Internationalization of Universities as Internationalization of Bildung

Lenz, Rainer and Steinhaus, Carol

University of Applied Sciences Bielefeld, Northern Michigan University

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Rainer Lenz
University of Applied Sciences Bielefeld

Carol Steinhaus
Northern Michigan University

Internationalization receives top priority in nearly any university mission statement. But why? What is the value of internationalization for a university? Is the purpose to improve a university's ranking, or to explore new revenue sources by entering foreign, mostly Asian, educational markets? Internationalization is not - or better - should not be an institutional end in itself. Internationalization is a powerful means to fulfill a university's central task "Bildung of individuals" as it significantly contributes to the learning process of students and professors within the university system. By focusing on the individual's learning process this article provides a new perspective to internationalization and develops a different approach for reaching the university's mission of internationalization.

Internationalization of Universities as Internationalization of Bildung

1. Introduction

Currently internationalization is at the top of the agenda for strategic university development. Two streams of arguments are often given to explain why universities put an emphasis on being international: First, multinational companies want graduates to have a sound understanding of world markets, different cultures and world politics. Therefore, it is the university's task to educate students for the international labor market. Second, the market for education has become global because education itself has become an international tradable good. New sources of university revenue are explored by exporting "on-line" courses, creating branch campuses in foreign markets (technically a "foreign direct investment") and by importing foreign, full-tuition paying students. Furthermore the degree of internationalization affects where a university is placed on university ranking lists. These rankings are very important for university marketing and so student recruitment.[1]

At first glance, these arguments are convincing because they reflect the observable shift from the educational to the economic as the dominant rationale for higher education and university development in recent years.[2] However the perspective is wrong: The primary task of the university is to impart ideas and knowledge and to stimulate individuals to think and to reflect about both the content they are learning as well as about their own identity. Related to the idea of a university Humboldt coined the expression "Bildung" which could be best translated with formation or edification. "The concept of Bildung….may be construed as implying the idea that accumulating knowledge is not an end in itself – nor is it, for that matter, an aim to any, so to speak, worldly use or application. It is instead, in the service of, and in favor of self-formation (Fehér: 35)." Hence in the Humboldtian sense universities should provide a scientific environment where individuals have the autonomy to pursue knowledge in an effort to transform themselves and thereby become a complete human being and a worthwhile citizen of a community. In fulfilling this task, the university meets the needs of and works for the benefit of the community as a whole. Subsequently, universities are financed by the public. This does not exclude the utility of higher education for the private, economic sector of the society but it is not the primary function of universities. The *"leitmotiv of Bildung"* is to create critical and innovative thinkers, students who learn

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[1] Mazzarrol et al, p. 90.
[2] De Witt, 2005.

to reflect about existing theories, knowledge, and their own identity. Defined this way, the learning process driven by the individual's will for edification becomes a high value for its own sake independent of its use for markets.[3]

The aim of this article is to analyze the internationalization process of universities from the perspective of the individual and his or her process of learning - or better – his or her process of formation. The article begins with an analysis of the value of internationalization for the individual in the context of higher education and continues with a definition of university internationalization. Knowing about the value of internationalization enables a discussion about common methods of evaluation and leads finally to the development of a new approach for reaching the university's mission of internationalization.

2. The value of internationalization in higher education

An assessment of the value of internationalization for higher education has to start with the impact of internationalization on individuals and their learning processes. Internationalization confronts individuals with something "new" and stimulates them to reflect about their own lives, their ways of thinking, personal behaviors, social norms and values. According to the OECD, reflexivity is the core of personal key competencies:

