Towards an integrated and sustainable paradigm of international higher education collaboration for a fast-changing, connected world: *A UK-Malaysia case study of '**reciprocal internationalization**'?*

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Paper version a collaboration with:

- Mohd Ismail Abd Aziz, Director of International Affairs, UTM.
- Steven Coombs, Head of Continuing Professional Education Programs, Bath Spa University.

FOCUS QUESTIONS OF THIS PRESENTATION

1. How might (why should) UK (European/Western) students become more attracted to study in 'Asia' (i.e. in non-Western contexts and/or the 'developing' world?) *[A recurring question at Going Global 2011 in Hong Kong]*

2. What formula is also needed to go beyond **Malaysia's Twinning model** in order to achieve its ambitious 2020 model of becoming a genuine international education hub? *[How has this model been at the 'epicenter' of the global push for 'HE internationalization'?*

3. In the context that International Higher Education and 'Academia' is so **asymmetrically** eschewed to English-speaking Western countries, <u>why and how might a more **reciprocal** model of an emerging global education/knowledge system be a WIN-WIN situation of truly important future and global significance?</u>

The answer to these questions perhaps lies at the intersection between two equally legitimate but often contradictory perspectives – such as epitomized by these two comments…

For some the impact of globalization on higher education offers exciting new opportunities for study and research no longer limited by national boundaries*… At the very least, with 2.5 million students, countless scholars, degrees and universities moving about the globe freely there is a pressing need for international cooperation and agreements*
– Altback, Reisberg & Rumbley (2009) Trends in Global Higher Education

One of the major peeves I have is when I see many private colleges advertising their twinning programmes as "world-class" and are partnered with the "top" universities in the various countries overseas, particularly in the United Kingdom *(UK)… These students who have paid so much more taking these twinning courses would have learnt more, and be better qualified for the job market if they had enrolled in some of the better local universities in Malaysia. – Education in Malaysia Blogspot)*

The structure of this presentation will follow that of a detailed inquiry written up in a related paper

1. **Malaysia-UK Twinning programs: An exemplary instance of the basically asymmetrical development of international higher education 'collaborative degree arrangements'**
   - ***Malaysia's Twinning model as the ambivalent historical prototype of 'collaborative' (and increasingly 'privatized') cross-border higher education***
   - ***Towards an integrated typology which better reflects this***

2. Overcoming the asymmetries of the past and present?: The challenge of getting UK and other European students/'youth' to go to Asia, to developing countries, and to non-Western societies
   - ***A comparative view of the 'strengths and weaknesses' which make up the globally networked higher education 'system'***
   - ***Navigating the two-way requirement to overcome asymmetries and 'harness the possibilities'***

3. A UK-Malaysia design experiment: Exploring the elements of an emerging future 'global convergence' in higher education
   - ***the UTM-Bath Spa University 'design experiment'***
   - ***How and why an integrated approach needed to transform into practice the endless rhetoric, contradictory promises, and disparate interests of global higher education***

THE TWINNING CONCEPT OF 'COLLABORATIVE DEGREES' EXPLAINED -

- Twinning degree programmes started in Malaysia almost 25 years ago – became very popular after 1996 HE reforms - and still today are a popular way to get an 'international uni. degree' (copied elsewhere)
- In a Twinning programme, students can complete either 1 year; 1½ years; 2 years; or 2½ years in Malaysia, out of the 3-year degree programme before going to the partner university overseas to complete the degree.
- Eventually a 3+0 program (effectively a franchising model of trans-national education) became available. Now also off-shore 'branch campuses (e.g. University of Nottingham campus), etc.
- The Malaysian educational institutions normally collaborate with well-known universities from the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States, New Zealand, France as well as Germany for these modes of study.
- As critics point out the recent scrutiny of the MQA (Malaysian Qualifications Agency) has helped improved matters but their focus tends to be on the curriculum rather than all the intrinsic and contextual aspects of educational quality (and also not on the local/cultural aspects of the international experience)
- Curriculum – teaching style – teaching context [surface to deep]
- *As Altbach etc. point out (the 'McDonaldisation of HE'), HE internationalization substitutes and short-cuts cannot substitute for local cultural contexts of quality of education or actual experience*

Some of the UK universities which have had had Twinning arrangements with Malaysian colleges

University of Southampton
University of Hertfordshire
Coventry University
University of Leeds
University of Sheffield
University of the west of England
The University of Hull
Cardiff University
University of Bradford
University of Birmingham
University of Reading
Oxford Brookes University
University of Aberdeen
Middlesex University
University of Nottingham
Staffordshire University
University of Abertay Dundee
University of Greenwich
University of Sunderland

University of the West of England
Cardiff University
University of Birmingham
University of Exeter
University of Liverpool
Loughborough University
Heriot-Watt university
Glamorgan University
AIU School of Business
Robert Gordan university
Northumbria University/
Middlesex University
University of Portsmouth
Sheffield Harlem University
University of Sunderland
University of the West of England
University of Wolverhamton
University of Central Lancashire
Anglia Ruskin University

University of Teesside
University of London
Sheffield Hallam University
University of East London
Huron University
Lancaster University
Manchester Business School
Derbyshire Business School
Keele University
Northumbria University
University of Manchester
Nottingham Trent University

