that are often overlooked by architects and planners that include their preferences for density, shopping facilities, employment opportunities, social services, cultural facilities, parks, and public spaces.
  - Bring a different aesthetic sensitivity or different patterns of land use that sometimes generate conflicts with existing indigenous residents.
  - The use of colorful patterns, motifs, details and “rumah toko” utilization of public spaces for “hanging out,” and multiple languages on public signs.
Globalization, inter-ethnicity dan interculturality

• Contact with an inter-ethnic, intercultural, diverse world is increasing.
  • more than half of my students have studied or traveled abroad and among-islands before they graduate with a degree in architecture.
  • Many of the professionals who give guest lectures, including alumni share their work in a range of countries including the Middle East, South East Asia, America, and China.
Globalization, inter-ethnicity dan interculturality

• No common set of values for all humanity: how does an architect or designer decide how to act?
  • All societies structure a series of institutions and laws to define appropriate sets of behaviors for people with shared value systems.

• But how does an architect or designer strike a balance between the need to protect the shared values and the need to be flexible in order to accommodate newly emerging needs?
  • These questions provide much opportunity for reflection and discussion.
Globalization, inter-ethnicity dan interculturality

• How do architects and planners better meet the needs of ethnically and culturally diverse communities and how do they avoid replicating standardized solutions from previous eras characterized by more cultural homogeneity?

• One response to the increased diversity witnessed across the globe has been to increase intercultural, multicultural, or international education (Tzonis, Lefaivre, and Stagno 2001).

  – Although education alone cannot change many problems facing communities across Indonesia and the globe, it can influence the future by preparing the minds of young people to include a diversity of viewpoints, behaviors, and values.
  – Inter-ethnic and intercultural education can work on many fronts as it endeavors to eliminate stereotypes, prejudice, and racism by creating an awareness of dissimilar viewpoints and thus a rejection of absolute ethnocentrism.
  – It assists people in acquiring the skills needed to interact more effectively with people different from themselves, and demonstrates that despite the differences that seem to separate people, many similarities do, in fact, exist across groups (Cushner 1998).
Globalization, inter-ethnicity dan interculturality

- Emerging literature: urban planning, design and architecture should respond to ethno-cultural diversity: part of the challenges of making a multicultural society work.
- Far less literature: how these insights should be put into education and practice or identifies innovative strategies that architecture and planning students can learn to respond the development of ethno-cultural diversity in local space.

- As a discipline of study and as place-makers, architects and urban planners has been very slow in recognizing the significance of ethno-cultural minority populations.
- Internationally, there are few documented examples of architects and planners taking diversity into account in the practice of their profession.
Intercultural learning in education:
Theoretical background

Education as “cultural politics” (Barber 1994; Martin and Nakayama 2003; Ward 1991)

Theoretical base to all actions of educators. Educators implement pedagogic theory when:

- organizing the lectures; choose certain readings over others;
- plan the content and approach to instruction;
- choose the site and scope of the studio project;
- conceptualize the type of exchange between teacher and students;
- establish the type of relationship the students will have with the client, user groups, or professional base; and so on.

These actions go beyond the transmission of knowledge and skill development and simultaneously engage students in power.
The relationships between knowledge and power, and between social context and the professional school curriculum, are central to the issue of intercultural learning and architecture.

- Architects work with diverse constituencies that represent a range of multicultural ideas, values, and voices, and they work in a context that often requires them to step outside the traditional disciplinary boundaries.
- The complexity inherent in a multi-polar world, along with the multifaceted, interdisciplinary requirements of architecture, necessitates the transformation of the educational system (Dutton, ed. 1991).
The challenge for the 21st-century university, and for architecture profession:

- To adopt strategies for global education and a new intellectualism that breaks from the reductionistic approaches of the modern era and introduce new perspectives, references, content, alternative creative process, and decision-making skills.

