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*Synergizing transcultural learning of Global Englishes: Voices of Chinese exchange students in a Thai university* by Singhanat Nomnian, Mahidol University is timely and significant in this modern globalization era especially where student mobility has been rapidly increasing around the world owing to the implementation of internationalization of higher education (HE) strategies. This book celebrates the value of diversity and transcultural learning in HE classrooms and vigorously employs interdisciplinary approaches to better understand how Global Englishes is framed within a transcultural setting in Thai HE. This book consists of eight chapters and aims to address the impacts of globalization on the teaching and learning of English concerning a group of Chinese exchange students at a Thai university.

Following the introduction chapter, the second chapter explores the groundwork of this study, internationalization of Thai HE, which has been very much motivated by the processes of globalization and ASEAN-ization. This chapter looks at the progress of international student mobility and the reciprocal relationship between the two terms globalization and internationalization. Nomnian starts from the global context of internationalization of HE and then narrows the scope to the ASEAN region and the local Thai context. He suitably provides recent situations of internationalization of HE around the world and this enables a fruitful comparison with ASEAN and Thai HE settings. He importantly notes that internationalization of HE worldwide is ‘culturally-sensitive, locally-relevant and globally-accepted’ (p.11) depending on the resources available to the local context at hand. Furthermore, Nomnian’s critical reflection on the current ASEAN and Thai HE status casts light upon the compelling issue ASEAN universities need to cope with. He also accentuates the significance of creating a ‘workable

[internationalization] model accepted [by] all' (p.19) and this can be realized by first of all providing realistic, useful support for the surging number of Chinese students in Thai HE (e.g. English language proficiency, academic and communication skills etc.).

In the third chapter, Nomnian continues with explaining the steady rise of Chinese student mobility worldwide and its effect on Thai HE. In this chapter, Nomnian adds the significance and rationale behind this qualitative study based on his own experiences teaching Chinese exchange students during the past three years. His unravels his past stories and thoughts concerning the exchange program and the students and it particularly gives a very interesting and personal flavor to this study. In the end of this chapter, Nomnian writes a more detailed aim of the study. This book aims to synergize 'transcultural learning' and 'language and cultural exchanges' in Thai HE. It essentially challenges 'Chinese exchange students' normative culture of learning by reevaluating the paradigm shift of Global Englishes taking place inside and outside the classroom' (p.30). This is achieved by scrutinizing 'Chinese exchange students' understanding of transcultural learning during their 10-month immersion program' (p. 30) at a research-based university in Thailand.

The fourth chapter is where readers can appreciate Nomnian's attention to interdisciplinary applications in this study. He innovatively incorporates the concepts of 'Cultural Synergy', 'Transcultural Security', 'Global Englishes', and 'Transcultural flows' to propose the 'Transcultural Learning Synergy Model of Global Englishes' (p.32) which is the fundamental basis of this study. In the last section, Nomnian demonstrates how the four key concepts serve as pillars working reciprocally and co-constructively around the model which acknowledges 'the fluidity, fixity, and fluctuation' (p.52) of transcultural identities. The fifth chapter deals with the research approach, data collection methods and data analysis. Nomnian adopted an Interpretive Phenomenological Approach (IPA) to understand the interrelationship between the four concepts illustrated in the previous chapter. Written English academic work from 24 Chinese exchange students at a Thai university have been collected to examine the experiences and perspectives of Global Englishes through transcultural learning.

The sixth chapter presents a thematic analysis of the Chinese exchange students' essays based on the four key elements: cultural synergy, transcultural security, Global Englishes and transcultural flows. Over 60 extracts written by the students allow the readers to comprehend the mindsets of these transcultural beings. Furthermore, the chapter demonstrates the interdependence and mutual relationship of the four elements which also 'play essential roles in synergizing linguistic and sociocultural dimensions for the Chinese

exchange students' transcultural learning' (p.87). This in turn calls for the development of 'versatile, adaptive, and flexible' mindsets of transcultural beings that 'appreciate[s] diversity, tolerate[s] differences, value[s] equity, and avoid[s] bias' (p.87).

The seventh chapter is also where I positively respond to Nomnian's interdisciplinary work and how the different fields adequately harmonize to deepen the understanding of transcultural learning in Thailand. He uses the bio-ecological systems theory and concepts of enculturation and acculturation and sensibly adapts these to create his pedagogical model that can integrate students' transcultural trajectories into their learning, namely 'Global Englishes pedagogies towards Global Citizenship Competencies' (p.89). Nomnian introduces five layers of the bio-ecological systems from the inner to the outer circle: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem. He respectively categorizes these with progressive language pedagogies which reflect the current Global Englishes status: problematizing "native-speaker" language attitudes and ideologies, raising awareness of Global Englishes, recognizing metrolingualism, equipping [students with] 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and integrating global citizenship competencies into English language education. He spells out how each category can be attained and links them to various research studies and transcultural learning experiences of the Chinese exchange students. This chapter is particularly well thought-out and brings us realistic and useful suggestions for English language teaching (ELT) around the world where still many remain adhering to native-speaker norms and traditional methods of teaching.

This book proves the extensive research done on transcultural learning and global citizenship with regard to Global Englishes. I believe its attempt to synergize transcultural learning of Global Englishes has been successful and it also provides applicable implications for future ELT practices not limited to ASEAN regions but across the world. This book appropriately reflects on what is going on in the real world where transnational mobility has brought about various sociocultural issues and endeavors to respond to it through avant-garde research on Global Englishes education in a Thai transcultural setting where in fact English is learned and used as a foreign language.