DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AT UK UNIVERSITIES

The Effectiveness of the Course *Transcultural Communication*

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Abstract

The UK is now the second most popular country in the world for international studies. In this context, intercultural communicative competence (ICC)—the ability to interact with people from different backgrounds appropriately and effectively—is of particular importance. This research is intended to explore the effectiveness of an intercultural training course *Transcultural Communication*, currently run at one university in the North of England. Adopting the relational model of ICC (Imahori & Lanigan, 1989), the focus is on both sojourner (international students) and host national (home students). Firstly, through interviews the results show that the general difficulties for international students are the language barrier, communication difficulties and educational adaptation. Both qualitative and quantitative analyses have been performed on interview and video data to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. The results indicate that after the course the participants' intercultural competence has been developed in four aspects—motivation, knowledge, skills and awareness. By comparing the performance of home students with and without such training, the results indicate the trained group were more interculturally competent than the untrained. This research also addresses the gap in the current literature in terms of the so-called "native speakers' problem", it is proposed that research needs to be focused not only on international students but also on home students in the field of intercultural communication.

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I am grateful for the support from my parents, whose love are with me in whatever I pursue.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my best friend, my husband, Dr. Chao Zhang, who sustains me with hope and belief in our shared goals, who is there from the beginning to the end.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as References.

Chapter 1 Introduction

This research aims to find out the development of students' intercultural competence after intercultural training at a university in the North of England. It is intended to provide valuable data on the general adaptation of international students, the relationship between international and home students, and the effectiveness of an actual running intercultural training course at the university. This chapter provides the background of the research, introduces the key terms and gives a general rationale of the thesis.

1. Motivation and Contribution of this Research

This research has grown out of my personal experiences of living and studying in different countries, in different contexts and with people from different backgrounds. As young as thirteen, I was sent to Japan for a week-long cultural exchange. Knowing little English or Japanese, I witnessed the power of intercultural communication. At the age of 21, I experienced the whole process of culture shock when I spent the summer in the U.S for an internship. These experiences—sometimes amusing, sometimes upsetting, sometimes confusing or difficult to understand and sometimes difficult to handle, have enriched my life and inspired me for further academic pursuit in the field of intercultural communication in the UK. Many of the intercultural episodes that I have experienced have been salient to me after taking my master programme in intercultural communication. During one year-long study in intercultural communication, I did not only become interculturally competent, but also realised the role that intercultural training played in developing intercultural competence. As intercultural communication is a highly interdisciplinary field, there are many perspectives to look at (e.g., applied linguistics and discourse studies, psychology, anthropology, and international business). However, having benefited from the training myself, personally I do believe intercultural training will make a difference if more people could get involved, especially for the students in the higher education setting. Thus, I decided to carry out my

Ph.D. research on intercultural training.

Since 1980s, inter- or cross-cultural training has been explored by many researchers. Until now, much have been achieved: the training methods have been refined, the training has become more systematized (Mumford, 1999), plenty of frameworks and tools for assessing ICC have been generated and reviewed. However, most of the training has been focused on the sojourner. In the higher education setting, while international students have been one of the most-researched groups of intercultural sojourners (Zhou, Jindal-Snape, Topping & Todman, 2008), little attention has been given to the home students on campus. In order to fill this gap, this research aims to find out the role that home students played in the process of becoming internationalised university, and how they could benefit from intercultural training.

Another issue in the field intercultural training is that most of the internationalisation strategy—the way in which universities infuse "international, intercultural or global dimensions" (Knight, 2003, p. 3) still remains as terms that values diversity and achieving cross-cultural capability rather than concrete plans (Koutsantoni, 2006a). Since the explosion of globalisation, the need for institutions to produce graduates who will become responsible global citizens has been highlighted. In the higher education system, polices have been made in order to promote intercultural dialogue and internationalisation such as the *2004 UK report Putting the World in World Class Education* and the *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue* published by European Union. However, there is research indicating that developing students' ICC still remains at a surface level. For example, Koutsantoni (2006a) found that 87% of the universities focus the majority of effort on encouraging studying abroad or abroad collaborations, and in particular the recruitment of international students. Although international students would increase the diversity of the campus, it may not necessarily lead to greater intercultural interaction or the development of intercultural competence (e.g., Pederson, 2009; Spiro, 2014; Middlehurst & Woodfield, 2007). Lantz's Ph.D. study (2014)

further confirms that without any pedagogic intervention, the development of students' intercultural competence does not naturally increase even though there were relatively high levels of intercultural contact during students' time at university. In all, questions such as how to develop students' intercultural competence at universities and put it into daily teaching and learning still remains.

Last but not least, the evaluation of the training does not receive sufficient attention. Currently there are over 20 universities in the UK which offer taught courses on intercultural communication at Masters Level (Hua, Handford & Young, 2017). Young and Schartner (2013) evaluate the effect of a Masters programme of cross-cultural communication (CCC) at a university in the North of England, which indicates the benefits of a long-term intercultural education in the UK higher education setting. However, fewer short-term courses have been known, which aim to develop intercultural competence to the overall students at UK university. The evaluation of such courses is even less frequent. Luckily enough, at the beginning of my Ph. D study, the course *Transcultural Communication* started to run at the university which I am registered. Thus, evaluating such course becomes my prime goal for my research. By doing this research, I hope it could provide valuable data and evidence on intercultural training. If such short-term intercultural training course is effective in developing students' ICC, it should be promoted to more students, staff and around the UK universities.

2. Purpose and Research Questions

As mentioned above, the prime goal for this research is to explore the effectiveness of an existing short-term course *Transcultural Communication* at one UK university. Questions that guided the study considered the general need of students' adaptation (especially that of the international students'), the relationship between international and home students, and how the course affect students' intercultural competence development. To be more specific, this

research was aimed at addressing the following questions:

1) Currently what are the general difficulties that international students encountered during their stay in the UK? Does participation in intercultural training solve the difficulties that international students encountered?