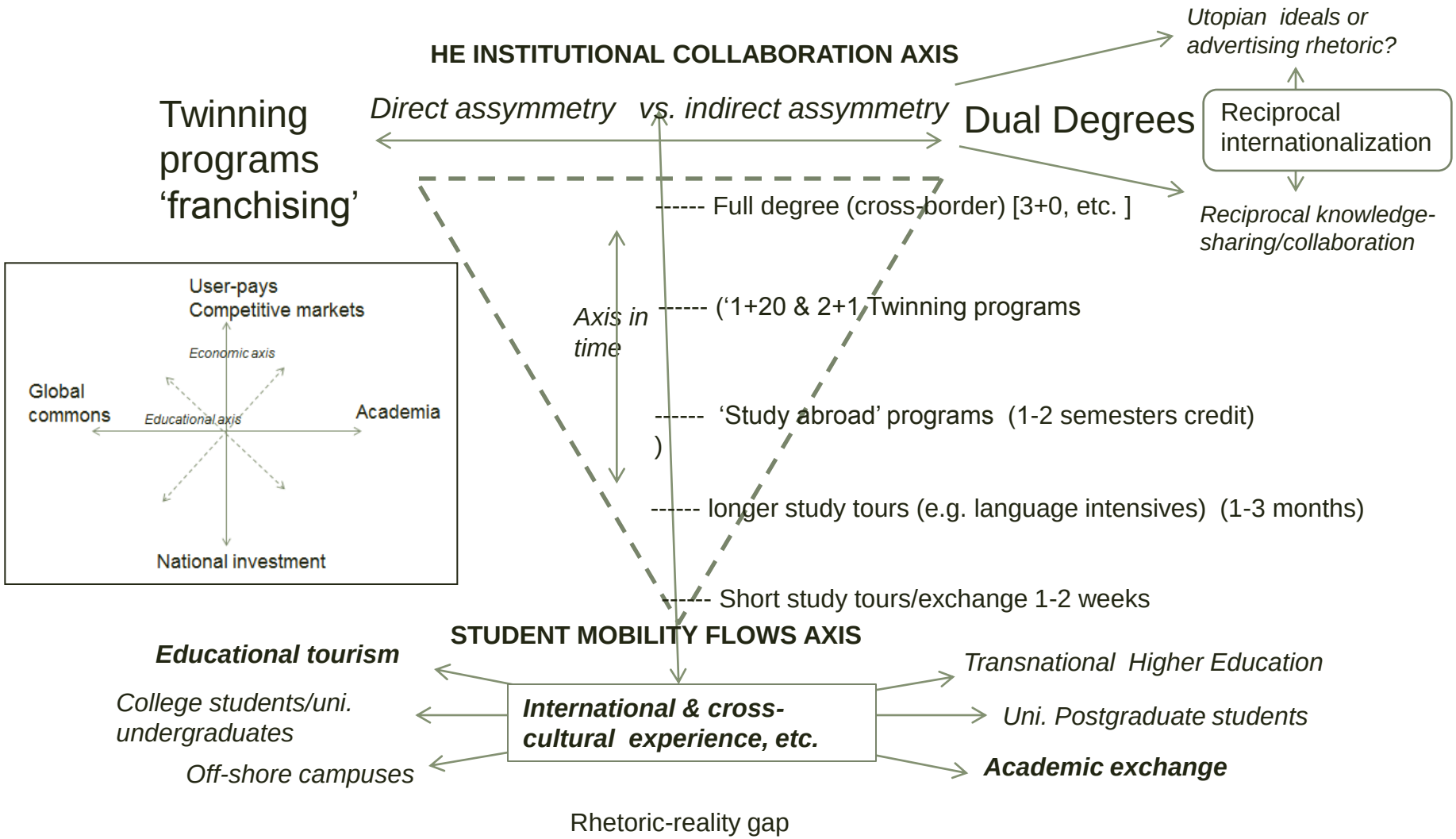
Examples Of Twinning arrangements

(www.studymalaysia.com/)

COUNTRY	LOCAL COLLEGE	UNIVERSITY	DEGREE
UK	INTI College	Coventry University	Business
	KDU College	University of Manchester	Economics
	Olympia College	Nottingham Trent University	Business
	Taylor's University College	University of Birmingham	Engineering

Go

Towards a framework for recognizing a basic *asymmetric vs. reciprocal/dialogical* tension in global higher education



HE as competitive market Vs. HE as global 'public good'

(user-pays/ for profit etc.) *(service/ knowledge-sharing/commons)*

Reality-rhetoric gap in HE internationalization promotion?

Marketing Rhetoric - **HE 'branding' of 'cultural globalization'**
– racially/culturally inclusive, preparing students for a changing world, quality degrees, employability outcomes, integrating new information and communication technologies, education as a noble ideal/service, etc.

Underlying reality - **competitive market (economic globalization)**
– driven more by **national policy/economic imperatives**; **us vs. them** between universities as well as nations and regions, **user-pays** focus on attracting fee-paying students, **broker model** of education hubs, focus on **surface rather than deep learning outcomes**, also open to abuses, marketing misrepresentation, and possible disappointment, etc.

Education MALAYSIA
Pioneer

CONGRATULATIONS
SUNWAY UNIVERSITY
on being awarded the Reader's Digest Trusted Brands Awards 2011
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VOTED BY CONSUMERS
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HIGHER Education MALAYSIA

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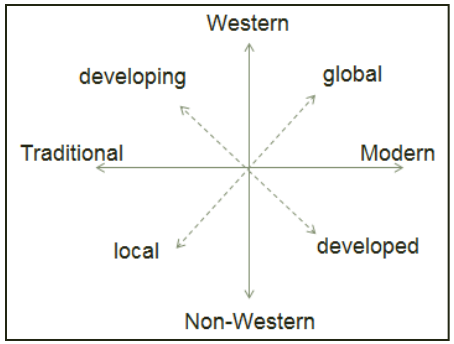
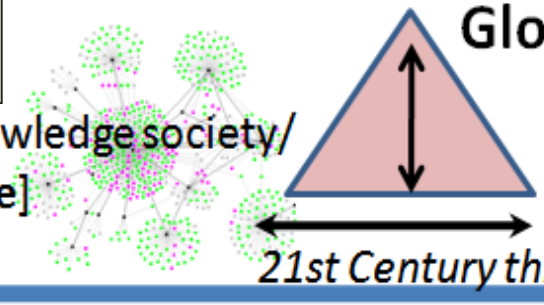
Two different approaches to Higher Education Internationalization?

Top-down/ commodity/ broker model	Emergent/more sustainable model
➢ **International students and academic staff viewed more as 'means to an end'** ➢ Focus on ad hoc/surface not deep measures of quality (credentialism, descriptive research, surface/rote learning etc.) ➢ More effort needed to overcome suspicion at 'HE internationalization' by local academic cultures and wider society ➢ Concept of education as a 'public good' and private sector leadership both somewhat missing in all the rhetoric and policy of national investment/ profit ➢ **Main rationale: national investment and economic development for its own sake [profit first, quality of education second]**	➢ **International students and academic staff attracted, harnessed and integrated** ➢ Encourages active' learning and knowledge-building (critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation etc.) ➢ HE internationalization as a focus for encouraging greater openness and pluralism in local academic cultures and wider society ➢ HE convergence between marketization/ privatization/ internationalization based on national 'manpower' and human resource development needs ➢ **Main Rationale: 'deep quality' improvement of HE linked to access issues for local students (and reverse 'export internationalization')** **[profit not primary]**

The foundations of future global knowledge convergence (incl. global higher education system)



(a) Network society/knowledge society/ global 'village' [**space**]



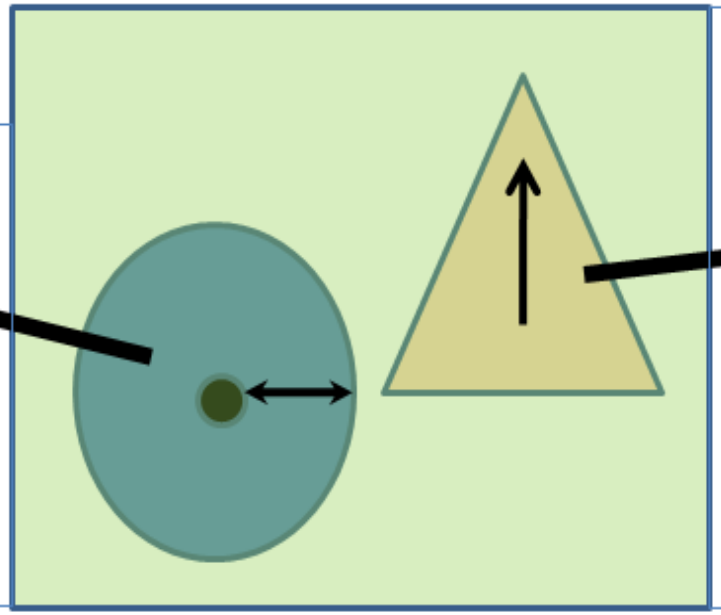
(b) 'Optimal' agency, emergence, and resilience [**time**]

Human cultural history

us vs. them & self vs. other (same vs. difference)

Traditional

- equilibrium (space)
- physical environment/ indigenous systems
- local communities of practice (collectivism & social hierarchy)
- 'honor and shame' societies
- innovation as performance in context - US vs. THEM



Modern

- growth/progress/ accumulation (time)
- global aspirations (history/ technology/civilization)
- individualism/ self-actualization
- rule of law (external/top-down organization)
- innovation as new form
- SELF vs. OTHER

DESIGN EXPERIMENT.