"Thinking reflectively demands relatively complex mental processes and requires the subject of a thought process to become its object. ….Thus, reflectiveness implies the use of metacognitive skills (thinking about thinking), creative abilities and taking a critical stance. It is not just about how individuals think, but also about how they construct experience more generally, including their thoughts, feelings and social relations. This requires individuals to reach a level of social maturity that allows them to distance themselves from social pressures, take different perspectives, make independent judgments and take responsibility for their actions. (OECD: 8)."
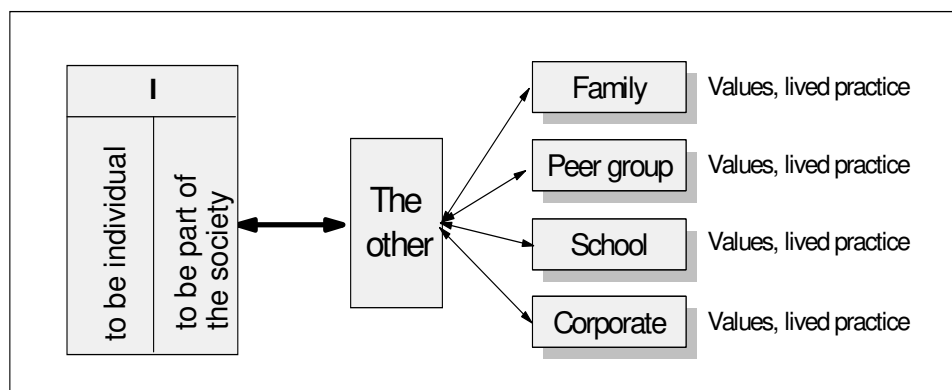
The impact of internationalization on the individual process of reflexivity could be illustrated by using the philosophy of "New Kantianism" and its conception of human beings.[4] According to this approach individual behavior is determined by two key elements. First is the relation between "I" and "the other", who is a member of different social groups in the society. Every social group contains a

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[3] Thornton, 2001, p. 48.
[4] The most prominent philosophers of „New Kantianism" (The Marburg School) are Georg Simmel, Richard Hönigswald and Ernst Cassierer.

system of values and norms - or to be more general - a kind of lived practice. The individual "I" as a member of social groups adopts partially or entirely different group values and behaves in specific situation in a manner which is the lived practice within the group. The degree of conformity between "I" and "the other" depends on the individuality of the "I", which is the second key determinant of individual behavior. "To be individual" stands for individuality, the internal process of self-reflection, and the unique human nature and soul. This part of the human being is responsible for an autonomic individual who acts independent of social roles, values and beliefs in the society. Simmel (1919, p. 387) describes these two constituting parts of an individual as a dialectic relationship. Hence every human being is at the same time partly individual and partly social. Therefore, the individual and the society are in a permanent mutual correlation. The degree of conformity of individuals in regard to social roles within a specific group depends on their degree of individuality.

Figure 1: The two parts of an individual[5]

Internationalization confronts the individual "I" with "the foreign other", whose relationships to various social groups in the "foreign" society are different than one's own.[6] The "foreign other" has as well a different individuality, combining his personality with his social aspects. The degree of confrontation with the "new" depends clearly on the intensity of relationship between the "I" and "the other": the frequency of their contacts, their individual capabilities of communication, the context of that communication, whether they are forced to communicate, to coop-

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[5] Lenz, 2008, p. 9.
[6] Of course every individual is individual and therefore different. It would be difficult to distinguish between more and less different individuals. Hence the expression "foreign other" is solely used for illustration of the difference, as compared to the "New", but can't be exactly defined.

erate, or even to collaborate, and whether the general environment supports and stimulates such interactivities.

Here the university comes into play as an institution which establishes frequent contacts between the individual and the "foreign other". The individual could be a student, a lecturer, a researcher or a university employee who comes into contact with guest students, visiting professor, guest lecturers, foreign researchers or foreign administration officers. However it is not simply the pure number of relationships and contacts between the "I" and the "foreign other" which counts. The quality of the interactions is much more important.

