Internationalization of universities
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Chapter 8
Issues Proposed for Internationalization Policy Formulation

8.1 Introduction

This chapter is the summary of the findings from the research results as presented in details in Chapter 4 - 7 which will be divided into 2 issues:

- first, the issue about the goals of internationalization of universities will be presented in section 8.2.
- second, the issue of the language used for the internationalization of universities will be presented in section 8.3.

These findings have the character of "grounded theory" as the results of data collections from the individuals directly involved in the practical level which are the academic staffs and students. This is different from most of the concepts about internationalization of universities which were published that were the concepts suggested by the experts and the administrators. Thus the concepts were usually from the management level. For section 8.4, the researcher will present the issue of Internationalization Policy which was synthesized from the findings of this research.

8.2 The viewpoints of the academic staff and student about the goals of internationalization of universities

The academic staffs and students have been perceived as the "key elements" in the process of internationalization of universities since they are the direct operators in various activities of the universities. Therefore prior to the promotion of various activities about internationalization for which the academic staffs and students to follow, the study of the opinions and the awareness of those upon the goals of university internationalization will bring about common understandings among the management and the operational levels, and resulting in the good cooperation and the success of internationalization of universities.

From the results of the data analysis in earlier chapter, the opinions about the goals of internationalization of universities of the academic staffs and students from all universities indicate that the academic staffs and students have the opinions that the goals of the university internationalization should consist of both 2 dimensions which are the Universalization and the Nationalization dimensions. The Universalization dimension means that the university internationalization should have the goals for the benefit of the humanity or learning society whereas the Nationalization means that the university internationalization should have the goals for the benefit of the nations. As the conclusion, from the opinions of the academic staffs and students even though the current world became the world without frontier by the influences of the advanced communication technology which makes possible the instant communication among anyone in the world anywhere, there will still be the frontier inside one's soul which is the frontier of the Nationalism and being protective of one's identity. The missing frontier of the countries may cause the resistant force creating the invisible frontier in the mind and
the feeling of the academic staffs and students that want to support the Nationalization together with the Internationalization.

This is similar to De Wit who stated that regional differences in Europe, different social, political, economic and educational systems, have a clear impact on the internationalization of universities in each country and region. The results of this research found that the regional differences also have the effect upon the opinions of the academic staffs and students. By the comparison study among several universities, it was found that the academic staffs and students of each university have the opinion toward the Universalization and the Nationalization in different levels. The differences are of various types, for example the Asian university group gives the importance to the Universalization in the higher level than the European university group. One of the reasons is that the Asian universities have the feeling of the needs to depend on the knowledges and the technologies from the developed countries, and also the Asian universities may set the priority that the goal of the internationalization is at the global level whereas the European universities set the priority that the goal of the internationalization is at the regional or European level. This can be seen from the international activities which the European universities support or operate are mostly the activities among the universities in Europe (e.g. ERASMUS, LINGUA, ECTS, COMETT, TEMPUS, etc.). As for the Asian universities there are only a few international projects which are the cooperation among the regions as in Europe, for example, an exchange programme named UMAP (University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific). In general the cooperations are bilateral which each university creates the academic cooperations with the partners in Asia, Europe, USA and Australia.

For the opinion in Nationalization, the characteristics of the difference in the opinions of the academic staffs and students depend significantly on the historical context of each university. For the Asian universities, it was found to be multi-racial and multi-lingual countries, for which this research are Malaysia and Singapore who have the opinions about the Nationalization in lower level when compared to Thailand who has no problems in multi-racial or multi-lingual but has the only the Thai language as the only mother language thus having the opinion about the Nationalization in a rather high level. For the European universities, it was found that Belgium which is a geographical bilingual country has the opinion about the Nationalization in high level which differs from the multi-lingual countries of the Asian universities (i.e., Malaysia and Singapore). This may be reasoned that this research was carried out in one region which is the Flanders where people speak Dutch, therefore, the characteristic of being highly conservation was found. For the Netherlands which is a liberal country, it was found that the opinion about Nationalization is in low level.