2) The role home students played in intercultural interaction—to what extent do they contribute to the communication difficulties?

3) Does participation in intercultural training (e.g., the course *Transcultural Communication*) have an effect on students' intercultural communication effectiveness?

a. How does the course affect the development of international students' ICC?

b. How does the course affect the development of home students' ICC?

c. What is the difference between trained and untrained home students in ICC after the course?

4) Are there any other factors that influence students' intercultural competence e.g., previous intercultural experience, family background?

3. Process of Carrying out the Research and Observations on the Research

As intercultural communication is a complicated process, assessing intercultural competence and evaluating intercultural training are not easy. There were twists and turns during the process of carrying out this research. At the very beginning of the research, influenced by the well-cited Bennett's (1993) work as well as being registered in the psychology department which embraces positivist view, I tried to use experimental design (e.g., using control/trained group and self-scoring questionnaire) to assess intercultural competence. However, after the pilot study in 2014 autumn term (the detail of the pilot study is presented in Chapter 2), I realised the problem of the positivist view and the difficulty of carrying out experimental design for assessing ICC in my research. Along with some practical issues (e.g., limited funding, small sample size), finally I decided to use a mixed-

method approach— adopting an interpretative and constructive paradigm, interviews were carried out and analysed qualitatively; psychological approach was also adopted and analysed by quantitative analysis such as the measurement of eye gaze and amount of talk.

Similar to most of the existing literature, I also put my focus on the international students at first, especially given that all the participants signed up for the course transcultural communication were international students from 2014 autumn term to 2015 autumn term. The start point of this thesis is the study exploring the general difficulties that international students encountered during their staying in the UK. Although there is plenty of literature on international student's adaptation (e.g., Young & Schartner, 2016; Young, Sercombe, Naeb & Schartner, 2013; Zhou et. al., 2008; Zhou & Todman, 2009), this study was still carried out as it helps to establish a baseline of international students' experiences before any intervention in this context. Furthermore, there were novel findings from this study—it turns out that international students have particular concerns with their relationship with home students. A large gap existed in the research literature on home students, I realised the importance of home students' ICC. Thus, I decided to further explore the role home students played in intercultural interaction. From 2016 spring term, there were home students who chose to take the course—that is the point that I could finally start to examine how the training affects the development of home students' ICC. Although the sample size is quite small (in total there are just eight home students who took the TC course and they were all female), this study still provides valuable data and gives some direction for future research.

As pointed out by Spencer-Oatay and Fanklin (2009), cultural decentring is vital for cultural-interactional research, but complete cultural neutrality is impossible. During the process of carrying out this research, I am aware of that our (me and the participants involved in the studies) own values, experiences, interests, beliefs, social identities and so on have shaped the writing of this thesis and the perspectives that we have taken. Being an

international student myself, it was natural for me to focus on the topics such as the adaptation of international students. This culture-centeredness may also apply to the categorisation of international and home students in this thesis. As this thesis is not based on a positivist approach, any category such as nationalities, international, home students should be treated with caution. However, it is difficult not to do so. During the process of data collecting (e.g., interviewing the participants), all the participants categorised themselves at some point. For example, they all started by introducing themselves as where they came from; they were particularly sensitive towards the category international vs. home students. These categories or labels drawing from their nationalities, their family background, their experience and so on are the way that they make sense of the world and their own identities. In order to present these data, these categories were retained. Hence, the content of the thesis is a product of the presentation of the participants' own experiences, interests, priorities, as well as my interpretation of such.

4. Clarification of Key Terms

There are a number of specialised terms within this thesis (although a detailed definition of intercultural competence is discussed in Chapter 2). They are defined in this section to help the reader make sense of the subsequent writing.

Intercultural: The term "intercultural" literally means "between cultures" (Spencer-Oatay and Fanklin, 2009). Although there is some debate about distinctions between "cross-"and "inter-" cultural (e.g., Gudykunst, 2003), I regard these two synonymously and use intercultural throughout this thesis. In terms of the term intercultural interaction, in this thesis I follow Spencer and Franklin's (2009) definition that "an intercultural situation is one in which the cultural distance between the participants is significant enough to have an effect on interaction/communication that is noticeable to at least one of the parties" (p. 3).

Intercultural Communication: The phrase "intercultural communication" is used very

extensively across a wide range of disciplines. It is a focus of interest in many different subject areas such as anthropology, communication studies, social and organizational psychology, sociology, marketing, management studies, foreign languages and foreign language education, applied linguistics, pragmatics and discourse analysis. Registered in the department of psychology, I do need to follow the policies and rules of the department such as the way to structure the thesis. Also, there are experiments using psychological approach such as eye behaviour measurement. However, I do not regard myself as psychologist. Accordingly, this work is considered as a "soft science" which may be seen either a subject in itself (intercultural communication) or as part of other subjects in humanities and social science which has particular focus on international phenomenon.

International students/sojourner: "international students", "international student sojourners" and "sojourner's" are used synonymously to refer to the students who come to UK universities for higher education either for short-term (e.g., exchange programme) or long-term (e.g., master degree).

Home students/native speakers/host-nationals: These three terms are defined differently in different contexts. For example, native speakers are often studied in the field of applied linguistics or language studies; there are also cases that home students are not stereotypical native speakers. However, throughout this thesis, these terms were used synonymously. All these terms refer as home students who are mainly educated in the UK.