For example a foreign visiting professor invited by the university is not solely by his presence a benefit for the university in which he is visiting. What makes his stay during a semester period beneficial for students, the faculty, staff and for himself is the quality of the relationships he develops to his new colleagues and students. Attending a lecture of a visiting professor could be a highly valuable experience for students if he lectures a specific content in his style, from a different perspective, using different didactic methods and textbooks and grading students with a different evaluation system. For this to happen, the host university has to provide the foreign colleague with the liberty to do things his way. One current problem is that most curriculum modules are highly standardized in regard to content, textbooks and grading. Therefore, host universities often request that the visiting professors fit their teaching into standardized teaching processes. In this case the guest professor actually becomes a second best substitute for home- based lecturers instead of being beneficial for the learning process of students. The same applies for the relationship between the academic visitor and the faculty. The guest faculty could be isolated or he could be integrated in regard to research and social activities of colleagues.

The more intense the interactivity between the individual and the "foreign other" is, the higher the educational benefit for both individuals could be. The task of the university is to institutionalize frequent contacts between home-based students and guest students, or between own faculty and visiting professors. To explore the full benefit of these contacts the interactivity process between the individuals should have these characteristics:

- a high frequency of communication,
- the context of communication within the university sphere should be linked to learning and exchange of knowledge

- collaboration, in the sense that a common target could be reached only by collaboration of both individuals. Collaboration between researchers could be working on a common project or writing an academic article. Similarly, students could collaborate on group projects or research papers.

The answer to the question asked earlier about the value of internationalization for universities is that internationalization could and should be an important stimulant for the learning and reflection process of students and researchers. Because the central function of universities is to educate critical thinkers, internationalization could be a major strategy in fulfilling this task. However, learning, which includes reflection about learned theories, models and personal behavior etc., is a very individual and complex process. Definitely there is no clear input-output relationship. One cannot assume that putting more emphasis on internationalization of a university as an input will automatically result in an output of better educated graduates. If the general learning environment of a university is not favorable for stimulating a reflection process of students and researchers, the benefit of internationalization may be limited. Vice versa, if the university provides a favorable learning environment, then internationalization becomes a key strategy for stimulating the reflection process of students and researchers.

3. Definition of university internationalization

The most commonly used definition of the term "internationalization" in literature is that of Knight (1994) as cited in Knight (1995:16):

"Internationalization of higher education is the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution"

This definition contains several key elements which matches perfectly with the previously described concept of the value of internationalization:

- Process, meaning that it is dynamic and not stable. The environment changes constantly, as does the university which is part of this dynamic environment.

- Process means also that there is no isolated measure to introduce internationalization. This requires a set of measures of change. Internationalization is a program which includes a set of measures which capture all as-

pects of the learning and teaching experience, including curricula, characteristics of the student population, and infusion of the concept of internationalization through the research, teaching and service aspects of the university.

- Internationalization does not simply relate to a geographical concept as the intercultural aspect included in this definition makes clear. The differences in thinking, in behavior, and in culture are the stimulating factors in the interactivity between the individuals. Individuals do not necessarily have to cross the border to find this kind of "New" because different cultural/ethnic groups are found within a country.[7] However, people from other countries are generally more different when compared to people from other countries, than are people within a country when compared to each other.

Nevertheless this definition is not sharp enough and focuses solely on the institutional aspect of internationalization. The perspective of the individual and its dimension of edification are ignored. As described before, internationalization confronts students with the different other in a university context – thereby it stimulates the learning process. To take this central aspect into account the preceding definition of university internationalization is modified in the following way:

"Internationalization of higher education is the process of creating an international environment in research, in teaching and in studying with the aim of supporting the international interactivity of involved individuals in all above-mentioned fields."

4. How to measure internationalization?

Currently, nearly every university is involved in several exchange programs with foreign partner universities and has an international office to assist incoming and outgoing students. Should such a university already be called international? Since no university was international from its start, internationalization seems to be a process which starts from less internationalization to more or full internationalization. However there should be a benchmark to assess where on this spectrum a university currently is on the road to internationalization. Knowing about the status quo makes it much easier to develop strategies for moving forward along this

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[7] Knight, p. 16.

road. These considerations lead ultimately to the aspect of evaluation of university internationalization.

4.1. Most common approaches of evaluation

A review of the academic literature reveals that the most common approach used to measure the degree of a university's internationalization is to define a set of indicators based on codified and publicly available information. Similar to the analysis of financial statements in the corporate sector, these indicators are set up as a ratio which expresses the magnitude of quantities of two variables relative to each other.