For the case of the different perceptions of internationalization across disciplines, the results of this research argues the others’ opinions (e.g., Kerr and De Wit). The results of this research found that the academic staffs and students in all fields included in this research (Arts, Social Sciences, Law, Science and Medicine) are indifferently interested in the internationalization in high level. When studied in details of the 2 cases (University of Amsterdam and Chulalongkorn University), it was found that most the academic staffs and students of all fields are interested in the international activities with the reasons that this will benefit to the academic knowledges and progresses. Moreover, it is favorable for having the chance to know some ones of different cultures. There are very few academic staffs and students whose response is no interesting in the international activities with the reasons that the major subjects are not international related, lack of time, and some
academic staffs claimed that they were about to retire. However, the researcher believes that with the current globalization waves, the flow of the communication technology will affect all individual in every subject. The cooperation among countries is not necessary being the cooperation of the same issue or the exchange of the same item or only the single matter, but may be exchanging the different items belonging to each side. This can be clearly seen by considering from the system of the information super highway or internet on computers on which all units create ones’ own homepage to distribute their data and information. Even the matter of their locals can also be distributed for others to acknowledge which may be the exchanging of local knowledges worldwide. Therefore, the subjects whose characters are local will not be the roadblock of the internationalization but instead the appropriated activities of each subject should be considered.

In addition, the results of the research also found that there are other factors which affect the opinions of the academic staffs and students about the university internationalization, which are that the ones with international experiences (visit university abroad) tend to agree with the Universalization more than the ones without such experiences, and the ones with higher proficient in English tend to agree more with the Universalization. (English as of this research has the status of the foreign language or the second language since the sample groups of this research are in the countries whose English is not the mother tongue.)

8.3 The language used for the internationalization of universities.

The issue of language used for the internationalization of universities is a debatable topic as De Wit and Callan stated as follows:

In any discussion of internationalization strategies, the language issue is a fundamental but also a highly controversial topic. This is acutely relevant for Europe with its enormous linguistic diversity. The language issue has two facets: 1) The importance of knowledge of foreign languages in addition to the mother language. 2) The languages of instruction selected, and their impact on internationalization.

The first point is particularly relevant for those countries where the mother language is spoken by large groups of individuals in other countries: Spanish, French, German, Russian and in particular English. The lack of knowledge on the part of native speakers of languages other than the mother tongue places a barrier against the internationalization of education in these dominant-language countries.

The second point poses particular problems for those countries of which the mother language is spoken only by minorities in other countries: for example, Dutch, Danish, Norwegian, Greek. The lack of interest among foreign faculty and students in learning these languages creates a further barrier to internationalization. In these countries the emergence of English as a common language of instruction, as a mean to stimulate internationalization, is often controversial.

This research studied the small countries which correspond to the second group as classified by De Wit and Callan above, therefore the issue of the use of English for the internationalization of universities is the one that interests the researcher since small
countries with their own national languages may have very little opportunities to use their own language and the mean in the process of the internationalization.

The results of the dimensional analysis of the internationalization (see details in Chapter 4) found that Domination of English has small positive correlation with Universalization dimension indicating that English is significant to internationalization of universities but not as a whole. With the intensive analysis in Chapter 6 and 7 enable the additional explanations that part of the academic staffs and students have the opinions that English is important to internationalization, whereas the other part disagree. The group that believes English is important to internationalization claim the reasons that using English will approach more individuals around the world than the other languages thus follow well with the academic progress because most are in English media. Meanwhile the group whose opinions are not to stress English to be more important than one’s own language claims different reasons. The respondents of the University of Amsterdam believe that both languages should be used i.e., Dutch and English depending on the appropriateness of the contents of the subjects and the English proficiency of the involved individuals which are the academic staffs and students. The respondents Chulalongkorn University have the reasons of being concern that their national language may vanish or be ruined by the English language, if the internationalization of universities causes the universities to use more English or in place of the mother tongue. Besides, there are other reasons that the mother tongue should be conserved indicating that the academic staffs and students in this group realized the influences of the English language in the current era especially in the academic progress. This resulted in the resistant concept against English by attempting to find the solutions to preserve ones’ culture. As the language for the internationalization, this group has no favor in the choice of language and it does not have to be English as long as the appropriateness, importance and the persons involved.