5. Overview of Thesis

Although this Ph.D. work is not regarded as "hard science", it still needs to follow the policies and rules of department of Psychology where most of research embraces positivist approach. Therefore, the empirical chapters (Chapter 3, 4 and 5) were structured in the format of science writing (e.g., background of relevant literature of that chapter, research design, result, discussion). Following this introduction, Chapter 2 contains the literature review and

methodology. This chapter firstly reviews key terms and frameworks in intercultural competence. The standpoint of this thesis including the definition of intercultural competence and the model of ICC are clarified. This is achieved through a comparison of the well-cited model from Deardorff (2006) and relational model by Imahori & Lanigan (1989). There follows a review of related literature on intercultural training. By introducing the course as well as problems that caused by the native speakers, the gap in the literature in exploring home students' role in intercultural communication and the importance of developing their ICC through training have been addressed. The last part of chapter covers the overall methodology on assessing ICC and the design of the thesis.

Chapter 3 is a starting point of the empirical work of the thesis which exploring the general difficulties that international students encounter during their stay in the UK. By doing so, it establishes a baseline of international students' intercultural experiences before any pedagogical intervention. Although this topic has been addressed on a number of occasions in previous research, this study does provide new findings and help to answer the main research question—how the course *Transcultural Communication* helps adaptation of international students.

Chapter 4 presents the qualitative findings of the international students who took the course *Transcultural Communication*. By doing so, it addresses the question as to how international participants perceive themselves in developing intercultural competence after the training.

The same protocol as Chapter 4 is used in the first section of Chapter 5 which focuses on home students who took the course. The second section presents both quantitative and qualitative data in comparing the performance between those home students who took the course and those who did not. The last section of Chapter 5 provides an overview of participants' evaluation on the course *Transcultural Communication.*

Chapter 6 integrates the findings from previous chapters. These findings are summarised and discussed in the context of the literature review. Limitation and implication of the thesis is also discussed. Lastly, conclusions are drawn, and recommendations made for future research.

Chapter 2 Literature Review and Methodology

1. Introduction

This chapter aims to review related literature in the field of intercultural communication and provide an overview of the research methodology. In the beginning of the chapter, the key term culture is firstly introduced. The key paradigms and models in intercultural communication are reviewed. By clarifying the standpoint of this thesis, it turns out that although the definition and framework proposed by Deardorff (2006) are frequently cited, they are considered not suitable for this research. Instead, the term intercultural competence is defined within the relational model developed by Imahori & Lanigan (1989).

The second part of this chapter focuses on the literature of intercultural training in the higher education setting. It points out that it is not enough to develop intercultural competence by just studying abroad for a certain period of time. It is still necessary to have some intercultural pedagogy or intercultural training in terms of developing intercultural effectiveness and bringing home and international students together.

Later the chapter provides a general description of an existing intercultural training course Transcultural Communication at a university in the North of England. By introducing the course as well as problems that are caused by native speakers, the gap in the literature in exploring home students' role in intercultural communication and the importance of developing their ICC through training have been addressed.

The last part of chapter covers the overall methodology on assessing ICC and the design of the thesis. A clear articulation for the choice in selecting a mixed-method approach has been made.

2. The Importance of Intercultural Competence

2.1 The importance of Intercultural Communication in General

Society has become increasingly mobile since the emergence of globalisation. High-speed travel greatly increases personal contact across national borders. Tourism has expanded tremendously. Facilitated by technological advances in transportation and communication, the level of international business has been significantly increased. Nowadays, modern communication has developed to a point that people are able to collaborate more effectively with people anywhere in the world. International meetings of all kinds—for businessmen, professors, doctors, and many others—have multiplied in number. All of these developments have created a more urgent need than ever before to develop intercultural understanding and an ability to live and work productively and harmoniously with people with different values, backgrounds, and habits (Bok, 2009). At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the influence of globalisation has become a theme in many areas such as the influence of culture in the health care setting, the increasing number of international marriages, and issues of ethnic identity. Such trends provide an important explanation as to why, in an ever-globalising society, intercultural communication competence is necessary. In the field of business, with the ample opportunities for employment overseas, it becomes important for internationally competitive business to hire competent employees (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009).

As early as the 1980s, one study conducted in a Japanese industry showed that lack of intercultural communication competence on the part of one expatriate employee led to a 98% loss of the company's market share to a different competitor (Tung, 1987). Nowadays as part of company policy, many large international companies have adopted cultural diversity in a sense requiring employers to be interculturally competent. Therefore, in order to compete globally, people must be equipped with knowledge and skills to behave in a manner

becoming to a specific culture (Gross & Lewis, 2006). To compete globally, people need to develop the ability to interconnect with diversity which is a major skill that employers seek (Bremer, 2006; Deardorff & Hunter, 2006; Hulstrand, 2008). To compete globally, people need the ability to relate to and with people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds both domestically and abroad.

Targowski (2004) viewed the 21st century as an era in which global organizations will increasingly focus on the critical values of cross-cultural communication process, efficiency and competence and cost of doing business. According to Spitzberg and Changnon (2009), one way to receive this preparation is "through the further development and expansion of college students studying abroad" (p. 4). For the college and university, now they have the responsibility to provide support for the students to be able to study abroad such as offering trainings or classes on intercultural competence. For example, a study published in College Learning for the New Global Century indicated that 46% of employers believe colleges should place more emphasis on proficiency in a foreign language, and 56% think more emphasis should be placed on the establishment of cultural values and traditions about the United States and other countries (National Leadership Council, 2007). In terms of policy making, the European Union has published *the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue* to policy makers and practitioners at national, regional and local levels. Its purpose of it is to provide guidelines and analytical methodological tools for the promotion of intercultural dialogue.

2.2 The Importance of Intercultural Communication in Context of Higher Education

Intercultural competence is also crucial for the students involved in colleges and universities—not only to prepare themselves for the demand of employers who seek for interculturally competent employees, but also to fulfil their own social needs. Moving to a new city, living with other students with different backgrounds, university students are

actually doing intercultural communication at all time. Furthermore, as the global demand for higher education increases, countries are competing to attract internationally mobile students (Douglass & Edelstein, 2009). Although the United States continues to be the world's leading higher-education destination, United Kingdom is the second most popular choice in the world for international students to study—it is estimated that 15% of the student population in the United Kingdom are international students (King, Findlay & Ahren, 2010). In the academic year 2016-2017, there were 2,317,880 international students enrolled in higher education in the UK (UK Council for International Student Affairs [UKCISA], 2018).

