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Locating Gold Mountain: Cultural capital and the internationalization of teacher education

Kumari Beck

Roumi Ilieva

Anne Scholefield

Bonnie Waterstone

Simon Fraser University

[authors listed alphabetically]

As we scan the surface of the global “eduscape”, we recognise diverse educational markers, signposts, prevailing movements and eruptions, and our attention is caught by the formation and development of phenomena called International Education. In this paper, we are attempting to locate ourselves in this educational landscape, while simultaneously understanding and assessing the practices and praxis of International Education.

We are four educators working in the post-secondary system: we have been colleagues and friends through graduate study, and beyond. Even as our friendships have been forged through compatible interests and worldviews, more recently we have come together as a team (coordinator, instructors, mentors and sounding boards) for a Master of Education program that falls under the umbrella of International Education in the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University (SFU). This paper presents our reflections as we navigate the complex practices of this program and, through a description of some of the dilemmas we have faced, enables links between theory and practice as we seek a way to align internationalization to ethical practice.

The students we are working with are from China. Historically, emigration from China was often mythologized as a search for Gold Mountain. Our paper discusses the contemporary trek for educational gold sought by Chinese students who come to Burnaby Mountain (SFU) for their Masters degrees. As east meets west in this eduscape, we become aware of another phenomenon—a process that creates a new and generative situation variously identified as an interpretive zone (Bresler, 2002), a hybrid space (Minh-ha, 1992), a ‘contact zone’ (Pratt, 1992) or a third space (Rutherford/Bhabha, 1990) emerging new and unpredictable for all concerned.

While we feel the pressure to conform to historical binary concepts of education, in this case a Western *or* Eastern interpretation, we aspire instead to recognize and participate in the development of a third pedagogical space in the global eduscape. We believe the emergence of this third or hybrid space is a consequence of, and is the process of our experience in international education. Locating Gold Mountain

then, becomes a trek not just for the students who arrive in our program, but for those of us teaching as well.

In trying to locate Gold Mountain, we will first explore the contextual terrain of internationalization, to understand the various conditions that influence the practices of International Education. These include a brief overview of how globalization is both reflected in and shapes our programs, and an examination of whether and how neocolonial conditions are implicated. Following this overview, we will focus on dilemmas that centre on identities, desires, and constraints in the 'eduscape' we experienced in this international Master of Education program. At this Canadian stopover on the educational landscape, how will students *and* teachers be changed by, and what footprints will we leave on, Gold Mountain?

Beginning the Trek : Why look for Gold Mountain?

Kumari questions the journey

I entered the field of international teacher education from a direct engagement with international development 'out there', and teaching English as an additional language to an immigrant population 'over here'. These experiences and being schooled in a colonial educational system have attuned me to become sensitive to systemic inequities and an awareness of being caught up in forces that are outside of our influence. I tend to frequently ask the question, '*what else is going on?*' On the other hand, I tend also towards collective activism and transformative resistance. The opportunity to journey together, in what has been a lonely path on research in internationalization, has been energizing.

I have approached my own research in internationalization, with this 'suspicious' curiosity about why international education is such a major focus of higher education in North America. Why has it become an imperative to have a certain percentage of our student population be 'international'?

While there is some recognition that internationalization is a response to, and even a product of globalization, there has not been much analysis in the internationalization literature, of the implications of this on higher education, for example. There is much that can be brought into such a framework from globalization and postcolonial scholarship, but for the purposes of this journey, a few key points will suffice.

Globalization is very much a buzz word and the popular perception is that you are either for it or against it. There is an acknowledgement that this unprecedented movement of people, ideas, goods and knowledge is creating a different set of conditions than we have known. Globalization is often depicted in a 'centre-periphery' binary model, with a powerful West engulfing 'the rest'. Giddens (1990) and Robertson (1990, 1997) see it as a complex process driven by a number of forces. It is a "dialectical process because it does not bring about a generalized set of changes acting in a uniform direction, but consists in mutually opposed tendencies" (Giddens, 1990, p.64). A series of complex interactions and a synthesis of globalizing and localizing, the local is not separate from, nor a binary of the global, but part of it (Edwards & Usher, 2000).