However, the issue of using English as the educational media, most of the academic staffs and students believe that there should be the concern regarding the appropriateness and the importance. In addition, there should also be the concern regarding the quality of the education. The courses to be taught in English beside the concern of being appropriated for instance the contents of the subjects are international, the teachers and the students are also international i.e. they came from several different countries. It is also important to concern about the quality of the teachers who should have high level in English proficiency comparable to the native speakers and the students should also have good English proficiency. If both the teachers and the students do not posses enough English proficiency, that specific course may fail or has no quality.

Therefore, in order to be successful in the internationalization of universities, the management must listen to the opinions of both sides (the one that is pro and the one that is con) which will result in the cooperation of both sides and as the consequence the success of the internationalization.
8.4 Policy issues proposed for internationalization of universities.

The policy issues that the research will propose have been synthesized from the findings of the analysis results of the opinions from the academic staffs and students about the goals of university internationalization and English as a consequence of the internationalization of universities. These are the policy issues with the “bottom up” character which will create the cooperation directly from the operational level (academic staffs and students) and the policy can be practical in reality and be successful.

This policy issue proposals the researcher aims toward the small countries whose mother tongues are not English. The proposals are of 2 issues which are the subject about stipulating the goals of the internationalization of universities and the use of English for the internationalization of universities. There will be no mentions about the construction of the management structure and the types of all activities involving the internationalization because there are plenty of articles suggested by several individuals.

The policy issues for the internationalization of universities which the researcher will propose are as following:

- Policy statements for the internationalization of universities must be clearly stated that the goal is for Universalization and at the same time for conservation of the nation’s identity or retaining the Nationalization. This is to bring about the cooperation from all sections since the academic staffs and students perceive that the Universalization and the Nationalization are of different dimensions. Therefore, the internationalization should not change the universities into the Universal as occurred in the past (see the historical background in Chapter 2). Each university should also conserve the institutional identity and the national identity that belong to oneself. Even though the current world become the world without frontier but it is only without frontier in terms of business and communications. As for culture arts and national identity which have not been disappeared but creating the resistance against the globalization in order to conserve the fine cultures of one’s nation and distribute worldwide with the communication without frontier.

- The goals of the internationalization of universities should be established into two levels which are the regional and global levels then clearly set the priority that the particular university give the importance to what issue in orders or to proceed with both at the same time. This is because the internationalization in the regional and global levels are different in terms of the goals, definitions, incentives and rationales. Therefore, setting priority of the level to internationalize will bring about the mutual understandings of all involving sections and the clear guide line for the incoming processes.

- Internationalization of universities should be supported for all subjects including Sciences and Social Sciences in order for all the departments in the universities to be international equally. Because the globalization in the current world is unavoidable and affecting all units, the results of the analysis found that the academic staffs and students in all subjects are interested in the internationalization but certainly not every individual. The majority agreed
and are interested in participating the internationalization activities. In the past, we often looked at the contents of the subjects that whether the content is international and only then it involved in the international activities. But in the present where the communications are without frontier and bidirectional bring about the adaptation of all the subjects to the international activities for example, the subject whose contents are local may want to promote their own advantageous and exchange with others’ in order to understand each other, to know, and to learn from the others. At the same time it is the way to conserve one’s own identity and well as distribute to others for acknowledgment too.