- How might UK students be enticed to come and study in Malaysia?

- And how can Malaysian Higher Education Universities as well as Colleges strategize to sustainably achieve this?

- [How could this conversely improve international HE provision in the UK and other European/Western countries and address many current problems of commodification, cross-cultural misunderstanding and inadequate or inappropriate support (and various related issues)]]

***Design experiments/research a* most powerful approach to 'sustainable policy-building' research/studies – because it engages the future and forces of change to work backwards from a reasonable outcome in terms of focusing on the aspects, conditions, and basic 'formula' for sustainable problem-solving**

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NEGOTIATING THE 'PUSH-PULL FACTORS' and 'ASYMMETRIC ISSUES' TO ACHIEVE THE EMERGENCE AND CONVERGENCE OF A GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE/HE SYSTEM

- **Foundational – cost, infrastructure, academic support, visa issues, credit transfer etc.**
- **Educational – quality vs. varied styles of assessment, teaching, learning and 'knowledge-building' (including traditional vs. modern styles/knowledge systems)**
- **Extra-curricular – economic vs. cultural globalisation and associated tensions (modern vs. traditional, developed vs. developing, ethnic/cultural/'civilizational' diversity**

Design experiments/research a **most powerful approach to 'sustainable policy-building' research/studies – because it engages the future and forces of change to work backwards from a reasonable outcome in terms of focusing on the aspects, conditions, and basic 'formula' for sustainable problem-solving**

The UTM-Bath Spa collaborative degree 'design experiment'

- As part of his visit to UTM on a British Council short grant, Dr. Steven Coombs from Bath Spa University, myself and local colleagues all discussed some **further collaborative possibilities** as part of Perdana School strategizing re: a new program for a new academic faculty with 'new possibilities'
- This included options of a dual or joint degree where UK students might be enticed to come and undertake a degree in Malaysia [i.e. **'reversing' the Twinning model of UK-Malaysia academic collaboration and student mobility flows**]
- Also this required us to analyze, understand and see if we could **address the dominant 'asymmetrical' model currently in place**

The UTM-Bath Spa collaborative degree 'design experiment' (PART B)

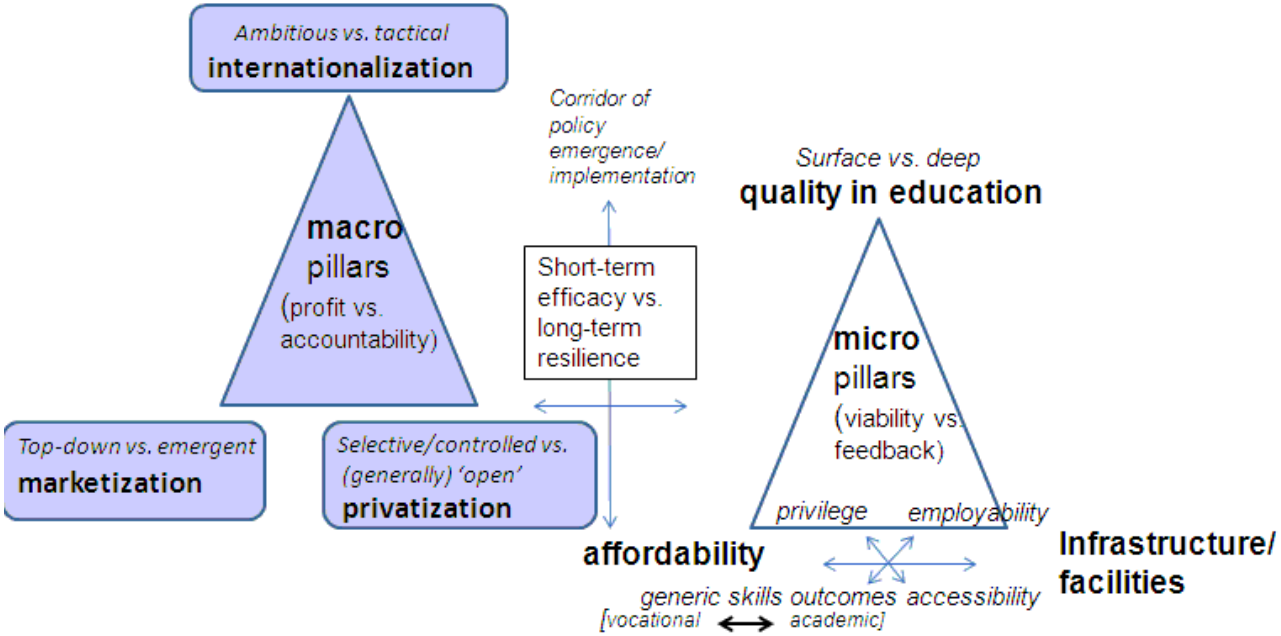
- Conversely, we shared a mutual view that it is increasingly important in a changing world of cultural as well as economic globalization (the 'Asian Century', 'decline of the West' etc.) that **UK (European/Western) students/youth** DO start reversing the current situation - since they are **missing out on the kind of 'global convergence' thinking and experience** being achieved by students (etc.) coming 'to the West')
- This also involves a new recognition of a **wider, more inclusive notion of knowledge** than the purely academic in a wider context – also recognizing the increasing value/importance of the experience of studying, living, working in 'other' countries, in cultural contexts, and in the emerging non-Western world. [also links to future 'employability']
- In both specific and general terms of academic HE collaboration, we recognized that the pivotal key to sustainable reciprocation (and a possible formula) made possible by how '**continuing professional education' is breaking down many traditional HE notions (vocational vs. academic, learning vs. research, theory vs. practice, face-to-face vs. distance education, etc**.) – and this why the postgraduate 'market' crucial to real change and harnessing of possibilities

The Malaysian advantage?