According to Ayoubi/Massoud (2007, p. 333) "…only three variables available from the HESA (Higher Education Management Statistics) could be used as a proxy for the real international achievements of a university and …are easily applicable and standardized measurements for the actual internationalization . These variables are defined as follows:
1. Percentage of overseas students to the total number of students in each university
2. Percentage of overseas income to the total income of a university
3. Percentage of market share of overseas first year students to the total overseas market share"

Instead of using only three variables most studies use a catalog of ratios which are differentiated into categories such as research activities, faculty and student exchange programs, external funding, etc. In measuring the performance of internationalization efforts of universities, the German "Center for Higher Education and Development" (CHE) goes one step further and differentiates indicators into the categories of input and output indicators. Just as in the business sector, input indicators record the use of resources for university internationalization while output indicators document their results in terms of international reputation and the number of degrees involving international experience.[8]

Because a ratio by itself holds no meaning (high or low, good or bad) it has to be benchmarked against its own historical development, against a competitor's ratio, or against an index of competitors' ratios. Therefore most studies use calculated ratios of university internationalization to set up nationwide ranking lists and to graph institutional differences between current and ideal levels of internationaliza-

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[8] CHE, p. 11f.

tion in visual form.[9] Other studies use the ratio results in order to classify and group universities into clusters of universities with similar ratio values. The affiliation to a certain cluster indicates the university's success in regard to internationalization.

Ayouibi and Massoud (2007) combine the ratio results with an analysis of the university's articulated commitment for internationalization in its mission statement. To determine the strength of an institution's international commitment, they screen universities' mission statements for keywords linked to internationalization. For example, based on the numerical scores in mission statement content analysis and on ratio results, UK universities were segmented into the following four clusters: International losers group, international speakers group, international winners group and international actors group.

The American Council on Education (ACE 2005) measures internationalization of US Research Universities in a somewhat different way. A nationally distributed survey contained a list of questions grouped into the following six dimensions: Articulated commitment, Academic offerings, Organizational infrastructure, External funding, Institutional investments in faculty and International students, and student programs. In order to create an "Internationalization Index" all answers of survey questions were coded on a five-point scale, ranging from "zero" (0) to "high" (4) levels of internationalization. The overall performance of a university in regard to internationalization and its performance in each dimension was then derived by summing the values of variables being measured in the survey.

4.2. Criticisms of existing evaluation methods

The previously mentioned methods of measuring internationalization of universities fail to provide a holistic and complete picture of internationalization achievements. In general ratios are able to document quantities but not the quality of relationships. For instance, the pure ratio of incoming or outgoing students compared to total students doesn't provide any information about the interaction between home and foreign students or about the learning and reflection process of students. As the American Council on Education (2005, p. 20) states in its conclusion: "The mere presence of international students on a campus is not a major contributor to internationalization – more important are initiatives that provide

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[9] See for instance Elkin/Devjee/Farnsworth (2005): Visualising the internationalization of universities.

opportunities for U.S. and international students to learn from one another out-side the classroom, such as buddy programs, meeting places, and international residence halls or roommate programs." Ratios refer only to the mere presence of international students on campus but not on their impact for the learning process of domestic or foreign students. Therefore any assessment of a university's inter-nationalization success based solely on the ratios and their comparison is undenia-bly incomplete.