• In order to relate and agree to cooperate with any university worldwide, there should be a thorough study of the others first, by studying the background of the society, institutional characteristic as well as the pledge of the institution. In order for the well understanding and the success of several cooperation projects. Even though many universities are in the same country, there may be differences in details of the background, history, characteristic and the pledge. Each university must have its own identity and as a result, the academic staffs and students within different universities have different viewpoints moreover, the readiness to interact with the other universities is also different. Therefore to get the cooperation among the universities to the goal no matter if it is unilateral or multilateral or even the university networks, it is necessary to thoroughly study the other side first. Otherwise, there will be only the mutual agreement on the paper which may not result in the practical aspects thus there should always be the realization that each university has different concepts and facilities.

• One way to encourage the academic staffs and students to understand the internationalization is the experience in visiting the foreign university. Since the analysis results indicate that the different types of experience abroad affect the opinions about the internationalization i.e., the ones who have the experience in visiting foreign universities will tend to agree more with the internationalization of universities than the ones with the experience in studying abroad or attending the international seminars. Therefore to encourage the academic staffs and students to have the experience abroad in each category, there should be different goals. In order to support the academic staffs and students to have the experience abroad in each category, there should be different goals. In order to support the academic staffs and students to have good attitude toward the internationalization, the appropriated activity will be visiting the foreign universities. The period of time which one is staying abroad may affect the opinion of that individual. It is also possible that the ones who study abroad usually stay longer thus getting used to the place may reduce the eagerness in participating the international activities. As for the experience in attending the meeting of the academic seminars, generally is of short term and focus mostly on the meeting leaving almost no time to participate in the international activities. In conclusion, the appropriated activity and duration will encourage the academic staffs and students to be impressed by the international activities is visiting which in general should take approximately 2 weeks.
The language to be used in the internationalization of universities should be any languages according to the necessity and the appropriateness. There should not be a specific limitation of using just only one language but rather the consideration from the contents of the involving subjects and the involving the individuals as well as the linguistic readiness of the academic staffs and students. For example, if the activity involves individuals from all over the world, English should be used but if it is the local activity involving only the group or individuals who know the local or that regional language then the local or regional language should be used e.g., in Europe the language to be used can be Dutch, French, German or Spanish whereas in Asia, the Japanese, Chinese or Thai can be used. Furthermore, the universities should support teaching all foreign languages according to the readiness and the appropriateness and should also support the use of several languages including the mother tongue and the foreign languages to communicate in various activities both inside and outside the universities. This will broaden the usefulness and suitability of the internationalization of universities for the activities which the involving individuals come from local, regional or the international level and for all the subjects.

The universities must encourage the academic staffs and students to be proficient in foreign languages especially English (for those countries whose mother tongue is not English). It is generally accepted that in present the English language is influencing the current world enormously in particular the academic progress as well as the communication with anyone worldwide. English can approach individuals widely and more groups than any other languages thus the opening of the international curriculum of the universities in all regions may find it difficult to avoid using English as the educational communication. However, the quality of the education is the most important issue, both the teachers and the students should have good proficiency in English otherwise the curriculum may become uninterested and be of low quality because the studying in English. In the countries where English is not the mother tongue, the results cannot be expected to be as good as the countries whose mother tongue is English. This is not only because the English proficiency of the teachers but also the environments out side the universities of the countries - who have English as the mother tongue - which provide the support for the development in English of the students. Therefore, the universities should have the language institution to provide the foreign language teaching to the academic staffs and students and should support foreign languages studying both within the curriculum and various supporting curriculum activities in order that the academic staffs and students will have good proficiency in the foreign languages.

The international curriculum of the country whose mother tongue is not English should have one’s own identity. To attract the interest of the foreign students to come and study the international curriculum only because of having the studying in English may not be enough reason to compete with the countries whose mother tongue is English, the quality and identity of the curriculum should be considered more than the issue of using English to
communicate. Therefore, the international curriculum of the countries whose English is not the mother tongue should present their own identities as the predominant point or the presentation point of the curriculum in terms of institutional identity, national identity or the predominant of the other aspects - national culture for example. This will enable these international curriculum to be competitive with the international curriculum of the foreign countries and competitive with the countries whose mother tongue is English.