- Glocalisation education?
- Universal?
- Cross-cultural?
Intercultural learning in education: Theoretical background

• Major goals of intercultural education: restructure the approach to learning so that students acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to function in a diverse and democratic world.
  • Consequently, it is an education focused on freedom, and thus, should raise questions related to power and inclusion (Diaz, Buss, and Turcuit 1991).

• Whose issues are central to architecture education and practice and whose are marginal?

• Whose world is celebrated and whose is trivialized?
  • An intercultural education is one that is designed to reduce race, class, and gender divisions and to encourage a more full participation in a democratic society.
Operationalising intercultural exchange in architectural education

• To fully participate in our democratic, pluralistic society, all students need to develop skills and perspectives that allow them to understand others and to engage in a rapidly changing and diverse world. It is particularly important for educators to train pre-professionals to become more sensitive to intercultural issues as a basis for becoming more effective practitioners.

• Students often have difficulty working effectively with diverse cultures and they often lack the skills and the motivation to benefit from intercultural participation.

• But, minority students are often forced to examine, confront, and question their cultural assumptions when they enter the school and higher education.
Educators: to help students understand their local community culture while also liberating them from their cultural boundaries.

- Thus, architecture education in a democratizing world should help students acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes they will need to frame professional actions that make societies more equitable and just.
- This implies that architecture and planning education go beyond a professionally-driven curriculum primarily focused on developing competencies needed to gain employment, and toward a pedagogy that strives to develop the whole person.

But, within a democratic, multicultural pedagogy educators have a responsibility to prepare students to solve problems within both the local and global context.

- This needs to be done by preparing the students to be responsible citizens who can make personal choices to serve their own needs while contributing toward the benefit of society.

“What essential elements characterize a meaningful intercultural exchange?”

These processes include cultural-spatial experiences in a globalized world and the development of specific pedagogical tools for intercultural learning.
Experiential learning expresses an approach that goes beyond the problem-solving method that can be lacking of real-life constraints and instead outlines an approach where students become directly involved in learning the complexities of their society.

Experiential education conceptualizes learning as multidimensional and encompasses a four-stage cycle:

- Beginning with a specific experience, it progresses to observation and reflection of the experience, then forms abstract concepts and generalizations, and, ultimately, tests the implications of these concepts in new settings (Kolb 1984). Instead of students being given a theory or principle to apply to a design or planning problem, in an experiential-learning setting students draw their own principles from the inter-ethnic and intercultural experience which can be applied within studio context (Walsh 1996).
- When these principles are then applied to the professional action, it has more meaning for the students.
Experiential education is critical in inter-ethnic and intercultural learning since it makes the subject matter more relevant in settings where the student is exposed to different ways of acting and thinking about the world.

- These types of experiences broaden the personalities of people sharing in the experience.
- There are a number of other important benefits that come from experiential learning. James Coleman describes the “self assurance and . . . sense of accomplishment and mastery that successful action provides.”
- Since experiential learning involves more investment on the part of the student, this often increases motivation and provides an associative structure of events in memory that helps insure that whatever has been learned is not lost. Student can be challenged to simulate the real world problems.
• Intercultural learning programs often help develop an awareness of deep-rooted values, ideas, and attitudes within oneself and in others.
  • In the intercultural exchange, students often report that they value the knowledge gained not only in reference to the unfamiliar culture, but also in reference to the new awareness of their own cultural identity.
  • Those who study or work abroad frequently acknowledge the benefit of self-knowledge. A returning study-abroad student can be typically heard to say, “I learned more about myself when I was in a foreign country.”
  • The experience often leads students to reflect on their own assumptions, sometimes creating an impetus for change, other times leading to a deeper knowledge of the self (Pratiwi et al. 2006).
• In an inter-ethnic and intercultural context, the design process can thus become not only a vehicle for problem solving but also can lead students on a transformative journey.
provide for reflection and self-knowledge,

• In learning to appreciate the contributions of others, students become open to learning from a wide variety of sources and inputs.