One of our central metaphors in this paper was drawn from Appadurai's (1990) theory on the "dimensions of global cultural

flow". He challenges the binary centre-periphery model of world systems, in which forces of western modernity penetrate and absorb peripheral cultures. He dismisses these simplistic explanations for cultural flows, positing a process of indigenization which adapts and changes, or, indigenizes, a global idea, activity or object when assimilated into a local community. To understand these "growing disjunctures" he proposes a framework of perspectival constructs called "scapes" that flow in "increasingly non-isomorphic paths" (p. 301). The dimensions through which this occurs are five-fold: ethnoscaples, the distribution of mobile individuals; technoscaples, the distribution of technology; finanscaples, the distribution of capital; mediascaples, the distribution of information through a variety of media, and ideoscaples, the distribution of political ideas and values (p. 296 - 297).

If Appadurai's image of landscapes provides an appropriate metaphor to convey the fluidity, the irregularity and great variety of the globalization process, it is a useful framework to understand the extremely complex relationships among these dimensions and the multiple ways in which flows occur among them, highlighting the simultaneity of convergence and fragmentation. If we see the global-local discourses in this way, we can re-frame internationalization of education as an 'eduscape' allowing for the simultaneity of convergence and fragmentation, and more importantly, making opportunities for the 'flows' of discourse to move in "increasingly non-isomorphic paths" rather than the assimilationist (or conformist) forms of centre-periphery expected from a western-eastern binary with its implications on curriculum and pedagogy.

This connection was, for the authors, at once a relief, and a release from experiencing and imagining ourselves as operating within a system that represents itself in binaries. We were expected to take on roles within a centre-periphery model (West teaching East, Locals orienting Internationals, and so on), roles that created tensions and stresses among us (as you will read further on). As we experienced the potential of and opportunities for alternate 'flows', the necessary ruptures and fissures could be created.

As we began to think about our teaching assignments, we wondered about other ways that globalization might be affecting international education. According to Edwards and Usher (2000), the research on school and higher education across several countries illustrates increasing trends towards the 'business' of education, reflected in policy and practice. Most educational reform is promoted through changes in governance. Such change is formulated in economic terms and institutions are encouraged to use business-oriented, managerial styles. Student outcomes are aligned to employment-related skills and competencies. At the same time, attempts have been made, at the government level, to initiate and control national curricula. Edwards and Usher suggested that universities are becoming increasingly corporate and less collegial, more consumer-oriented, and more concerned with accountability and efficiency.

In this climate, knowledge itself becomes a commodity. Those who 'have it' begin to look for those who want it, and those who want it are motivated by the demand for particular kinds of specialized knowledge. The increased and accelerated 'desire' for internationalization is driven by both sides, in this case the university that offers programs and actively recruits students to enroll in them, and the students themselves who believe that this knowledge will position them well in an increasingly competitive job market. As my

colleagues will comment on further, this factor has been one of the key motivations of students enrolled in this teacher education program. Just as immigrants from China came to British Columbia many decades ago in search of 'Gold Mountain' and better prospects for the future, we have a new wave of those who come prospecting.

Being in an institution that advertises the promise of 'gold', and having myself experienced the desire for higher education opportunities in the West as the only salvation for becoming truly educated and wise, I have a preoccupation with how we position ourselves and how we are positioned/implicated as the stewards of Gold Mountain. What is our relationship to those who come seeking it, and where do our loyalties lie? Who are we becoming, and what do we encourage our students to be and become?

One of the issues we face with the increasing numbers of international students on our campus is that of difference and diversity. Bhabha (Rutherford, 1990) makes a distinction between cultural difference and cultural diversity. He situates cultural diversity in a liberal tradition that values the co-existence and encouragement of many different cultures. It is a fundamental principle of multicultural policies in many democratic nations. We encourage the creation of diversity by inviting international students to our campuses. The rationale adopted by universities in Canada, is the wish to prepare graduates who are internationally and interculturally competent (Knight, 2000). Along with the 'creation' of cultural diversity, however, there is 'something else going on': Bhabha finds a '*containment*' of cultural difference as dominant cultures 'accommodate' others only within their own norms and frames. This echoes the themes of fragmentation and disembeddedness operating alongside forces of homogenization and unification in globalization theory.

In Bhabha's view, there is an incommensurability about cultural difference that is extremely difficult to accommodate under one universalist framework (Bhabha, 1994). He offers the concept of cultural translation as a way of seeing that all cultures are related to one another. This is not because all cultures have a similar content, but because of the nature of culture itself – it is a "signifying or symbolic activity" (Rutherford, 1990, p. 210). Cultures, in his view, are not one fixed entity, have no essence and are always "subject to intrinsic forms of translation." (1990, p. 210) Translation can also be interpreted as a form of imitation noting that the original itself is never finished (Bhabha, 1994). Cultural translation denies the essentialism of a culture and so forms of culture are always in a process of hybridity. For Bhabha, "[T]he importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather, hybridity to me is the 'third space' which enables other positions to emerge"(p. 211). Cultural translation is about negotiating new situations from the perspective of re-formed positions and ideas rather than in the frame of old paradigms. "[A] new situation may demand... that you should translate your principles, rethink them, extend them" (Rutherford, 1990, p. 216).