The German CHE even explicitly defined input and output indicators and set them into a functional relation. However most studies do this implicitly by analyz-ing the amount of money a university spends for internationalization and using the number of international publications or the amount of external funding for inter-national research projects as a proxy for the return of investment. The mapping model (based on ratios) developed by Elkin/Devjee/Farnsworth (2005, p. 323) for example is recommended by authors to use as an investment tool for university managers. "Usually institutions have limited resources. As a result, activities need to focus on where they will most improve internationalization. This is often where the internationalization dimension is of great importance and where there is a ma-jor difference between desired and actual performance. This will maximize the return of investment." Obviously this is a major problem of university internation-alization: it does not fit well into input/output categories. This is because the learning and reflection process of students stimulated by interaction with foreign students cannot be measured in financial terms. Using proxy variables for counting the output like the number of international publications makes no sense because it does not refer to internationalization and the individual learning process. Here again the general problem of a market oriented university management comes up: Bildung, Learning and Education are all terms which cannot be controlled and monitored like business processes in a corporation. Subsequently the investment approach of measuring success in internationalization leads in the wrong direction or, to speak in business terms, it leads to false management decisions about future institutional activity resource investments. Efficiency of the use of invested tax-payer's money for the purpose of internationalization could be measured by the individual's progress in edification. However, these individual utility units are not convertible in cash terms, but they are nevertheless most important for the society as a whole.

Internationalization can't be an isolated activity of university management and has to be consciously embedded in an overall concept of learning. Otherwise it often fails to have the desired impact on the individual's learning process. Subsequently

an evaluation concept for university internationalization has to take into account the institutional learning environment such learning methods, organizational routines, communication processes between students and faculty, and organizational culture. Internationalization is only a mosaic piece, however an important one, in the whole environment of individual learning. An assessment of the impact of internationalization on the individual's learning outcome has to illuminate the university-based part of this environment.

One final remark concerning rankings of universities: successful university internationalization needs a high degree of interaction between domestic and foreign individuals. The institutionalized exchange of ideas, values, knowledge, and methods between different individuals supports their reflection and learning. Such exchanges of intellectual property between researchers and to a lesser extent between students require the creation of trusting and collaborative relationships between individuals. Organizational cultures of universities could either support or impede the establishment of cooperation or collaboration between researchers. An important part of organizational culture is the evaluation system of researchers and the university or research institution itself. Evaluation based on quantitative, output related indicators and their rankings often creates a highly competitive atmosphere between researchers which is counterproductive for communication, sharing knowledge and learning in a university context.

4.3. A system theoretical approach

The consideration of a university as a complex and open system of elements and relationships which depend on each other could be used as an overall guideline and basis for evaluation. Core elements of the university system are students, lecturers/researchers and administration. Every element is organically linked in the university's system of organization, organizational culture, routines and activities, which then leads to a system network of interrelationships among its elements. A university is an open system insofar as it exists in mutual relationship with its environment.

Figure 2: University as a system
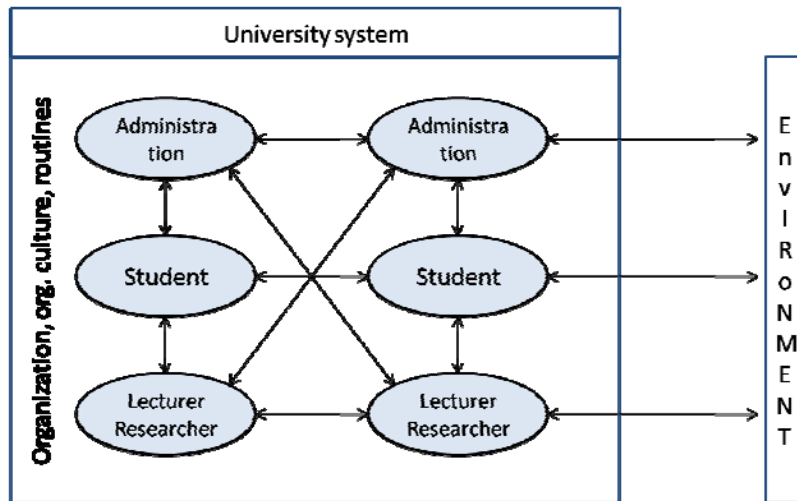
Disregarding external factors, the learning process of students within the university system is determined mainly by two interrelationships: First is the **student-to-student** relationship which reflects interactions with fellow students. The quality of the student-to-student learning depends on the university's organization of the learning environment. If students are embedded in cooperative or collaborative learning processes with a high level of student interactivities, student-to-student learning contributes essentially to individual learning outcomes. The design of a stimulating learning environment is at least partially the responsibility of the lecturer. This leads ultimately to the second interrelation – the **student-to-lecturer relationship**. Lectures given mainly in a stereotyped and highly standardized way by relying heavily on powerpoint slides or one-way lecturing could not be characterized as interaction because this is more a communicative one-way street. Lecturing should stimulate students to discuss problems with fellow students and lecturers, to bring in new ideas and to pursue knowledge driven by curiosity. Understanding the student-to-lecturer relationship as a frequent exchange of knowledge, ideas and opinions should be challenging for both sides and should inspire learning for students as well as for lecturers.[10]