International students do not only contribute economic benefits, they also enrich domestic students' educational experience in the host country (Sharma & Jung, 1985), and especially in the case of graduate students, they tend to accelerate the development of academic fields (American Embassy Information Resource Centre, 2001). The classroom and campus become more dynamic and diverse. For the international students, they hope to gain global experience with the desire of connecting with other international students as well as host nationals. If it materializes, they may have stronger language skills, better academic performance, lower levels of stress, and greater life satisfaction (Redmond & Bunyi, 1993; Rohrlich & Martin, 1991; Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward & Masgoret, 2004). In order to form positive relationships, intercultural competence is crucial as it bridges the gap between the initial stages of relationship development (when intercultural complexities are most prominent) and the more stable stages of interpersonal involvement (when cultural differences tend to retreat into the background) (Gudykunst, 1985). If international students are satisfied with their experiences and leave with a positive view of the country, they can play an important role in fostering productive relations with their former host country (Gareis, 2012). If home students have positive intercultural or interpersonal relationships, they might be more motivated for the further intercultural interaction.

3. Key Concepts in Intercultural Competence

3. 1 Culture

3.1.1 Definition of Culture

Before talking about intercultural competence, it is important to define some key terms. The first question to answer is—what is culture? As a matter of fact, the word "culture" has never had an absolute definition. As long as the early 1950s, Krober and Kluckhohn (1952) identified more than 160 different definitions of the term "culture". Probably, what makes the word "culture" so complex is partly due to the fact that the concept of culture is dynamic, which could be defined in different ways by different people in different contexts. According to Ting-Toomey (1999), culture is defined as "a complex frame of reference that consists of patterns of traditions, beliefs, values, norms, and meanings that are shared to varying degrees by interacting members of a community" (p. 10).

However, if linking culture and communication together which is the aim of this research, Triandis' (1994) definition of culture seems to be more advanced: "Culture is a set of human-made objective and subjective elements that in the past have increased the probability of survival and resulted in satisfaction for the participants in an ecological niche, and thus became shared among those who could communicate with each other because they had a common language and they lived in the same time and place" (p. 23). Triandis highlights some key features within the meaning of "culture". First of all, it is "human-made" which means it is not "biological parts of human life" (Samovar, Porter & McDaniel, 2009, p. 23). To be more specific, compared to some innate behaviours such as eating and sleeping, culture is acquired or learned after we were born. Secondly, culture is subjective which is the main point of Ting-Toomey's (1999) definition of culture (see above). Harrison and Huntington (2000) explained the "subjective" elements of culture as "values, attitudes, beliefs, orientations, and underlying assumptions prevalent among people in a society" (xvii).

Being subjective means that how people interpret the world may be different from each other; what they think is "right" might be "wrong" from other people's view. Lastly, Triandis mentioned the importance of language in culture. As a symbol system, language serves as a media so that culture could be transmitted and shared (Samovar et al., 2009). Due to the key features mentioned above particularly in the field intercultural communication, this research adopts the definition of culture proposed by Triandis' (1994) which considers culture as human-made, subjective, changeable and depending on the use of language.

3.1.2 Essentialism vs. Non-Essentialism

There are two principal views of culture, termed the essentialist view and the non-essentialist view. From an essentialist viewpoint, culture is defined as "a concrete social phenomenon which represents the essential character of a particular nation" (Holliday, 2000, p. 38). Hofstede (1991) describes culture in terms of physical entities which can be seen, touched, and experienced by others. The essentialist view tries to explain people's behavior and action through national culture, such as the saying that "the Chinese people do XX because they are Chinese." So in some degree, the essentialist view might be defined as nationalist or culturist. It has been argued that such a view may fall into the risk of overgeneralization and stereotyping as it is the basis of what has come to be known as Orientalism (Holliday, 2000), through which "we" see "them" as less complex than they really are, and tend to explain all their actions as being caused by a simplistic national culture. Such orientalism could be also seen in sexism and racism, which attempt to fit behaviour of people into pre-conceived, constraining structures (Holliday, 2000). Thus, the essentialist view sees national culture as concrete structure within which the behaviour of a particular group is placed. For example, the behaviour of a Chinese person is seen as totally confined by the constraints of a national (Chinese) culture. For the person who behaves in a non-stereotypical way, he/she thus can only be explained as a departure from Chinese

national culture, and is seen as neither "real" Chinese, nor "Westernised" (Holliday, 2000).

Obtaining such a view might cause conflict in a multi-cultural classroom. For example, the

teacher with an essentialist view would begin with judging his/her students according to their

national cultural characteristics, such as individualism and collectivism, and perhaps end with

a confirmation of these categories. For the students, they might be constrained by their

national culture, which makes them passive and non-participant (Holliday, 1997). In all, as

Holliday argues, the implication of essentialist view of culture is that "people are not allowed

to step outside their designated cultural places" (2010, p. 5).