Reflecting on these ideas, I am considering several possible applications to our own experience. How do these creation/containment tensions manifest within the students before us? Does Bhabha's theory hold up regarding the containment of cultural difference? If so, in what ways are student differences contained within the norms of the dominant culture of our programs and courses? And, how might these various tensions influence the

identities of international learners and the identities of those who design and administer the program?

At another level, by applying Bhabha's notions of cultural translation to academic culture (understanding culture as 'signifying or symbolic activity'), it enables us to see that academic culture is not a fixed entity. It does not have an original, unchangeable form to adhere to and, thus, its discourses are subject to 'translation'. How is it possible then to 'translate' principles, to rethink and extend them to enable a 'Third Space', to let other positions emerge? Further, is it possible to think of international learners not simply as a mix of more than one cultural practice, but as this *process* of the emergence of 'something new and unrecognizable' (Rutherford, 1990, p.211), 'the emergence of the interstices' (Bhabha, 1994, p.2)? If so, what is this process, and how can it be identified? This is the focus of *our* journey to locate Gold Mountain.

Potholes and falling rock: Anne checks the trail(s)

The students from China arrived in July 2005 to participate in this inaugural Master of Education course for an 'international' cohort at Simon Fraser University. We understood that, generally, most enrolled believing this graduate degree would enhance their employability in China. For those who intend to teach English, this was also understood to be a perfect opportunity to strengthen their English language proficiency. These are practical purposes—the trek to and up Gold Mountain was viewed as a means to acquire resources that, at home, will prove to be a competitive investment for their futures. As far as we knew, their enterprise, as Kumari says earlier, fit the concept of International Education as a commodity: these students were "aligned to employment-related skills and competencies."

Our work with the 20 students began in August 2005 when we provided a preliminary, month-long orientation for them. We were the welcoming committee at the foot of the mountain, offering, we hoped, the maps, the encouragement, the resources and the reassurances to make this a safe and exciting adventure. We four teachers have each lived outside of our countries of birth and have worked in more than one language. We are familiar with the unpredictable nature of 'foreign' educscapes and were mindful in our preparations, of the lived curriculum of the Third Space. We believe that education, no matter how pragmatic, includes issues of identity. In the case of studying and living in another country, the educscape is fertile with seeds of that old cliché called 'Culture Shock'. Climbing Gold Mountain, following signposts in a familiar language but in a new context, enduring (and enjoying) the variable weather, the forests and meadows, the ravines and glaciers, facing the sunrises, sunsets and the limits of one's own stamina would be a journey made as a group, but, we predicted, would manifest itself as individual and personal educations.

Education, in it's deepest sense...concerns the opening of identities—exploring new ways of being that lie beyond our current state....It places students on an outbound trajectory toward a broad field of possible identities. Education is not merely formative—it is transformative. (Wenger, 1998, p. 263)

If we accept what Etienne Wenger says about the transformational

potential of education, I believe that we are responsible, as we offer 'an education' to students from China, to accompany them on this "outbound trajectory" toward new identities—theirs and ours. Although the four authors of this paper worked together during the August Orientation, we have since worked independently with these students. Because of our concern for the quality of the students' journeys, we have met frequently to review the trip as planned, and the curriculum as lived. We have discovered that the students' journey is ours, and that the educational aspects of this 'international' program have been transformative for us as well. We have found ourselves in the Third Space as described by Aoki (1996), neither "here or there" but "here *and* there", in a program that is neither "this or that", but "this *and* that" (T. T. Aoki, personal communication, September, 1996).

As Kumari has already noted 'International Education' as a practice has yet to coalesce as a discipline with a well-articulated conceptual framework and accompanying educational practices. We consider this Master of Education program for students from China to be a kind of international education, because of its 'internationalness'. As such, we hope to be able to assess some of our practices and their consequences for this emerging field, not only from the experiences of the students on their trek, but from the transformations felt by those of us who are providing the guided tour of Gold Mountain.