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[10]Annotation: In this context it is remarkable that Stiglitz (2010) dedicated his new book "Free-fall" to his students: "To my students, from whom I learned so much, in the hope that they will learn from our mistakes."

The principle of lifelong learning applies to everyone in the modern society but even more strongly to university faculty. Within the university system the learning process of professors depends upon the interactions between and among colleagues. A **researcher-to-researcher interrelationship** with frequent discussion rounds, exchange of ideas, interdisciplinary communication, and cooperation or collaboration becomes the most natural and most easily explored channel for learning and personal development.[11] No interaction within the university's own researcher community leads inevitably to paralysis of the researchers' personal development and paralysis of the university system as a whole with any system development.

The previously described three interrelationships (student-to-student, student-to-lecturer, researcher-to-researcher) build the core of a university because their correlation directly affects the individual learning process of students. The university administration's task is to establish and to institutionalize interrelationships between students and lecturers and researchers in such a way that the students' and lecturers' individual learning processes are facilitated and supported. This contains all facets of university organization: the library, information technology, maintenance of buildings, academic affairs (hiring, promotion, tenure and evaluation), international office etc.. It is important to emphasize that the administration in all its functions is an integral part of the learning environment and is therefore closely linked to the faculty and students. The focus of every **administration-to-student** and every **administration-to-lecturer/researcher** interaction should always be the optimal organization of and support for the individual learning process within the university system.

How does the internationalization of a university fit into this systems approach? The value of internationalization is the confrontation of the individual with the foreign other, with the "New", with different ideas, different experiences and different values and norms. In a university system with a high degree of interaction between students, between students and lecturers and between researchers, internationalization becomes an invaluable stimulant for the individual learning process and personal development. However, in a university system with less communication and less frequent exchange in all three interrelationships, the effect of interna-

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[11] It is worth mentioning that lecturers and researchers are identical system elements (same person) as research and teaching form a unity. This article distinguishes between lecturer and researcher only for the purpose to making a distinction between these activities.

tionalization on the individual's learning process might be negligible. This could even be the case for universities with a high number of student and lecturer exchange programs, many international research projects, frequent international publications, and mission statements with strong commitments toward university internationalization. The actual numbers of international activities are only partially relevant for success in university internationalization. The impact of internationalization on the individual's learning and reflection, which is in reality the success of university internationalization, depends mainly on the internal readiness of a university system.

Based on this system approach, evaluation of success in university internationalization has to contain two main elements. First is the quantitative part, such as counting the number of guest students, guest lecturers, exchange programs, etc., and developing quantitative ratios. This task should be easy to do because it is mainly the collection of explicit knowledge which is already documented in paper form and therefore easily attainable. However the second part of evaluation is measuring the impact of guest students, visiting professors or international research projects on the individual's learning process in regard to the three system interrelations (student-to-student, student-to-lecturer and researcher-to-researcher). This requires much more effort. It is a matter of generating system internal qualitative information and therefore implicit, so called "tacit" knowledge. Referring to the principle of knowledge management, explicit and implicit elements of knowledge are complementary to each other and are not considered mutually exclusive.[12]

The problem with implicit knowledge is that it is not yet documented and hence the information is not easy to collect. Any evaluation of success in university internationalization has to go into the system itself to measure the frequency and intensity of interactions between the two core elements of lecturers/researchers and students. In part, information could be generated by self-assessment of individuals who answer questionnaires or write self reflection reports. Furthermore evaluation has to focus on the university's general organization of the three core interrelationships. For instance, information should be relevant if guest students or visiting professors are embedded in cooperative or collaborative learning or research projects. Another question is how is communication between students themselves and a researcher institutionalized by regular meetings (formal and informal) in the university system. The organization of core interrelationships in a university system concerns the administration-to-students or administration-to-

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[12] Nonanka, Takeuchi, 1997, p. 8.

researcher relationships. On the administration side one main player is the international office. Here evaluation has to assess whether the international office is closely linked with the university faculty and what kinds of instruments are utilized to support student and lecturer interactions.

