Narratives of socialization of international students in their school communities

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Where were the participants from?

- Years 9-13
- All boys
- Students from China, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Pacific Island countries, and Europe
- Had to do ESOL courses before entering mainstream courses
- Low to pre-intermediate proficiency in English
Findings

Students’ socialization included

- Physical space
- Norms
- Every day lived interactions
Physical space as liberating and limiting

A) “The thing that surprised me when my first came to [name] high school is the clean environment classroom school have a big field and I like school terf. It surprise me because I like to play football at terf and that terf are very good material”.

B) “The difficult that I first came to [name] High School is finding a classroom because they have many building and I can’t remember it so I ask some student where is my classroom and how to go there.”
Students’ negotiations of norms, rules, and regulations

• Teaching and learning/curriculum
• Sociocultural
Teaching and learning / curriculum

• Inquiry based learning
• Improving ako, whanaungatanga, tangata whenuataa, manuakitanga and wānanga, emphasizing **partnership, community and belonging**
• Students are encouraged to become curious thinkers, develop creative knowledge and reflect on how they are learning
• Important aspects of this are differentiated learning, student goal setting and student subject literacy and numeracy
Sociocultural

• A. General conduct
• B. The school uniform and grooming
• C. What not to be brought on to the school grounds
• Mobile phones and other devices (laptops / notebooks / tablets)
• D. Attending a school function
• E. Cyber safety
• G. Litter
• H. Exeat passes
• K. Absences
• L. Personal property
• M. Bicycles/motor vehicles
• O. Damage
The everyday interactions

- Interactions with peers
- Interactions with teachers
- Others
Challenges

- Linguistic
- Cultural
- Affective
- Gender
- Homestay
- Fees
- Technology
Strategies

• “I think the only one thing I feel bad is I sometimes lost my way. I feel lonely. I usually use google map now to check my right way. I can find my way now. It’s really cool, google map is a good app.”

• “I did all the things that I could have think of to improve my English. I did pretty much watch English movies and try not to speak my own language at home. So I can get used to it quickly.”

• “I used my free time to remember the vocabulary and watch English movies. And my English skills are improved.”
Student transformations

- “communicate with Kiwi students and others better
- I understand school and have friends,
- have learned the rules better,
- getting to know the physical space better,
- now I could volunteer at school,
- more confident to do exams”.
Discussion

▪ Superdiversity creates opportunities as well as challenges

▪ International students’ face multiple challenges in their new social contexts

▪ Students struggle to make sense of, employ strategies, and learn the norms of their new academic social space

▪ Academic socialization is contested and not neutral

▪ Students are active agents in their social spaces

▪ Socialization is a creative and dynamic process

▪ International students had to negotiate the physical space, learn the school norms, and negotiate difference as they encountered other people at school.

▪ International students experiences of inclusiveness and exclusiveness were contingent upon their every day experiences at their school
Thank you for listening.

If you would like a copy of my slides, please email me at b.soltani@massey.ac.nz.