As teachers, we struggle with this program because there seems not to be a clear, philosophical incentive for the business of International Education, at least not a theoretical or educational one. When a vision is articulated, rarely is curriculum included in the concept. It has been my experience that 'International Students' arrive to participate in curricula that usually are not prepared with them in mind. Curricula, therefore, are often inaccessible to them and do not take into account what the students themselves bring. How do we (and should we) assess whether there is, as Tang (2003) asks, "equivalent meaning in two cultures, two languages" (p. 24)? How should we approach the incommensurability of cultural differences that Bhabha identifies through the concept of cultural translation that he suggests? Tang invites us, as international educators and students, to locate on the eduscape, the phenomenon of translation that "challenges us to look at the complexity of language, and to dig into the fascinating and challenging domain of language, thoughts, and culture" (p. 24). When digging into this eduscape, we have invited the students from China to bring themselves to the curriculum and to participate in its discovery and development.

This cohort, for the most part, attends classes with each other, separate from the general graduate student population. Hongyu Wang (2004), an International Student from China, in the United States, writes, "Isn't the relationship between the self and the stranger one central theme of education?" (p. 7). If, in our educational institutions our students, foreign and domestic, rarely encounter each other as they engage with the curriculum, when and how does Wang's anticipated "relationship between the self and the stranger" figure, educationally speaking? For the August program we tried to plan a curriculum that anticipated the kinds of educational transformation and identity transformation described by Wenger. We also thought about Wang's question regarding the relationship between the self and the stranger. How could we attend to these questions considering the relative isolation of these Chinese students from the larger student body?

The stranger, in many cases of international education, turns out to be another cliché, the stranger within. This was also true for Hongyu Wang. She locates the site of her own transformation in the Third Space (Aoki, 1996, Rutherford/Bhabha, 1990, Smith, 1996) and refers to David Smith (1996) who “writes of identity pedagogy [that]...calls for the third space, which is neither East nor West [and] contests the given intellectual and cultural binary” (Wang, 2004, p. 9). Wang, in her own personal isolation, recognized the Third Space of her particular eduscape and describes the curriculum-as-lived that she engaged there, through encountering herself and her American colleagues. Wenger’s “broad field of possible identities” has meaning for Hongyu Wang, in an unfamiliar eduscape, so far from home. What implications does Wang’s experience have for the cohort of Chinese students at SFU, as they study and live together, making their collective yet individual journeys up the educational mountain? Where will they, and we, find ourselves, ultimately, on this “broad field” of identities?

Because wanted to provide an accessible curriculum for the students following the August Orientation, we tried to find common educational understandings on the journey, the “outbound trajectory”, toward this graduate degree. We wondered what we needed to know about the education system in China, if anything. We asked ourselves questions about how each of *us* has been acculturated by our own education systems. And how might the Chinese students have been acculturated by theirs? We wondered, and still question, how we can offer a Master of Education program to students whose lives and desires have no clear context for us. And how can these students contextualize what we have to offer in meaningful and educational ways?

I am curious, too about the assumptions made when ‘selling’ this program to Chinese graduates. Like the rumours of Gold Mountain that circulated in China a century ago, what are the students led to expect from our curriculum? How relevant *is* this program for the students lives ‘at home’? How much are they able to claim the coursework as their own? Just what *is* happening for the students vis a vis the identities Wenger and Wang talk about?

Most of the students in this inaugural cohort have not been public school or post-secondary teachers. They have limited academic or practical connection with education beyond their own experiences as students. So I wonder about the motivation behind a Master of Education program, for them and for ‘us’. This is a question about education as a marketing product—how alert should we all be to the fool’s gold in every rush to Gold Mountain? How am I as an educator implicated in the aspect of International Education as a for-profit business? All our identities are concerned here. Speaking at a conference in honour of Ted Aoki, William Pinar reminded us that Aoki, in his work as an educational theorist, “Over and over again... point[s] out that education is not a business” (Pinar, 2003). We have an ethical dilemma on our hands when we speak of the business aspects of International Education and ignore the curricular and/or identity components that I believe are inherent in the work.

As I mentioned earlier, we all are aware, or should be, of the dilemma of culture shock and the fragility of homesick students. One student has written, “sometimes I feel so lonely that I cannot even breathe” (07 Jan 2006), and, “What concerns me a lot during these days is finding my philosophy...as long as I have a philosophy, it's hard for me to change” (25 Nov 2005). I understand this last remark to be an

expression of the ambivalence typical of the tensions felt in the Third Space. The transformation, or change identified by the student suggests a struggle with identity as well as philosophy. As international educators, what are our professional, moral and educational responsibilities to the students as they engage in these struggles in this educational context? What *are* our identities in this enterprise, as individuals and as an institution? Are we tour guides, entrepreneurs, mentors, educators or both “this *and* that”?