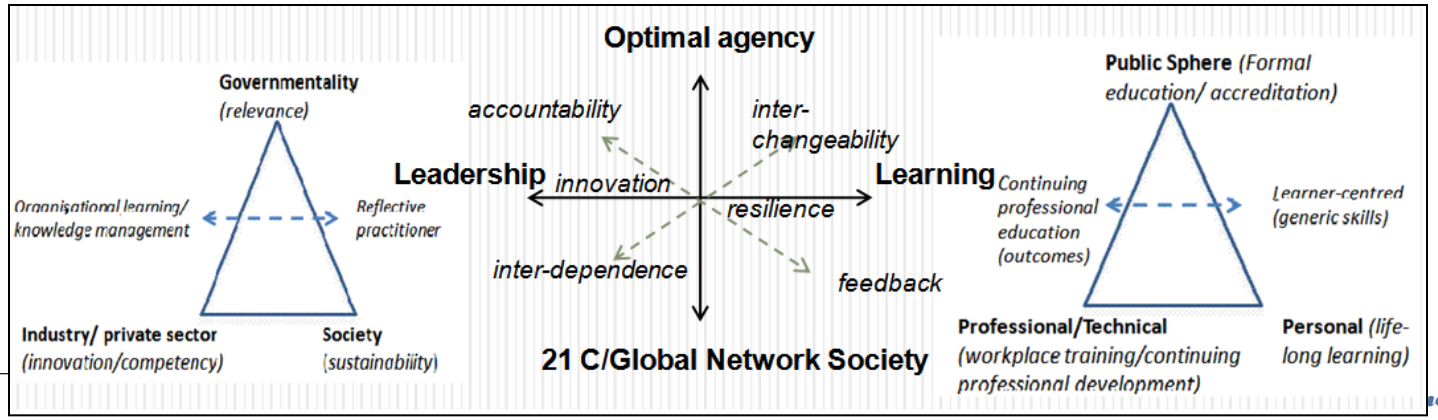
1. In many ways Malaysia at the **geographic, historical and cultural cross-roads of the world – between different civilizations from the past** (Malay, Chinese, Indian, Islamic and Western) and a **future network society**
2. **English** language widely spoken, generally a **multicultural** society (esp. in big cities), reasonably **tolerant,** and becoming a more **open** society.
3. Unique **balance between affordability and reasonable infrastructure** (also a **gateway between developing and developing worlds**)
4. Possibly the **most openly 'privatized' and 'marketized' higher education sector** in the world (albeit most focused at college level of technical and professional training linked to overseas university accreditation in terms of Twinning arrangements) – thus has long anticipated later global trends
5. In the past has arguably been more **open to policy innovation** in education (at least in principle if not always in practice) than most other countries
6. HE Internationalization focus as a tactical means to an end to **augment local human resource development and national training/education needs**
7. In sum, over the last twenty years Malaysia has been home to the emergence of a **most significant non-Western (higher) Education Hub model**

(adapted from Richards, 2011a)

The macro-micro pillars of Education Hub policy [Malaysia vs. Singapore – Richards, 2011b]



INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT: A global 'network society' (Castells) of information flows between urban/cosmopolitan/professional centers **OR 'global convergence'/ exchange** between rich/urban/developed centers and poor/rural/developing margins ???



eron Richards 2012

Not just why but how 'asymmetric higher education internationalization' can and should be reframed in a globally convergent model of knowledge.

- Business (competitive us vs. them) vs. Educational (emergent) model of SWOT ANALYSIS and strategizing
- Navigating the US/THEM stereotypes and knowledge/education/cultural 'divides

Not just why but how 'asymmetric higher education internationalization' can and should be reframed in a globally convergent model of knowledge.

Modern Western/European	**Asian/developing countries AND/OR non-western contexts**
Provisional/suggested strengths - Methodological ('scientific', etc.) language and publication dominance - Academic/disciplinary standards and procedures	**Provisional/suggested strengths** - More dynamic and/or resilient engagement with local-global tensions (economic, social and/or cultural opportunities , etc.) - Increasingly more open to the future & adaptable to a changing world
Provisional/suggested weaknesses - Tendency to hierarchical(downwards) views of 'West vs. the Rest' - Likewise increasingly stuck in past, inflexible, and 'confused'	**Provisional/suggested weaknesses** - Need to develop more depth and integration to various quality assurance indicators - Need to reform tendencies to passive learning, exam-based curriculum and lack of cultural exclusivity/openness

Academic axis

'extra-curricular' axis

- Business (competitive us vs. them) vs. Educational (emergent) model of SWOT ANALYSIS and strategizing
- Navigating the US/THEM stereotypes and knowledge/education/cultural 'divides

How can Malaysian universities harness the possibilities with sustainable formulas to 'entice UK students to come and study/live/work ' Malaysia etc. ?

General background and key elements – to sustainably entice international students?

- **Postgraduate market a** key one for HE internationalization policies
- Also **vocation-education divide** overcome in terms of direct focusing on **academic-government-industry-society collaborations**
- **Linking of academic generic skills to 'employability' outcomes (**problem-solving, communication skills, information literacy, design process, change agents, etc.
- **Information & communications technology** a key to professional as well as learning global/local networks – brings in authentic contexts of internships, scholarships and work-based projects
- New **'middle way**' taking best of academic education (critical thinking) and best of 'corporate' training models (for innovation)
- Engage with '**employment networks'** in relation to public and private sectors (e.g. including the 'expat' networks for UK students – thus British Malaysian Chamber of Commerce, in KL)

Specific formula developed for a new faculty

- Focused on **targeted niches** which reflect existing strengths and emerging future opportunities
- **Authentic projects** – esp. re: governmental, corporate and/or community contexts
- Use of **digital e-portfolio** for both learning-assessment portfolio and professional profile (social media 'e-learning 2.0')
- **Scholarships/work opportunities** for both local and international students
- Focus on **active learning**, quality teaching/ curriculum, effective & applied outcomes
- Use actual/topical cases for **simulations of decision-making, planning and problem-solving**
- Market other **competitive advantages** (cost of living and cost of study, etc.)
- **Interdisciplinary & convergent thinking** linking technical and applied/management domains of knowledge – e.g. also cutting edge science & technology and knowledge management

The essential support infrastructure needed to sustainably frame internationalization initiatives

The goal of Education Hub sustainability

Academic support structures

a. **Background support *(external)* -** general student assistance, counseling, scholarship and work opportunities.

b. **Direct academic support *(internal)*** - Academic English/literacy courses, more effective academic research and writing models/support ['Failproofing' the PhD]

Social support structures

a. **Wider community acceptance of internationalization *(external)*** – of foreign students, and of the changing role of universities (knowledge society)

b. **Academic communities *(internal)*** – in addition to proactive policy/administration, also inclusive/pluralistic academic culture)

Deep and sustainable rather than superficial notions and ad hoc measures of educational **'quality'** – – i.e. '***active' learning and knowledge-building*** (critical thinking, problem-solving, collaborative project development, innovation etc.) vs. ***exam-based curriculum/ information recapitulation/descriptive research/ credentialism, etc.***

How our ‘design experiment’ also helped conceive an innovative new course model [UTM’s *Perdana School mixed-mode Masters for future ‘policy-builders’ from government, corporate and community contexts*

(overview as diagrammatic series)

INVITATION TO A SEMINAR:

Policy-builders of the Future:

The 'optimal' training/education of decision-makers, planners and problem-solvers in governmental, corporate, and community contexts to better engage a changing world?