• Anyone who aware of this transformative journey can liberate him/her from the viewpoint that leads him/her to think—in the overconfident sense of self—that s/he has the best answers, the best assumptions, and the best methods.

• It can, instead, offer awareness that the guiding “truths” or “principles” which are presented as professionals are framed by one’s cultural experiences and thus are not necessarily meaningful when translated to different cultural settings.
develop new knowledge and skills,

- Attempt to focus on difference as well as shared characteristics between ethnic groups, and introduce ways to value and reinterpret people’s voices and their vernacular places.
- Raise questions about the cognitive appropriateness of forms that arise from constructed identities.
- Intercultural education challenges students to examine their own myths, attitudes, and worldviews (Cushner 1998).
  - In multi-ethnic and multicultural environment, students must draw from information that presents political, economic, and historical frameworks within specific cultures. These are serving to break down stereotypical preconceptions.
develop new knowledge and skills,

- to introduce and to mediate information from academic sources with local knowledge.
  - The strategies are different ways to develop students’ listening skills that allow them to ask questions of peers, community people, professionals, as well as the locale, and to reflect this knowledge in multiple ways.
  - It needs to consider ways to transform traditional analytical and design skills by overlaying them with personal stories that fill the process with richer meaning colored by personal perspectives and alternative value systems.

- communication skills
- graphic communication skills and different collaboration styles
- the development of improved interpersonal and inter-group relationships.
provide for transformation of architects’ role.

- The issue of architects’ role in public realm is also come up in the students mind during the research interview in 2006 (Pratiwi et al. 2006).
- different approaches for architects’ public roles. This makes them think about the traditional relationships of client/professional, teacher/student, student/student, or university/community.
- collaborative learning, reciprocal learning, or service learning
- redefine the nature of the architects’ roles and the relationship of the parties involved in the exchange and relationships
- the intercultural and inter-ethnic learning experience has the capacity not only to empower students but also to empower the community.
provide for transformation of architects’ role.

- The knowledge transfer power of civil society as a transformative agent in the community renewal process.

- In some cases, the architecture studio builds on theories and methods of participatory planning while acknowledging the shifting role of who is being taught and who is learning.

- Community empowerment happens as a result of a process directed at physical change, as well as the establishment of meaningful relationships and opportunities for dialogue that present communities with the opportunity to reinvent democracy.
Conclusions:
intercultural process of place-making and architecture education

- increasing multi-ethnic and multicultural communities raise many challenges in the architecture professions and the educational institutions that support them.
- The issues are ethical and others are practical.
- The emergence of heterogeneous communities within local space can open the way for more complex understandings of power and social relations and richer, more diverse design expressions throughout the globe.
- Or ignored and marginalized, giving way to architecture and place-making that reflect the homogenizing effects of modernization and globalization.
Conclusions:

intercultural process of place-making and architecture education

- the future role of architects, planners, and other design professionals forced by globalization, include:
  - How will the concentrated and growing communities of increasingly integrated regionally and internationally in economy, culture, tastes and life-style, coexist in the places which consist of the local space, the local economy and the local culture?
  - How will globalization shape evolving multi-ethnic and multiculture habitat?
  - Will this emerging places be prepared to accept and recognize its past?

- Reflection on these questions helps architecture educators and scholars to recognize the changing nature of the twenty-first-century place-making and the corresponding challenges in structuring an adaptive pedagogy that both acknowledges and is responsive to these multi-ethnic and multicultural transformations
Conclusions: intercultural process of place-making and architecture education

- the mutual formation of identities and values toward the environment and places.

- But, inter-cultural learning presents challenges on many aspects. It requires not only extraordinary commitments from teachers, students, and institutions, but also a set of pedagogical tools and methods that can appropriately work for students and teachers in meaningful intercultural exchange.

- It requires a theoretical basis that allows for new ways of thinking about how people within different cultural and geographic contexts construct their identities through individual and collective interactions with their environments.
Thank you

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