To answer these questions, the business of international education as it concerns recruitment has to engage philosophically with those who engage educationally. By locating administration, teachers and students all in the international ‘educscape’, in this case, on Gold Mountain, we might engage the “convergence and fragmentation” to which Kumari refers. We might, as Wang (2003) puts it, bring strangers together in that Third Space for, “mutual transformation of [all] parties...without assuming they must meet each other in full embrace” (p. 9).

Some signposts on the trek: Rumi’s story

In thinking about possibilities to inhabit a third space as I engage with the students in this program I plough through dilemmas I have faced in my work. In that context, two themes preoccupy me, both resulting from my own identity positionings as a former international student to a North American educational setting coming from an ex-communist country where the goods offered by the West are considered extremely valuable: the students’ desires to partake in such programs and ways to provide access for the students to North American academic discourses. I will discuss the first theme here and refer to the second later in this paper.

As an instructor and coordinator of the MEd International program I find myself pulled in various directions as to how to best satisfy the needs of our students. As I can identify with the students on a number of levels I would like to discuss the identity positionings from which I attempt to speak for Others (Alcoff, 1991). As Alcoff would argue, with this paper I am participating in constructing subject positions for the students through my discourse. These constructions entail grappling with Anne’s question as to where one locates oneself and the students on a broad field of identities.

In this context, questions like what is my responsibility, who should I be accountable to when speaking for them, and what discursive effects are involved in my portrayal of the students need to be raised. While I cannot possibly find a straightforward answer to these questions it is my hope that the positive response of the students to our conference presentation suggests they feel comfortable with the subject positions we construct for them in this paper. Still, who am I to speak for them? I came to Canada and SFU in 1992 as an international student and remember some of my motivations to do a Master’s degree. I knew very well how envious I left many of my colleagues in an English language teaching institution in my native country because of the simple fact that I was going to study in the West and, if I chose to return, would be introduced everywhere as the one with education from the West, education that would open immense opportunities professionally for me. I had felt stifled by the rigid teaching approaches I had had to follow in my practice and fully convinced that “West knows best” with regards to teaching English as a foreign language. These memories are still with me as I attempt to address the desires of the students from China with regard to what

graduate studies in a North American university could offer to them. In this context I would like to look into the students' motivations to partake in this program as these, in my view, exemplify the awareness of the 'cultural capital' that could be gained by the students through participation in such programs. To get a better sense of these I went back to the students' letters of intent accompanying their application to this program. Here are a few quotes:

".... If I will be accepted into this program, I can almost foresee my prospect in China. I am sure I will be more competitive in job seeking in China after completing the degree (S1)

Considering the vast and fast growing English education market, I do believe to be an English educator will also be a profession with very bright future. English education is a booming industry in China. I wish I could be a part of it with the knowledge and experience I gain from my graduate study in this program

I yearn for [your] university for so long a time..... I am ... aware of the shortness of Chinese educational system and ways and eager to hold the chance to understand western advanced educational system and ways (S5)

I am longing for study in SFU in Canada. SFU has a great teaching facility, and good reputation all over the world. So I will equip with profound knowledge and perform as an excellent teacher."

Looking into the realities, identities, and relations (Fairclough, 1995) that these quotes offer suggests the use of clearly economic terminology to evaluate the potential profits that could be gained from this program. Students talk about "market", "competitiveness" echoing discourses of the commodification of education in the global eduscape referred to by Kumari and Anne above.

However, they also talk about "yearning" and "longing". Overall, the value of the cultural capital a Canadian masters degree has to offer seemed immense in the students' imagination. As Bourdieu (1986) argues, capital is a set of resources which are a source of power and control in society. Bourdieu, of course, distinguishes between various forms of capital and the ones that are particularly relevant in educational contexts are cultural, social and symbolic capital. The desires evident in the students' letters of intent point to the symbolic value/legitimacy of the institutional cultural capital that an academic degree from a Canadian university could offer students in the fields in which they aspire to maneuver/perform. At the same time, according to Henriques et al. "desire ... [is] produced through power relations as they operate in particular social practices ... [which] are themselves regulated discursively" (1984, p. 288).

A question related to the students' desires evident in the quotes above (as well as in my own reminiscences) seems to be the somewhat uncritical embrace of what the West has to offer to China. Drawing on poststructural and sociocultural theories I see both students' constructions of Canada's lead and China's educational needs as similarly tied to discourses the students (and I) have been subjected to. These discourses seem to be part of the West/East dichotomy that we attempt to overcome in our search for a Third Space in the international eduscape that we inhabit. In this context it seems to me

that an analysis of what International Education in this era of globalization has to offer has to find a way to engage meaningfully with such desires and uncritical stances to have a chance to make an impact on both those who 'seek' international education and those who 'offer' it, since, as Kumari points out earlier, both sides jointly create the drive for internationalization.