Wednesday 25th April 2012

08.00am to 1.30pm (including lunch)

Seri Pacific Hotel, Kuala Lumpur

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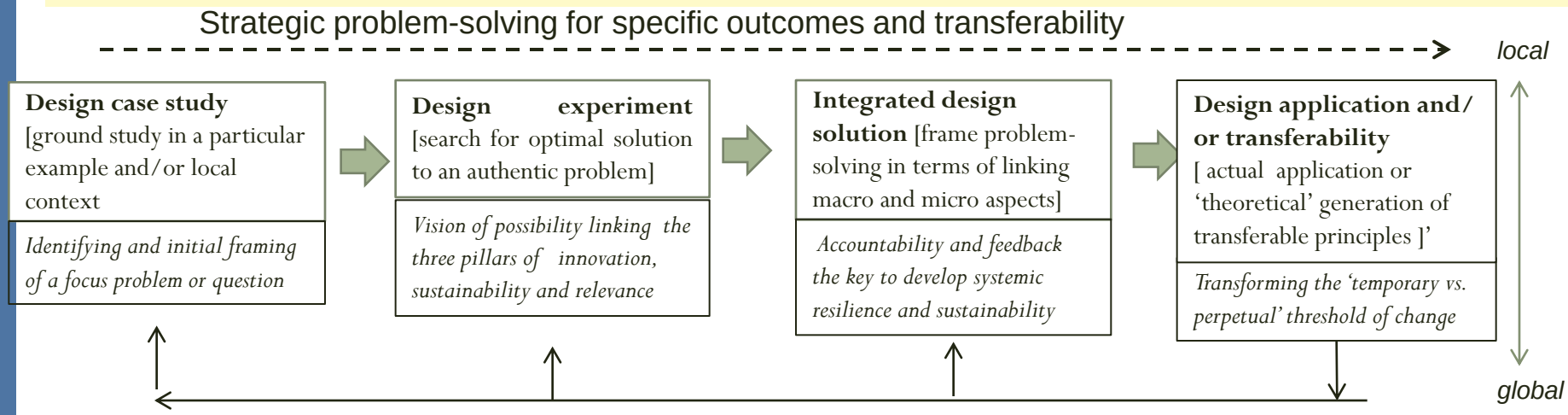
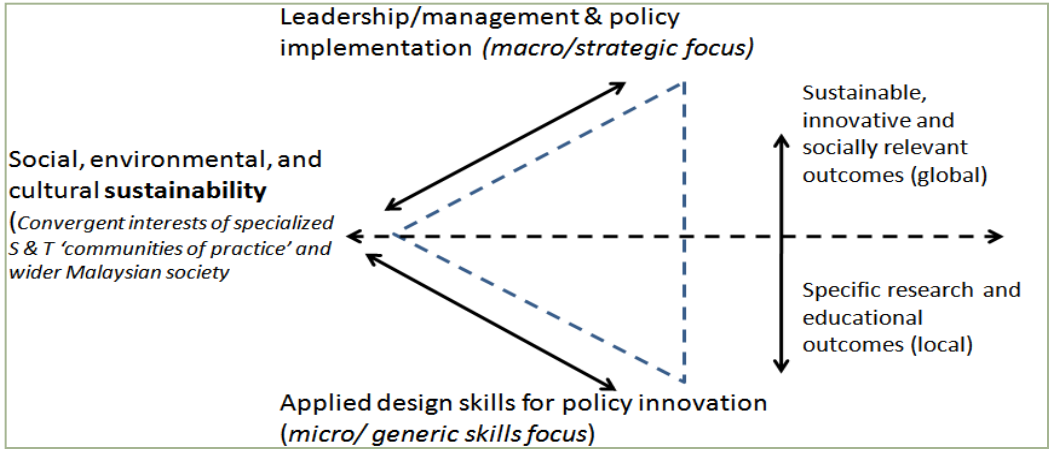
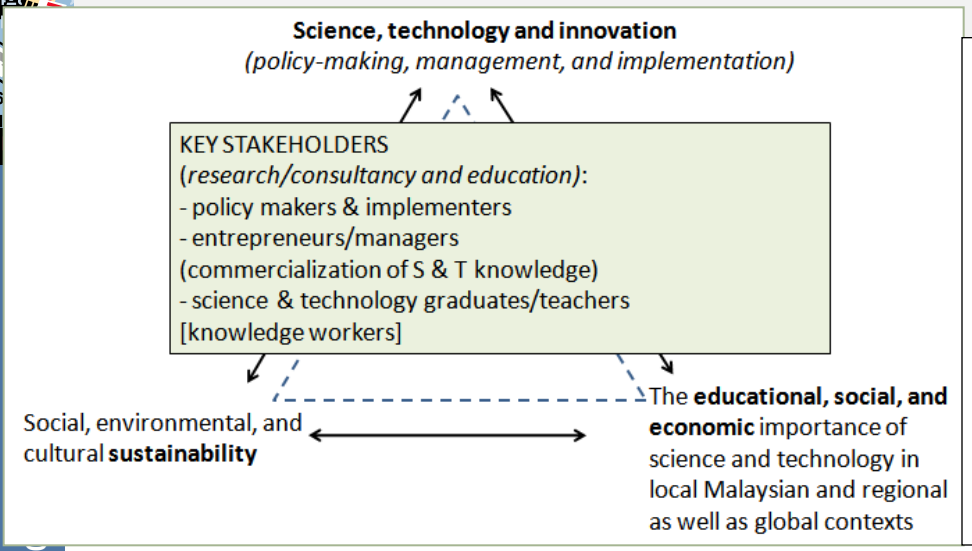
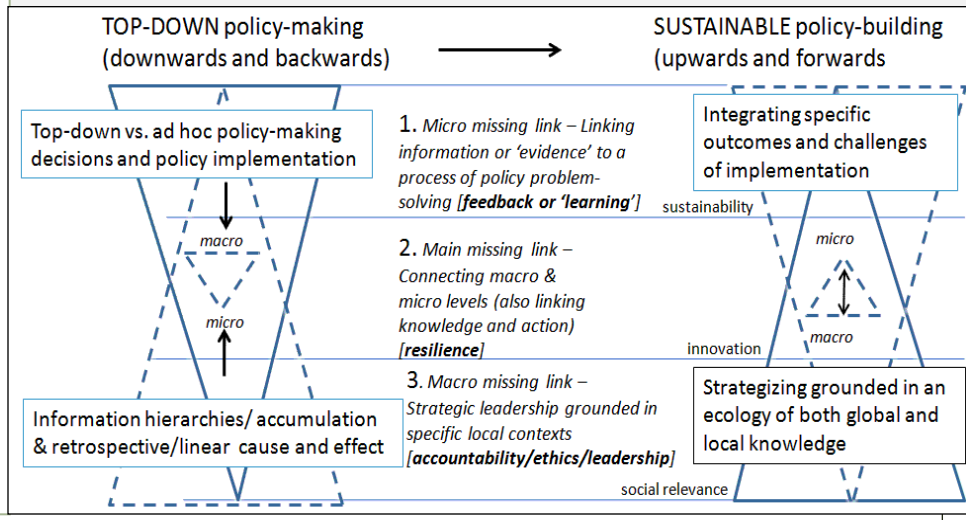
G
E