On the other hand, the non-essentialist view defines culture as "a movable concept used

by different people at different times to suit purposes of identity, politics, and science"

(Holliday, 2000, p. 38). According to Baumann's (1996) research, the meaning of "culture"

and "community" changes depending on how people use them on which topic for what

purpose. Thus, in the non-essentialist view, "culture" is explained in a more flexible and

dynamic way and tries to avoid preconceptions toward a specific national culture. Instead of

fitting people's behavior into a particular national culture, the non-essentialist view focuses

on how people use culture for their needs, and how people cohere into a social group. The

non-essentialist view of culture allows social behavior to speak for itself—hence the non-

essentialist view could be defined as interpretivism (Holliday, 2000). The advantage of non-

essentialist view is that it liberates culture as a resource for investigating and understanding

social behaviour without the preconceptions about national cultural characteristics. According

to Holliday (2000), a non-essentialist approach can help us to unlock any form of social

behaviour by helping us to see how it operates as culture per se. Taking the example of the

classroom again, a teacher with a non-essentialist view would not begin with the notion of

which national culture his/her students come from. Instead, he/she would look at the

classroom as a small culture and explore the dynamics of its culture. The students differ from

each other in terms of their different orientations. Such orientations might be connected to (but not limited in) different national scenarios, or personal experiences. In all, as Holliday (2000) summarises, the non-essentialist view of culture provides the resource of an understanding of how culture works, and a framework for analysis of behaviour without the pre-definitions of the essential characteristics of specific national culture.

3.1.3 The Hofstedian Legacy

Critiques of essentialism are well established (e.g., Dobbin, 1994; Holliday, 1999; Keesing, 1994) and such a view has been generally argued as a constraint in intercultural communication. It considers people's individual behaviour to be entirely defined and constrained by the culture they live so that the stereotype becomes the essence of who they are. However, it is still deeply rooted in and "continues to sit at the centre of common perceptions of culture both in the academy and in everyday life" (Holliday, 2010, p. 4). Holliday (2010) further explains the reason behind it is that it is a default way of thinking about how we are different from each other and people still have a long-standing desire to "fix" the nature of culture and cultural differences.

A particularly influential example is in the work of Hofstede. Hofstede collected questionnaires from more than 100,000 IBM employees in 72 countries in 1968 and 1972 (Hofstede, 2001). Based on these data, he identified four cultural dimensions which are individualism vs. collectivism, high vs. low power distance, masculinity vs. femininity, and high vs. low uncertainty avoidance. Those dimensions present culture "as a collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another" (Hofstede, 2001, p. xix). According to Hofstede, the behaviour of individuals can be "scored" within the dimensions mentioned above (Hofstede, 2001, p. 29).

As Hofstede acknowledges himself, his model might fall into the danger of ethnocentric stereotypes such as "all Dutch people are honest" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 14), where much

current work in intercultural communication studies rejects essentialism and cultural overgeneralization and acknowledges cultural diversity (Holliday, 2010). However, the systematic nature of Hofstede's work has sustained theory building for more than 25 years. His "macro-level laws" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 28) in particular have been attractive to intercultural communication theorists and trainers. As pointed out by Holliday (2010), one of the advantages of Hofstede's dimensions that "they provide the certainty of precise, tightly measurable behavioural formulae for how to act in the presence of people from specific cultural groups and the reassurance that one can calculate how to greet, for example, a Swedish business man on the basis of prescribed information about 'Swedish culture'" (p. 7).

Because of such advantages, Holliday (2010) implies that there is an inconsistency of non-essentialism. On the one hand, many intercultural communication studies try to look at cultural diversity and complexity that goes beyond national categories and deals with the smaller cultures of discourses of business or educational organizations; on the other hand, the essentialist use of national cultures as the basic unit often appears in the literature, either of which employing Hofstede's (2001) categories of difference or others like them.

For example, there are a number of works beginning with anti-essentialist statements and then moving on to use potentially essentialist categories (e.g., Gudykunst, 2005; Scollon & Scollon, 2001; Spencer-Oatay & Xing, 2003; Triandis, 2004). Similarly, in people's daily life, although stereotyping is commonly felt to be a negative thing, people still find them difficult to avoid as it is quick and easy means of categorising the world. In all, it seems the rejection of essentialism is incomplete. As Holliday (2010) pointed out, "behaviour which goes against national stereotypes is therefore nearly always framed as an exception to the essentialist rule rather than as reality in its own right" (p. 7).

As stated above, whereas the dominant approaches in intercultural studies oppose essentialism, it is often found that they fall back on prescribed national cultural descriptions

as those are convenient for theory building and provide accountable solutions in intercultural communication (Holliday, 2010). Similar issue appeared in reporting the results throughout this thesis. Standing for the non-essentialist view of culture, this research is intended to find out how the training (Transcultural Communication course) affected each individual and how their worldview was changed and transferred. Treating the participants who took intercultural training as a small culture, the nationality of the participants was not considered at the first place. However, during data collection (especially in the interviews), it constantly occurred that participants described themselves and others according to their nationalities and tried to explain their behaviours in Hofstede's dimensions or others such as low and high context (Hall, 1959) as they learnt from the training. Thus, it is inevitable to report these data as it is and categorise the way that participants institutionalised themselves. In all, to clarify the stance of this thesis, rather than claiming as to be either essentialism or non-essentialism, this thesis sits in the position in between. While appreciating and respecting cultural diversity, it still contains the categories such as international students, home students etc. It also should be noted that these categories are only used to present and interpret findings from participant's point of view whereas the framework and methodology still remains non-essentialist.

3.2 Key Paradigms in Intercultural Communication Studies

3.2.1 Positivist Paradigm

In intercultural communication studies, there are five main paradigms: positivist, interpretative, critical, constructivist, and realist. These paradigms represent different kinds of philosophical worldviews and research orientations. In this section, the positivist and interpretive paradigms are reviewed in detail as they are closely related to essentialist view and non-essentialist views of culture. Studies following a positivist paradigm tend to identify patterns and the causal effect of culture on communicative behaviours and practices. Therefore, they treat cultural values, cultural norms and communicative behaviours as

variables and seek to make generalizations based on a set of measurements. The main assumptions of positivist paradigms are summarized by Hua (2016) as follows:

- Culture is (relatively) stable and fixed and, therefore, can be isolated for research purpose.

- Cultural norms exist and can be identified through measurement.

- Culture values determine communication behaviours.

- Misunderstandings in intercultural communication can be accounted for in terms of differences in cultural values.