The system theoretical approach distinguishes from common evaluation methods by focusing on the individual learning processes of students, lecturers and researchers within the university system. This is in line with the university's genuine mission to facilitate the learning process of students and to build up critical and reflective thinkers. Since internationalization has to be seen as an important stimulus for the individual's learning, any assessment of success in university internationalization has to analyze the relationship between internationalization and the student's or researcher's process of learning in the university system. Attempting to assess to what extent internationalization contributes to an individual's learning is more difficult because the learning process itself is complex and influenced by many internal and external factors. However qualitative evaluation of success in university internationalization is important because it helps universities improve the design of the system's learning environment and also helps to increase the impact of internationalization on an individual's learning. Quantitative evaluation is not linked to individual learning and therefore it can't provide this valuable information.

5. Strategies to become international

Most university strategies concerning internationalization concentrate on increasing the numbers instead of focusing on exploring the given sources in "learning efficient" ways. Increasing the numbers means hunting for new foreign partner schools with student and lecturer exchange programs in attractive places all over the world. Sometimes it is the university's desire to have a network of foreign partners which covers all five continents because this signals the omnipresence of that university. From a university's perspective this quantitatively-based strategy is partially understandable: A university's reputation and success are measured in ratios and rankings. International quantities are part of these ratios and so contribute to the overall university ranking. However, despite this misleading incentive to focus on quantities, it seems to be a wise strategy to consolidate the existing foreign exchange programs, international research contacts and international relationships and to audit their impact on the individual learning process.

A quality-oriented internationalization strategy contains two main aspects:

- An **internal audit** of the current status of university internationalization. Any foreign activity of the university system has to be audited in regard to the learning process in the three core-correlations. Internal auditing leads to re-organization measures of the administration-to-student and administration-to-lecturer relationships in such a way that the learning outcome is enhanced.

- An **external audit** of contacts which implies the assessment of exchange programs and research activities with foreign partner universities. The main objective for this review of foreign activities is to prove the system readiness of foreign partners in regard to individual learning when they send out home-based students or researchers.

Figure 3: Strategy of University Internationalization
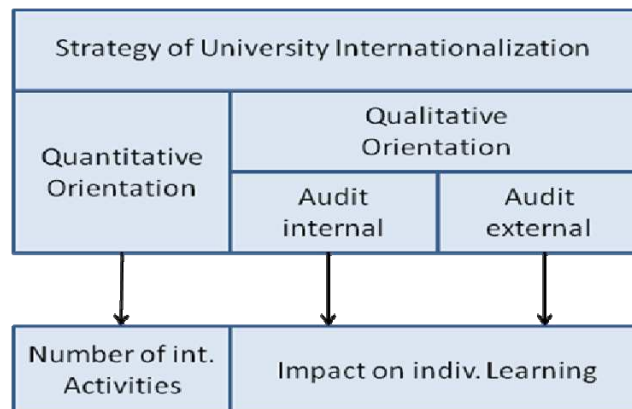
The theoretical system approach provides an optimal basis for the internal as well as the external auditing. The **internal audit** could start with a simple listing of internationally related activities of the university. Subsequently every activity should be analyzed as to its correlation with the learning process of students, lecturers, or researchers. The individual's learning outcome in turn is connected to the interaction level within the three core interrelationships. The purpose of the audit is to record the degree of interactions and to organize the learning environment to improve the impact of international activities on the individual's learning.