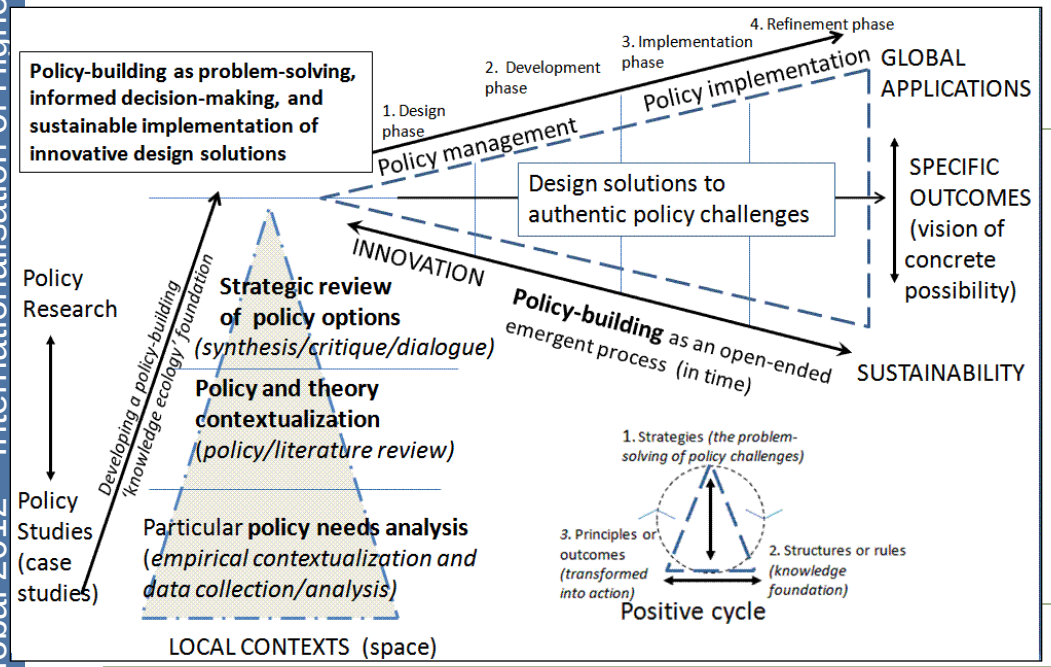
Design model of research (generic version and sequence) – especially recommended for applied educational research (beyond both action research and design experiment model)