- Researchers can generalise cultural patterns, compare different cultures and use cultural values as an explanatory variable (Hua, 2016, p. 7)

A social psychologist like Hofstede (1991, 2001) mentioned above is a typical example of a positivist. Scholars such as Schwartz (1992, 1994), and Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1961) are also adopt a positivist approach. Triandis (1998) reconceptualised the dichotomy of individualism and collectivism as horizontal and vertical. Studies following this paradigm have been carried out in the traditions of psychology and communication studies. One of the advantages of using this paradigm is its convenience in revealing cultural differences in values and beliefs (Hua, 2016). Therefore, studies following this paradigm are widely cited in business and organization management studies and applied in intercultural training.

However, such studies have been criticized for an essentialist and over-generalized view of culture. As argued above, the essentialist view on culture is a constraint as it restrains people from knowing each other as individuals. Also, it should be noted that the danger of the positivist view is that it tends to treat the members of a cultural group as the same, sharing definable characteristics irrespective of context (McSweeny, 2002). Such over-generalisation seems to indicate that if one of the interlocutors could acquire fixed cultural elements which

allow him/her to communicate with a "native of the culture", then he/she could be well-adapted or interculturally competent (Dervin, 2010). However, the reality is more complicated that this—as Dervin (2010) suggests, "We all have to interact with very different people from our very own environments" (p. 159). Even if people from the same country/region or even the same family, they still might be different in terms of their personal experiences.

3.2.2 Interpretative Paradigm

Like the non-essentialist view, the interpretative paradigm tends to explain and interpret culture through the context where it exists. Such a paradigm is often adopted in the tradition of the ethnographic study of culture. Rather than analysing culture as "an experimental science in search or law" (Geertz, 1973, p. 5), studies following an interpretative paradigm tend to inspect events by describing and observing behaviours in detail and in their contexts. The goal of such studies is to grasp or understand the meaning of social phenomena (Schwandt, 1994). The main assumptions shared by culture studies adopting interpretive paradigm are summarised by Hua (2016) as follows:

- Culture cannot be reduced to abstract entities. It exists and emerges through details, actions, meaning and relationship.

- Culture and culture norms can be captured through detailed observation and description.

- Communicative behaviour, along with their meaning, constitute culture, while at the same time, are informed by culture.

- The researchers' role is not to identify rules and the causal link between culture and communicative behaviours, but to try to interpret culture in its entirety (p. 9).

The earliest well-cited ethnographic studies on cultures were those of Edward Hall (1959, 1966). He is regarded as the founder of the field of Intercultural Communication (Hua, 2016), who made the famous claim that "culture is communication and communication is culture" (Hall, 1959, p. 191). Scholars such as Carbaugh (2014), Katriel (1986), Scollon & Scollon (1990) also are followers of the interpretive paradigm. Recently, it has been used in studies examining local practices in organizational contexts such as business communication (Hua, 2016). For example, Ehrenreich (2009) investigates how English is used as a lingua franca in German multinational corporations. Adopting an ethnographic multimethod and an interpretive paradigm, Ehrenreich collected interview and observational data, and recorded business activities. She points out that what needs to be learnt is not English as a native language but communicative effectiveness in English as lingua franca, which she termed an intentional contact language (Ehrenreich, 2009). Instead of identifying causal link between culture and communicative behaviours, the author tries to interpret the behaviours in that context (German multinational corporations) and how they constitute their own culture—for example, employees are aware of the need to negotiate the norms or rules for intercultural interactions and show greater tolerance and preference for cultural hybridity in communication (Hua, 2016).

3.2.3 Alternative Paradigms

Apart from these two paradigms, there are three other paradigms—critical, realist, and constructivist. The critical paradigm is mainly focused on issues of macro contexts (historical, social, and political levels), and the hidden and destabilizing aspects of culture (Hua, 2016). In this paradigm, the role of power (political, social, and linguistic) and ideology are taken into account to understand cultural differences. Similarly focusing on the macro contexts, the realist paradigm calls for a "realist" view of the relationship between structure and agency, which acknowledges both agency of individuals and the constraints of

social and historical conditions. To be more specific, according to the realist paradigm, culture is regarded as a macro-structures or mechanism which shapes individuals' behaviours at surface level; meanwhile it is human activity which reproduces and transforms the culture (Hua, 2016).

As the focus of this thesis is not on either the role of power, or the issue of intercultural communication at macro level—neither historical or political, the critical paradigm and realist paradigm do not seem particular appropriate. Instead, this thesis is based on the constructivist paradigm which pays attention to the subjective nature of meaning making (Hua, 2016). From the constructivist point of view, intercultural differences and cultural memberships are socially constructed. Differing from the positivist view, the constructivist paradigm regards the person as actively engaged in the creation of their own world (Burr, 2003), thus the understanding of culture and intercultural differences is subjective and emerges through discourse and interaction (Hua, 2016). The focus of this paradigm is on the process of interaction and how interacting individuals connect their lived experiences to the cultural representations of those experiences (Schwandt, 1994). What the participants accomplish from their experiences in terms of new values, identities and practices is more important.

Apart from the constructive paradigm, the interpretative paradigm is also adopted for this thesis as they share the same position on subjectivity and agency of the person. They are chosen over the positivist paradigm not only because of positivist's risk of over-generalisation (as reviewed earlier), but also for the following reasons. Firstly, unlike natural science (or hard science) which studies the physical world, this thesis sits in the field of culture science (or soft science) which views culture as subjective. As defined earlier, being subjective means how people interpret the world maybe different from each other—what one thinks is "right" might be "wrong" from another person's view. If there is no "rightness", it

would be meaningless to seek for "universal truth". Opposite to the positivist view that culture is stable and fixed, this thesis regards culture as dynamic. Even for the same person, his/her worldview might be changed over time; he or she might behave differently according to different context. If not stable or fixed, there is no point to seek for natural law or causal link as in experimental science. Instead, as culture is more complicated and irreducibly interactive, what is more important is to focus on the process whereby people's worldview, actions and behaviours are created, negotiated, sustained, and modified within a specific context.