How could a program such as the one I teach in address such questions in ethical and respectful ways? In my view, a chief goal for such programs would be to create spaces and afford discursive positions for students to participate in a critique and recreation of ESL Teaching in a global context. These discursive positions and spaces, however, need as well to allow students access to what Delpit (1995) would call acquiring the culture of those in power in the global village of ESL teaching. I believe that fluency in the culture of power could be a first step towards the appropriation of powerful educational discourses for resisting and subverting the negative forces of internationalization like the McDonaldization of the global village or, in the field of language teaching, McCommunication approaches to classroom teaching practices.

Reading/writing on rocky terrain: Tensions and interactions

Bonnie's journey

Roumi refers to Lisa Delpit's argument that minority students need access to the "codes of power"—to a kind of cultural capital – as a first step for appropriating educational discourses and resisting the negative forces of internationalization. Part of our task as educators in this International Program was to teach the practices privileged and legitimated in the particular field or marketplace of Western higher education (Bourdieu, 1991), to enable students to join ongoing scholarly conversations. As someone who has often worked at the site of teaching the 'codes of power,' I found that this instance of 'orienting' a cohort of Masters students from China raised particular issues. While learning to make the rhetorical moves that will be recognized and rewarded is something all graduate students must accomplish, the task is greater for those who come to the West for higher education, after years of schooling that legitimates different practices. For those students arriving from China, even those who have learned English as a foreign language for most of their schooling years, the ways of talking and reading and writing in Western university classrooms are unfamiliar. These ways of doing things are embodied; they are a habitus, formed through family, class and culture and are often unconscious (Bourdieu, 1991). As teachers, we struggle to make explicit what seems 'natural,' our tacit knowledge (Giddens, 1984). And the students from China struggle to make sense of new behaviours and attitudes towards learning and discussion and representation of knowledge. The classroom becomes a site where multiple ways of 'doing school' jostle together. But, on the mountain to which these students have come to get the prized and desired commodity of a 'Western education', the teachers' ways, of course, are more privileged. As teachers, we were very aware of how our institutional positions and affiliations implicated us in binary and hierarchical interactions.

We wanted students to 'succeed,' so we tried to teach them how to talk and write the way we do here, to gain the 'culture of power.' We were participating in a narrative of acculturation to the practices of Western research institutions, complicit in the liberal tradition Bhabha speaks of that accommodates 'others' only within their own

norms and frames (referred to earlier). This attempt at containing difference, however, cracked open in the questions we posed ourselves. Our identities as teachers shifted, and an unexpected curriculum began to assert itself, in the dynamic space of teaching/learning in this program. Challenged by our encounters with students and with each other, we found ourselves as teachers in a place of tension and contradiction.

Participating in the Orientation program, we began to question the concept of 'orientation': how were we to locate ourselves as teachers, in relation to the students from China, in this terrain of a Masters program? We continued to question how we were complicit in institutional discourses that reflected and reproduced relations of power and privilege. Later in the semester, as I marked graduate essays, I sometimes saw myself as a reluctant gatekeeper. I was reluctant because I felt my collusion with colonial and neo-colonial narratives. I was haunted by Allan Luke's (2004) questions about the reasons second language educators need to be critical:

Is it because the traditional student bodies of such programs have historically been objects of colonial and imperial power or diasporic subjects living at the economic margins of Western and Northern cultures and economies? Is it because the work of second language education, notably Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), itself once a mixture of missionary work and orientalism, is now a transnational service industry in the production of skilled human resources for economic globalization as Alastair Pennycook (1994) has argued? Is it because the identity politics and dynamics of power and patriarchy within the TESOL classroom in so many countries typically entail social relations between teachers and students that reproduce larger social and economic relations because economically mainstream and marginal, cosmopolitan and diasporic, and white and colored subjects? Probably all of the above. TESOL is a pedagogical site and institution for educating the racial and linguistic Other. (p.25).