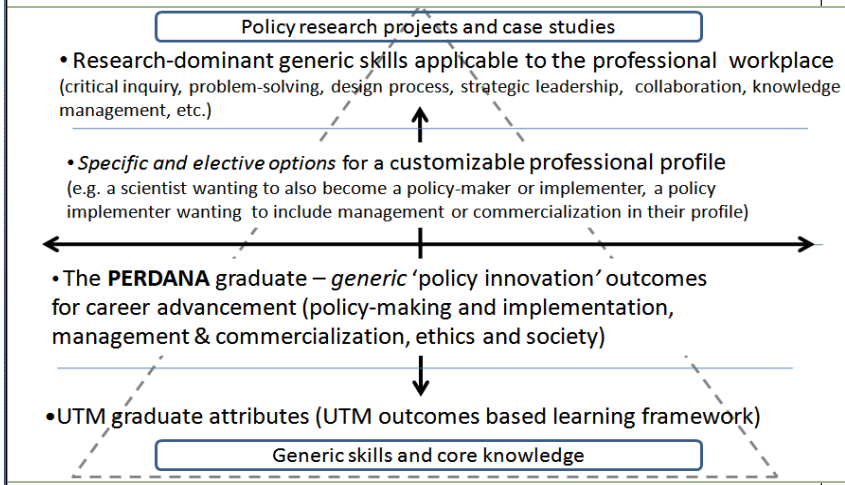






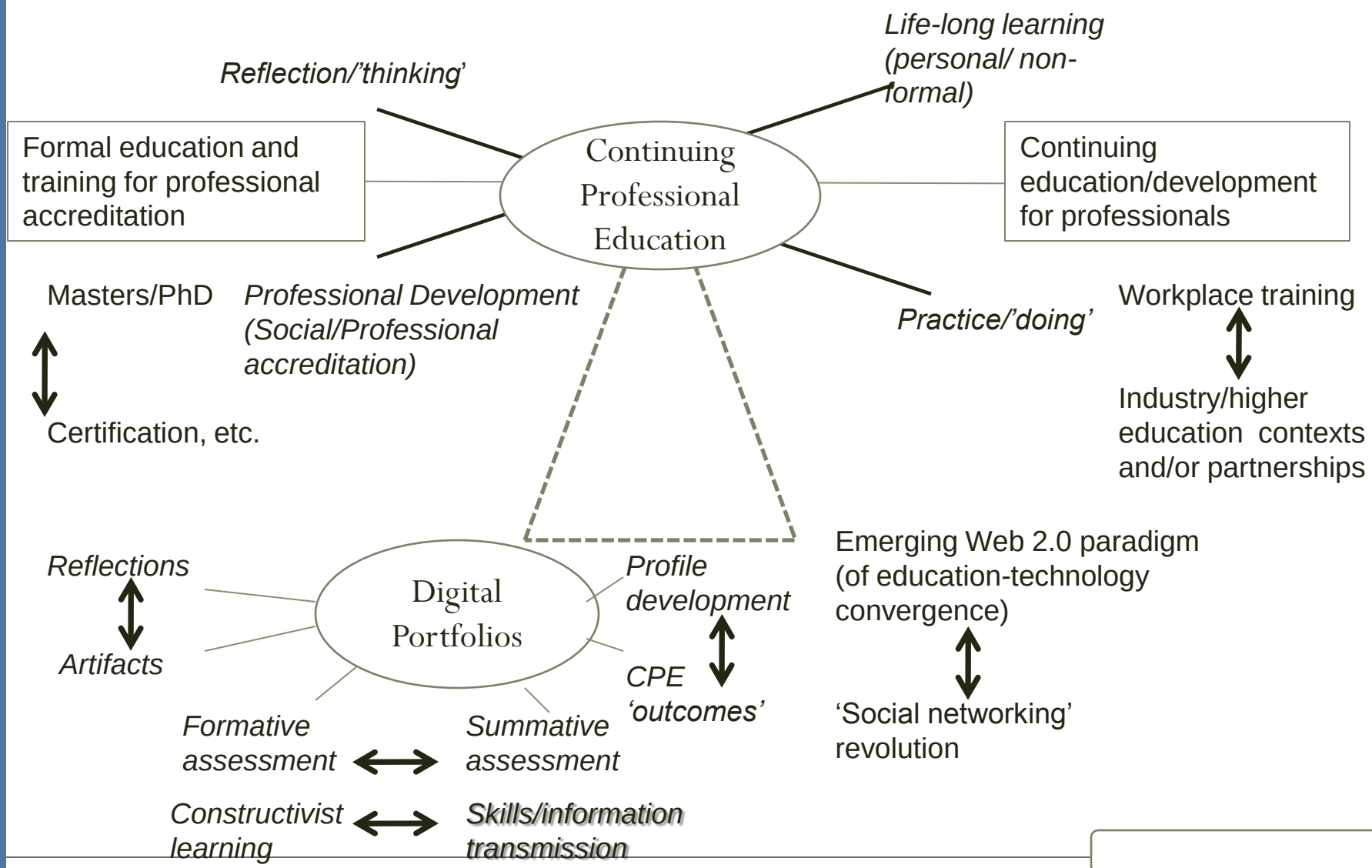


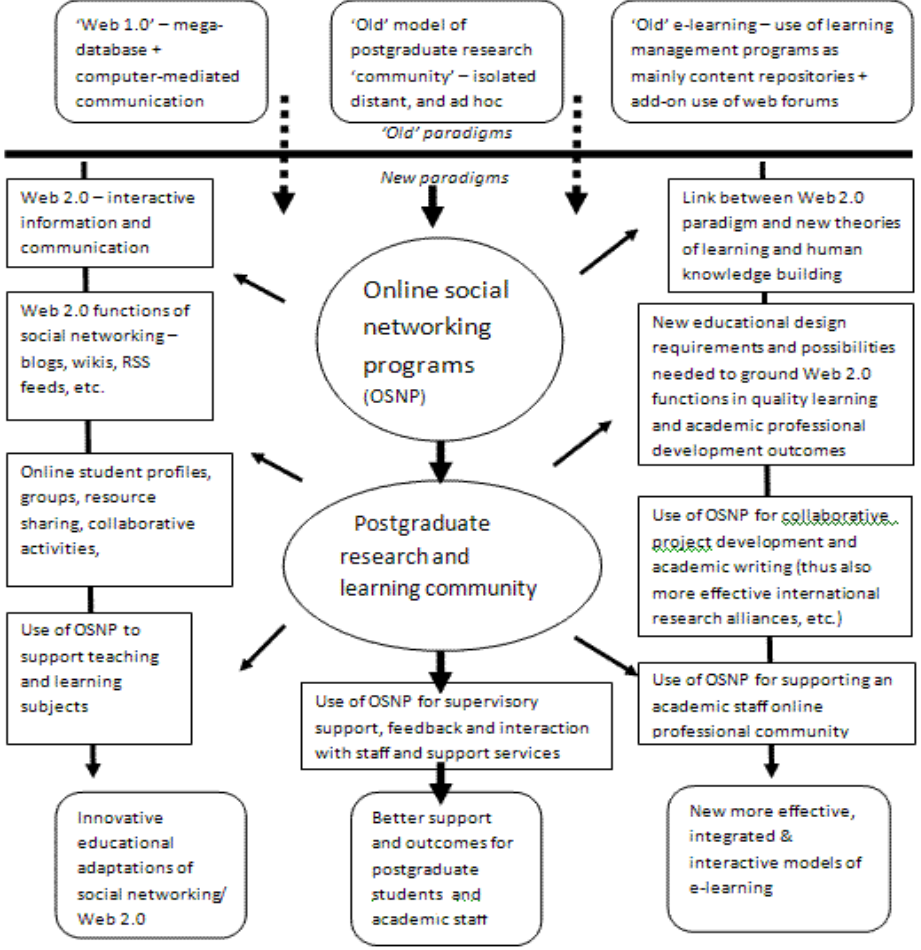




Cameron Richards (2011) **The Perdana Way: Towards a sustainable policy research and studies framework**

Integrated framework from this design experiment





.0 Web 2.0 (transformational)

d web' --------- communicational 'read-write web'

om-up 'publishing' --------- more participative, interactive, two-way

ransfer multi media/devices, mashups, knowledge

e-Learning 1.0 ? e-Learning 2.0 [content

1 'add-on' CMC] [integrated, activity designs, e-portfolio] real-time/f2f communication personal interest

? educational purposes

asynchronous communication social networking

Transmission Pedagogy & Content Curriculum Constructivist Pedagogy & OBE (generic skills)curriculum

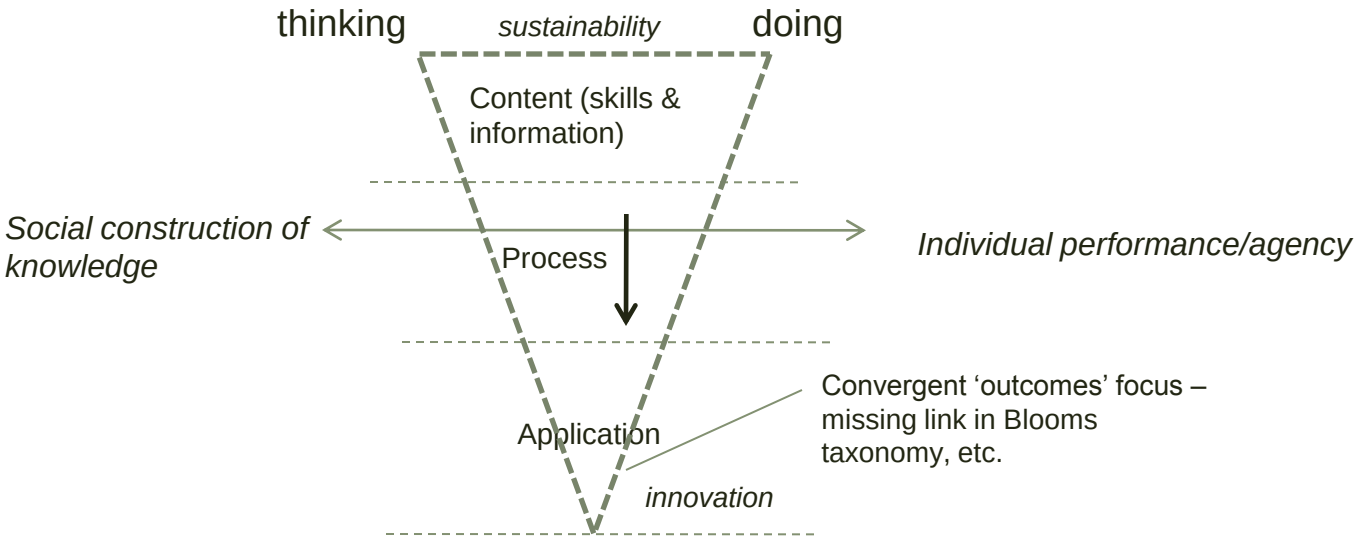
passive learner ---------- active learner

formal learning life long learning

ONE WAY TWO WAY (Dialogical – knowledge-building)