Secondly, although complex and dynamic, culture is interpretable. As Schutz (1967) points out, there are two senses referring to the interpretation. Unlike the world of nature which refers to anything to molecules, electrons, and atoms that inhabit it, we make sense of or interpret our everyday world and come to recognize our own actions and those of our fellow actors as meaningful. Then the social scientists attempt to make sense of our sense-making. Such sense-making process—the understanding of meanings and relevance structure of people's living, acting and thinking within it could be described and interpreted.

Lastly, the aim of this research is to find out how a training course affected participants' intercultural competence. The purpose is not only simply answering yes or no to the effectiveness of the course, but also and more importantly to find out the process whereby participants' intercultural competence has been developed and how they reconstruct their worldview and transform their way of living, thinking and acting accordingly from their experiences of the course. Such process is richly embedded in their reflections and actions which could only be read and interpreted in much the same manner (Geertz, 1973) (although some literature suggested that a positivist approach could also be adopted to assess ICC— which will be addressed in detail later in assessing intercultural competence). Hence, the standpoint of the researcher of this thesis is to look over the participants' shoulders at what

they are doing and try to give a good reason for their actions. It is important to clarify that the researcher of this thesis holds an experience-distance position when building on interpretation participants' testimonies or behaviours. Just as stated as in the standpoint regarding the essentialist and non-essentialist views, there are seemingly positivist or essentialist statements later on in the thesis which contradict the researcher's claim to an interpretative and constructivist position. Such contradictions do not imply an inconsistency in the researcher's theoretical position, rather it is the best way to present data from the participants' point of view.

3.3 Intercultural Competence (ICC)

Normally, competence is considered "an ability or a set of skilled behaviours" (Spitzberg, 2000, p. 379). So what is intercultural competence? Many efforts have been expended in trying to discover what it takes for a successful intercultural interaction. For example, such ability or competence is termed as *transcultural communication competence by* Ting Toomy (1999), or *intercultural communication competence* by Kim and Korzenny (1991). In fact, Fantini (2009) found a variety of terms being used such as multiculturalism, cross-cultural adaptation, intercultural sensitivity, cultural intelligence, international communication, global competence, cross-cultural awareness, and global citizenship. As currently there is still no consensus on the terminology around international competence (Deardorff, 2006), this thesis uses the term *intercultural competence,* given that it applies to any who interact with those from different background regardless of location. No matter what specific name it has been given, it seems that most of the definitions of intercultural competence emphasis the importance of managing one's cognitive, affective and behavioural orientation. In fact, since 1950s it is argued that the core components of human competence are: motivation (affective, emotion), knowledge (cognitive), and skills (behavioural) (Bloom, 1956; Havighurst, 1957).

3.3.1 Intercultural Competence Model

To a larger extent, all theories and models of intercultural competence rely extensively on these basic conceptual frameworks. Spitzburg and Changnon (2009) overview these existing models and classify them into five categories. Although most of these models may be culturally biased as they are developed in Western context, they provide conceptual paths and a theory background for the future development (Spitzburg & Changnon, 2009). The five categories are compositional models, co-orientational models, developmental models, adaptational models, and causal path models. The compositional model is basically a list of the key components of ICC such as attitudes, knowledge, and skills. Each component contains relevant characteristic or traits. However, these models do not consider the relationship among the key components. The co-orientational model emphasizes the concepts relevant to comprehension outcome of interactional process. Questions such as how people adapt to one another's meanings and behaviours are focused on. The developmental model involves time dimension in intercultural interaction which emphasizes how intercultural competence develops overtime and the process of progression. The adaptational Model is focused on the actual process of adaptation as a part of intercultural competence. The core of this model is that competence is manifested in mutual alteration of actions, attitudes, and understanding among multiple interactants. Last but not least, the causal path model described the interrelationships among components. Such a model represents intercultural competence as theoretical linear system, which could be empirically tested by standard cross-sectional multivariate techniques.

3.3.2 Deardorff's Pyramid Model of ICC

Although these five types models have their own uniqueness and serve for different research purposes, one of the most frequently cited is Deardorff's (2006) pyramid model of intercultural competence (see Figure 1.)

DESIRED EXTERNAL OUTCOME
Behaving and communicating effectively and appropriately (based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes) to achieve one's goals to a degree.

DESIRED INTERNAL OUTCOME
Informed frame of reference / filter shift
- Adaptability: to different communication styles & behaviours; adjustment to new cultural environments
- Flexibility: selecting and using appropriate communication styles and behaviours; cognitive flexibility
- Ethnorelative view
- Empathy

KNOWLEDGE & COMPREHENSION
- Cultural self-awareness
- Deep understanding and knowledge of culture: including contexts, role and impact of culture & other world views
- Culture-specific information
- Sociolinguistic awareness

SKILLS
- Listen
- Observe
- Interpret
- Analyze
- Evaluate
- Relate

REQUISITE ATTITUDES
- Respect: value other cultures, cultural diversity
- Openness: to intercultural learning & people from other cultures, withholding judgment
- Curiosity and discovery: tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty

Figure 1. Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2006, p. 245)

In 2006, Deardorff employed a Delphi methodology in which 23 intercultural experts participated, resulting in document consensus on a definition and on the components of intercultural competence. As a result, given that the items within dimensions of intercultural competence are still broad, an overall definition of intercultural competence was proposed—"the effective and appropriate behaviour and communication in intercultural situations" (Deardorff, 2006, p. 66). Such definition provides the standard or criteria for a successful intercultural interaction, which are "appropriate" and "effective". Deardorff (2016) summarizes effectiveness as the degree of which the individual's goals were achieved while appropriateness refers to the manner and context in which those goals were achieved.