We seemed, as the rather marginalized instructors in this MEd program (none of us are tenured, two of us were doctoral candidates), to be participating in a 'transnational service industry' to support 'economic globalization.' To be, despite ourselves, serving larger political and economic forces driving higher education and its internationalization, and to be complicit in the containment of difference (Bhabha, 1994). As I read and commented on student writing, I policed the borders of academic discourse, protecting its authority -- making sure no unruly elements contaminated it, graciously ignoring surface errors if I could understand the writers' meaning, and allowed those who I could understand through the gate. I welcomed the production of accented English on the page, but there were 'criteria' to be met. Sometimes I felt the weight of being an arbiter of intelligibility, aware of my limitations and of irrepressible polysemy of any language use. However, what I became most aware of is that the gate is located on shifting ground.

In today's global environment, the academy can no longer "represent itself as a homogenous and unified entity, to which outsiders must seek access through learning its ways" (Jones, Turner & Street, 1999, p. xvii). Universities are filling with more diverse bodies – but how is

this interpreted? Does this diversity only result in more bodies being marked as 'not belonging'? How are meanings that diverge from what has historically been the centre received, at the micro level of instructors' reading student work? The site of 'marking essays' participates in discourses of 'standards' and 'academic rigour' which regulate meaning making and legitimate certain practices and not others. Many who mark essays may wrestle with 'gatekeeping' dilemmas despite their own desires to open the academy to diverse perspectives and ways of representing knowledge.

For many who work in academic literacy, critical pedagogy has been seen as the alternative to acculturating students into a dominant discourse (Clark & Ivanic, 1997). Critical language awareness emphasizes the fact that all language is situated; academic discourses are merely a particular type of language use, suited to their specialized, research contexts. Academic discourses are situated within historical, cultural, institutional and social contexts, in which meanings are contested (Lea, 2005). Reading and writing in university are "socially situated discourse practices which are ideologically inscribed" (Lillis, 2003, p.194). But, as Theresa Lillis (2003) has pointed out, raising students' consciousness about how academic discourse is situated does not fully address the problem: critical language awareness "tends to assume that an (already critical) expert is engaged in raising awareness of an (as yet uncritical) student about language, power and ideology" (p.196).

The 'we' and the 'they' are rather clearly marked. 'We' as teachers found this when we engaged in discussions about the graduate students from China that we worked with. At one point, I found myself falling into stereotypes about how 'they' had been socialized through all their educational experience to not be 'critical.' If critical can be defined as the ability to stand outside a system and view it as Other, "an epistemological Othering and 'doubling' of the world" (Luke, 2004, p.26), then these students were 'critical' in their every response to Western classroom practices. What we as teachers meant was that they were not displaying the preferred habitus in Western graduate seminars (e.g., discussing critical points about the readings we had assigned). When we had those teacher conversations where we despaired and problem-solved about how to encourage them to reproduce and replicate these preferred behaviours, we were again participating in a binary, an East/West. However, more often our teacher conversations did transcend the binary as we reflected on our efforts to subvert our own practices of 'Othering', to attempt to create a third space in our classrooms.

Searching for a Third Space: Rumi's story continues in the classroom

In grappling with the question of students' 'uncriticalness' I went back to my identity position as an international student from an ex-communist country in a North American university. I continue to have a very vivid memory of how misplaced and alienated I first felt in attempting to make sense of graduate seminars and of critical approaches to academic readings endorsed in this new for me educational space. I wouldn't venture to speak unless specifically called upon, nor would I dare express an opinion that could be considered a critique of anything published. A published word was a truthful word in my mind.

Drawing on personal experiences of this type I now turn to the second theme I referred to earlier in this paper which speaks to my

search for a Third Space in navigating with the students through the North American discourses that occupy the courses I teach the students and the powerful/legitimated discourses of being successful in North American academia. As I engage in praxis I notice that I attempt in class to be very explicit about my instructional practices/strategies in order to demystify what is it that I am trying to do together with them in a graduate seminar. One example would be a think-aloud I performed when a discussion of how to go about choosing a topic for the final paper in a course in their first semester ensued in the classroom. I also constantly inquire with students if, and to what extent, what we are discussing makes sense in the educational contexts which they have inhabited and plan to inhabit in the future. I ask how, if at all, they would be able to translate the knowledge they are gaining to their teaching settings, hoping to engage them in a cultural translation of the type Anne refers to above when raising questions about curriculum in International Education programs. Similarly, I always attempt to work from the perspective that the students are the experts on their needs as educators. I try to allow a variety of identity positions to enter/be valid in the classroom space, fully aware from personal experiences as an international student in North American academia, of the ethical imperative, as Anne might call it, to create opportunities for the negotiation of identities constructed discursively in educational spaces “here *and* there”. It is my hope that this search for a Third Space in the relationships I attempt to build with the students would allow more students to echo what a lonely student seemed to imply in her letter of intent when suggesting that her goal with this program is to follow a Chinese saying to “Make foreign things serve China” in her future use of the knowledge gained through the program. This intent expresses, in my view, a willingness to search for a Third Space rather than uncritically accept what Western educational perspectives have to offer. It seems to me that such intentions offer signposts that allow the ‘flows’ of educational discourse to move in ‘increasingly non-isomorphic paths’.