Teacher content learner teacher learner design, learner content, learner

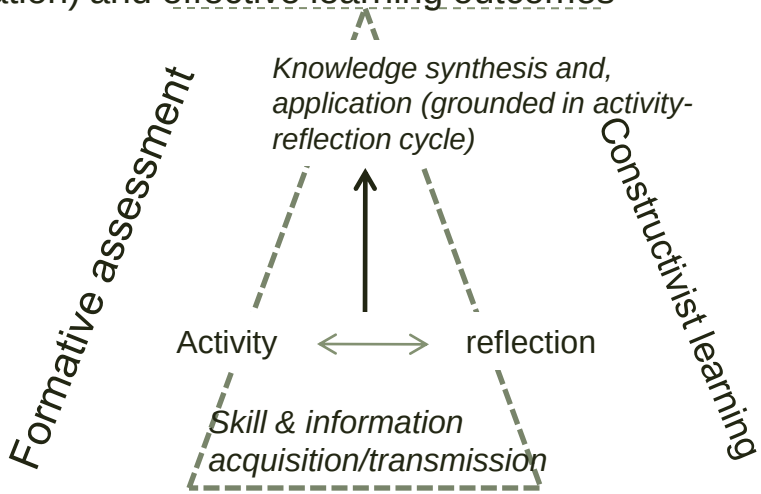
From a ‘transmission’ to ‘outcomes-based’ learning paradigm of education- technology convergence



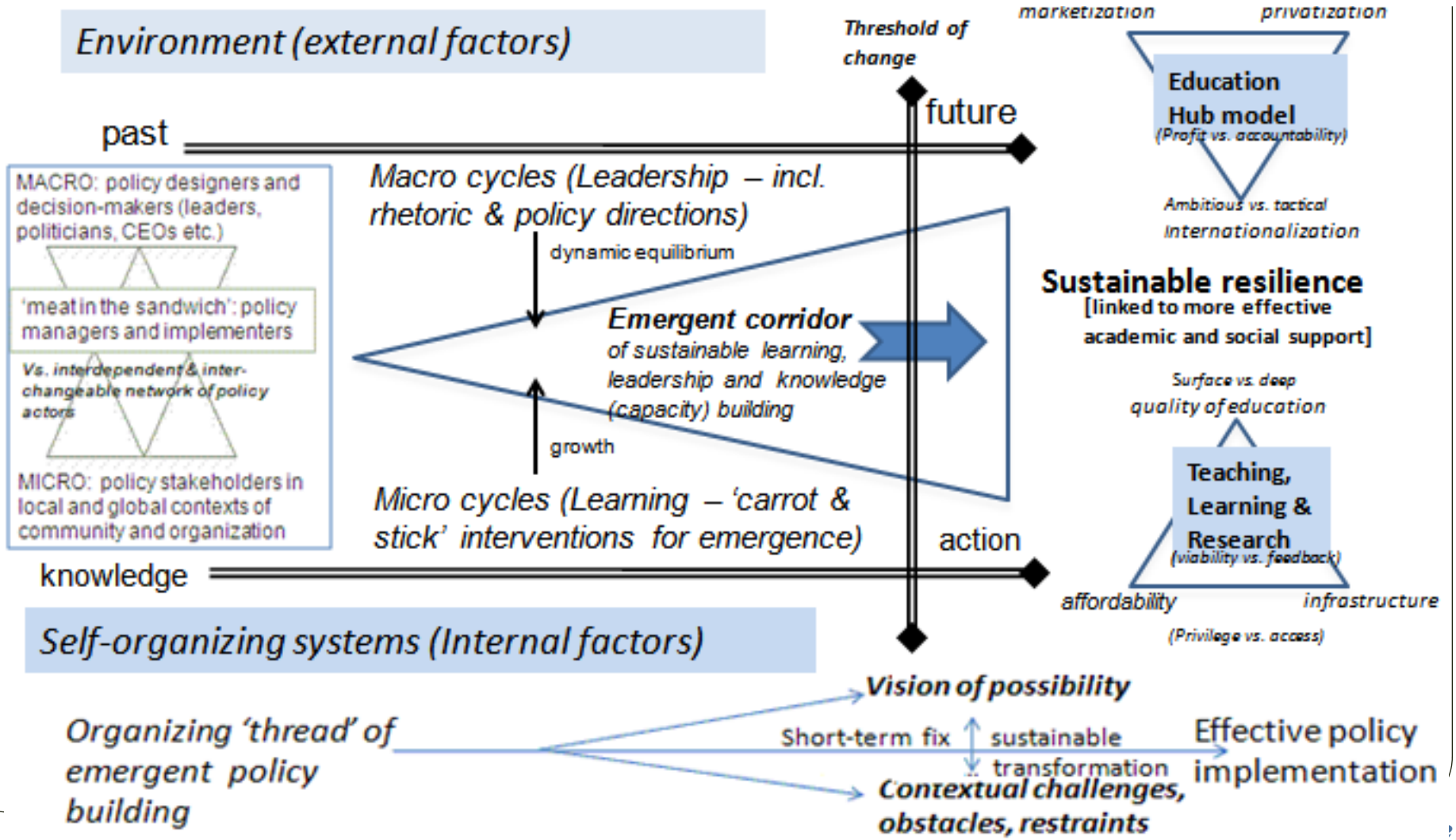
The ‘reflective practitioner’ and knowledge-building convergence

The professional/learning profile and e-portfolio (interface and archive)

Convergence of summative assessment (also professional accreditation) and effective learning outcomes



Higher Education internationalization as 'Education Hub policy' and the *emergent corridor* of sustainable leadership, learning and capacity-building



Conclusion : The various challenges of a fast-changing, interdependent and indeed 'connected' world suggest that a **more integrated paradigm based on strategic partnerships is needed** to reconcile associated dilemmas and harness new possibilities of 'internationalization' in higher education (HE). This is in order to transform into practice the rhetoric that:

- that formal education can complement growing imperatives **of work-based education, life-long learning,** and **continuing professional development**,
- that such associated HE imperatives as **marketization, privatization, and the user-pays principle** can be sufficiently reconciled with a residual and international affirmation of the principle that education might or should also be a global as well as local **'public good';**
- that HE internationalization imperatives of **global student mobility and academic networking** can likewise be reconciled with policies which also view HE as a focus of **national investment**,
- that higher education can be productively transformed by **social networking as well as related online technologies and digital media.**
- In other words, aspects of **change, diversity and innovation in education** are not in themselves sufficient for a sustainable harnessing of the endless possibilities and potentials of higher education
- that a '**reciprocal internationalization**' might be possible where academic staff and students from the West are also attracted to move to universities in non-Western including developing societies (and not just the reverse, as is typically the case)

FUTURE DIRECTIONS? – upcoming possible project idea

Re: the critical and central asymmetric problem of credit transfer and accreditation equivalency in international student mobility flows

- Bologna Process or Accord groundbreaking international effort (a most important EU legacy?)
- However still mired in related 'asymmetries'
- So a **new framework and reciprocally flexible formula** needed for a more global version

We think that this will need to be based on
(a) the foundational link **between academic generic skills and 'employability' as well as 'life-long learning' outcomes** [which might be mapped in part in terms of EQ framework]
(b) Additional 'variable' formulas (the flesh on the generic 'skeleton') to do with such **issues as particular prerequisites, specialist content/ process learning outcomes, specific and/or local professional 'employability' protocols, cross-cultural communication styles/differences, and (the integrated evaluation of) prior skills base and experience (etc.)**