The organization of the learning environment concerns mainly the administration-to-student and administration-to-learner interrelationships. Referring to incoming foreign students as an example, the two core interactions (home-to-guest student and guest student-to-lecturer) have to be organized in such way that the student's learning process is facilitated.

Sometimes quite simple changes in the administration of incoming students can improve the learning environment. For instance a university could institutionalize the student contacts by letting guest students share a dorm room with home-based students or by creating a "buddy program" (mentoring program) with a range of various activities between home and guest students during the semester. The quality of interaction among students could be enhanced by changes in the lecturer-to-student interrelation. If students are embedded in collaborative teaching projects (case studies, research papers etc.) during the semester the learning subject becomes the context of interactions. In classes with an international student audience, lectures with a higher degree of interaction and individual student contribution are more beneficial for the individual learning process than lectures with a low degree of interactivity. Quite often the design of the learning environment in regard to internationalization is an organizational issue. To reach the overall target, an increase of the impact of internationalization on individual learning, an organizationally tight link and continuous communication between the university's international office and the faculty are necessary.

The **audit of external** contacts such as program partners or institutions comprises the same tasks that should be done in the internal audit. For instance, foreign partner universities have to be assessed in regard to the learning environment provided for incoming foreign students. Auditing of external partners does not imply using a standardized set of criteria for the assessment. Probably foreign partners use different learning methods and are quite successful. The learning process is a purely individual process, and therefore the assessment of a learning environment must also be individualized. For this type of assessment internal system information is needed and can't be obtained simply by sending out questionnaires to foreign partners. The information has to be gained by personal interviews with administrators, lecturers and students of foreign partners or by interviews with returning home-based students or lecturers who visited partner universities for at least a semester. This review process may lead to finding that some foreign partners don't provide a favorable learning environment for receiving outgoing domestic students while some partners are much better than originally assessed. Furthermore, these audit results focus on the learning environment and don't take

into account the attractiveness of a foreign partner's location or the reputation of the partner university. Sometimes the university's reputation and the assessment of students' learning conditions fall apart. The contacts with foreign partners which provide a favorable learning environment should be intensified by extending the student exchange program to include lecturer exchange. Expanding on these notions could allow universities to establish joint degree programs or common research and teaching projects.

6. Conclusion

The past decade is characterized by increasing economization of university education worldwide. Universities are managed like companies and lectures, students and administration therefore are controlled and monitored like parts of business processes. Following this economic model, the standardization of processes converts learning into homogenous and tradable products which could be easily measured, sold, compared and exchanged in educational markets. "The dominant maxim of the science industry seems to be: what matters is measured, which implies the reverse: What cannot be measured does not matter (Prange, p. 501)". This maxim is applied to every field of higher education and so as well to university internationalization. However it is time to remember the original mission of a university: the edification (Bildung) of individuals. Bildung of individuals is a unique value by itself which can't be converted into cash terms and does not fit into the world of accountancies, ratios, balance sheets, benchmarking, rankings and accreditation. Embedded in an institutional concept of learning internationalization could contribute significantly towards the individual's process of edification. But internationalization should be never seen as an end in itself or as a means to fulfilling the interests of the institution "university". The focus should be always the individual and its process of Bildung.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Rainer Lenz is Professor of International Finance at the University of Applied Sciences, Bielefeld, Germany. He is head of "International Studies in Management", a Bachelor program in which students have to study one year abroad. Previously he was economic advisor to a German MP, and worked for several years in investment banking of an international bank in Frankfurt. Visiting academic positions include the American University in Washington, USA; the Universidad Iberoamericana Puebla, Mexico; and the University of West Florida in Pensacola, USA.

Dr. Carol Steinhaus is an Associate Professor in the College of Business at Northern Michigan University in Marquette, Michigan. Her areas of study were organizational behavior and management, including human resource management and conflict management. During 2009 she spent a semester on sabbatical at the University of Applied Sciences in Bielefeld, Germany. She is very involved in various international study efforts at the Northern Michigan University in Marquette, Michigan, and is currently serving as President of an international business school consortium, the International Business Student Exchange Network.