Naming Gold Mountain and journeying on

It appears that we are abandoning the map and guidebook that goes with the search for Gold Mountain, as we question the terms on which international education is understood. We are attempting to create new paths more aligned with ethical practice: are we creating new ways of locating? Or, are we putting up ‘danger signs’ along the well-worn, well-marked path? Or, are we involved in some mythological treasure hunt that involves the completion of impossible tasks where we will find Gold Mountain miraculously revealed when the tasks are all accomplished?

However we characterize the process, what is becoming clear to us is that first, it is critical that we find ways to name the problem. We are all implicated in the commodification of higher education, a means to an end. Recognizing this is the first step in finding ways to bring back the ‘education’ in International Education. Will it make a difference for students to acknowledge the wider discourses of desire and deference that they have been caught up in, and for teachers to examine ways they further these discourses? In examining together how we all participate in the creation of diversity and containment of difference, we are taking those first tentative steps in avoiding those pitfalls.

We used the Appadorai metaphor of an eduscape both to indicate the terrain that we navigate, but more importantly, to theorize the

possibility of International Education as an eduscape, with opportunities for the ‘flows’ of educational discourse to move in ‘increasingly non-isomorphic paths’. This calls for a much more flexible, open-ended conception, for example, of what an international Masters program would be. Rather than students coming in to follow a pre-packaged program, they would participate in co-creating the curriculum. This would require re-visioning higher education and its practices as open to being re-formed by flows of adaptation and change.

As Carys Jones, Joan Turner and Brian Street (2000, p.xvi) argue, we need to re-think higher education and academic literacy not in terms of skills and effectiveness but rather at the level of epistemology, identity and power: What counts as knowledge? Who decides? How is the self and agency constituted in academic reading/writing practices? How does the academy present its activities as neutral and given rather than partial and ideological, particularly in requirements for and assessment of writing? This interrogation goes to the core of how the academy defines itself. Although academic institutions are sites for the reproduction of power and privilege, they are also sites for unsettling normative discourses. As teachers, we find ourselves placed in institutional discourses we resist, while we are also, inevitably, complicit in them. In this tension, there are opportunities for spaces outside formal discourse, for fissures to open and allow ‘flows’ to move in unpredictable paths.

This destabilization of the university opens spaces and possibilities for, as Bakhtin (1981) says, “ever newer ways to mean” to arise in academic discourses (p. 346). In this vision, academic discourses are inflected and accented by voices with their own intents, with new intents. In our experience, a ‘Third Space’ has begun to develop in our classrooms as a result of an ‘interanimation’ of heteroglossic discourses. We found that very quickly the students from China began to appropriate a graduate student habitus we, as teachers, could recognize as ‘critical’ – as perhaps we began to ‘hear’ their insights more readily. As Anne suggested, our educational journeys through this international program have been transformative. In this ‘Third Space’ or *process* of the emergence of ‘something new and unrecognizable” (Rutherford, 1990, p.211), ‘the emergence of the interstices’ (Bhabha, 1994, p.2), however, is not a glorious self-gratifying discovery of treasure, but a sometimes tortuous, perilous stumbling in the dark. It is uncomfortable to live in the tension of representing a university’s practices while also subverting such practices. We live the curriculum as a tension of identities – the encounter between self and stranger, and the stranger within – in the transformative nature of those encounters in the classroom spaces we are trying to create, and in the ethical ways we try to relate to the students and to each other.

Our experience in this Masters of Education program so far has been one of discovery and challenge, as we try to find an ethical practice while negotiating institutional demands, student desires, our own identities within the academy, and larger historical/political forces that shape International Education. As we acknowledge and challenge what Aoki warns against—International Education as a business—we offer our experiences to the field as a way to think pedagogically, conceptually, philosophically and ethically about an international curriculum in a Third Space. The inevitability of International Education across the global eduscape provokes us to examine its practices and praxis as it is lived at this time and in this place—on the new *and* old Gold Mountain. Once the deal is done, and

the students and teachers are engaged, the thoughts of gold are subsumed by the practices, encounters and positions taken up on the trek.

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