In the Delphi study (Deardorff, 2006), two visual models were synthesized, one of which is pyramid model of intercultural competence (see Figure 1). Similar to many cognitive approaches, this model includes motivational (attitude), cognitive (knowledge and comprehension) and skills elements. One of the key features of this model is the lower levels are viewed as enhancing the higher levels, among which attitude is regarded as a fundamental starting point (Deardorff, 2006). Knowledge and skills presuppose some attitudinal dispositions and together they are likely to produce outcomes. This model is frequently cited because it allows for degrees of competence (e.g., the more components acquired might result in greater degree of intercultural competence as an external outcome) and provides general basis for researchers to develop specific assessment within a context (Deardorff, 2006). It also has an emphasis on the internal as well as external outcomes of intercultural competence.

However, this model also has its own limitations. Firstly, as reviewed above, the pyramid model is developed by an inductive method which aims to provide some delineation of the definition of ICC. Thus, this model is general in nature as it tries to broadly suit different research purposes in different contexts. As a result, it does not include detailed information on the elements within each component. For example, in the skills component, it lists key skills such as to listen, observe, relate and analyze etc. However, it is not clear that what to listen, how to listen, or what to relate with. Hence without clarifying specifically of each element, it might be too vague to further design training program or assess intercultural competence if using this model alone.

Secondly, categorised as compositional model (Spitzburg & Changnon, 2009), this model does not consider the relationship among the key components. Although it shows that the lower level enhances the higher levels, it does not indicate how these components interrelate with each other. According to Spitzberg and Cupach (1984), instead of being independent from each other, these components are claimed to be interdependent. Deardorff's

pyramid model does indicate that one relation—collectively attitudes, knowledge and skills lead to internal and external outcomes (e.g., greater adaptability, communication effectiveness), however it fails to point out that how these outcomes could affect intercultural competence in return. In fact, the development of ICC is a circular cycle rather than one-end process. For example, one successful adaptation in a foreign country or a positive intercultural interaction might encourage more intercultural experience and more motivation to further develop ICC.

Lastly, Deardorff argues that the pyramid model could "move from the individual level of attitudes and personal attributes to the interactive cultural level in regard to the outcomes" (2006, p. 255). However, the model itself does not clarify how this model could be applied to the interactive cultural level, especially when relational satisfaction is set as an outcome. For example, in the interaction between interlocutor A and B, how do A and B's intercultural competence work in order to have a satisfactory interaction for both of them? Certainly one could argue that the pyramid model could be used twice (e.g., one on A and another one on B), however it still lacks a whole picture as how A and B's intercultural competence correlated to the external outcome—relational satisfaction. As stated earlier, the aim of this thesis is to explore the development intercultural competence from two parties—international students and home students, it is important to know that how such development affect their relationships. Therefore, setting the relational satisfaction as one of the external outcomes, Dearforff's pyramid model does not seem to be a first choice for this thesis.

In all, the definition of intercultural competence and pyramid model proposed by Deardorff (2006) have been widely cited which provide delineation of ICC, but they seem to be too general and remain as unclear to adopt for the purpose of this thesis. Therefore, it is necessary to find a definition and model of ICC that suit this research.

3.3.3 Relational Model of ICC

As reviewed above, the two standards of intercultural competence are effectiveness and appropriateness. Spitzberg (2000) gives a more detailed explanation of these two criteria as follows: "Appropriateness means that the valued rules, norms, and expectancies of the relationship are not violated significantly. Effectiveness is the accomplishment of valued goals or rewards relative to costs and alternatives" (p. 380). According to Spitzberg (2000), these two standards are the guarantee of interactional quality. Only if both requirements are met, could such intercultural interaction could be regarded as optimal. Therefore, with these dual standards, a successful intercultural communication means that interactants fulfil their objectives in a manner that is appropriate to the context and their relationship (Spitzberg, 2000). In terms of "appropriateness", such explanation indicates that the degree of appropriateness is determined by the interactants involved in the interaction, which means as long as one's behaviour is appropriate in the eyes of his or her communicative partner, such interaction could be seen as appropriate. What is important from Spitzberg's (2009) argument is the participants in the interaction are interactants rather than one individual, which indicates that to achieve competence, both parties' needs must be fulfilled, and both interactants are responsible for actively participating in the exchange (Imahori & Lanigan, 1989).

In previous studies, a lot of data were collected just based on one individual's perceptions, for example, a sojourner's self-evaluation of competence or a host-national's perception of the sojourner's competence (Imahori & Lanigan, 1989). However, some scholars (e.g. Argyris, 1958; Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984; Wiemann & Kelly, 1981) suggest that competent partners should satisfy each other's needs based on the concept of "relational competence" (Imahori & Lanigan, 1989). They agree that just one individual's appropriate behaviours are not equated to effective outcome because other dyadic member may not

behave appropriately (e.g. Wiemann & Kelly, 1981). Therefore, Imahori and Lanigan (1989) argue that rather than from a one-sided perspective, the conceptualization of ICC recommends that both sojourners' and host national's competence need to be measured. Therefore, they propose a more detailed definition of ICC which focuses on relational outcome: "Intercultural competence is the appropriate level of motivation, knowledge, and skills of both the sojourner and host-national in regard to their relationship, leading to an effective relational outcome" (p. 277).

Based on this definition of ICC, Imahori and Langigan (1989) develop a relationship model of ICC derived in part from Spitzberg and Cupach (1984) (see Figure 2). Compared to other ICC models which do not place adequate emphasis on the host national, the relational model indicates that sojourners and host-nationals are mirror-image interlocutors, and both are modelled in terms of their motivation, knowledge and skills. Together with goals driven toward productive experience, a variety of outcomes (e.g., intimacy, relational satisfaction, commitment, and effectiveness) are likely to result.
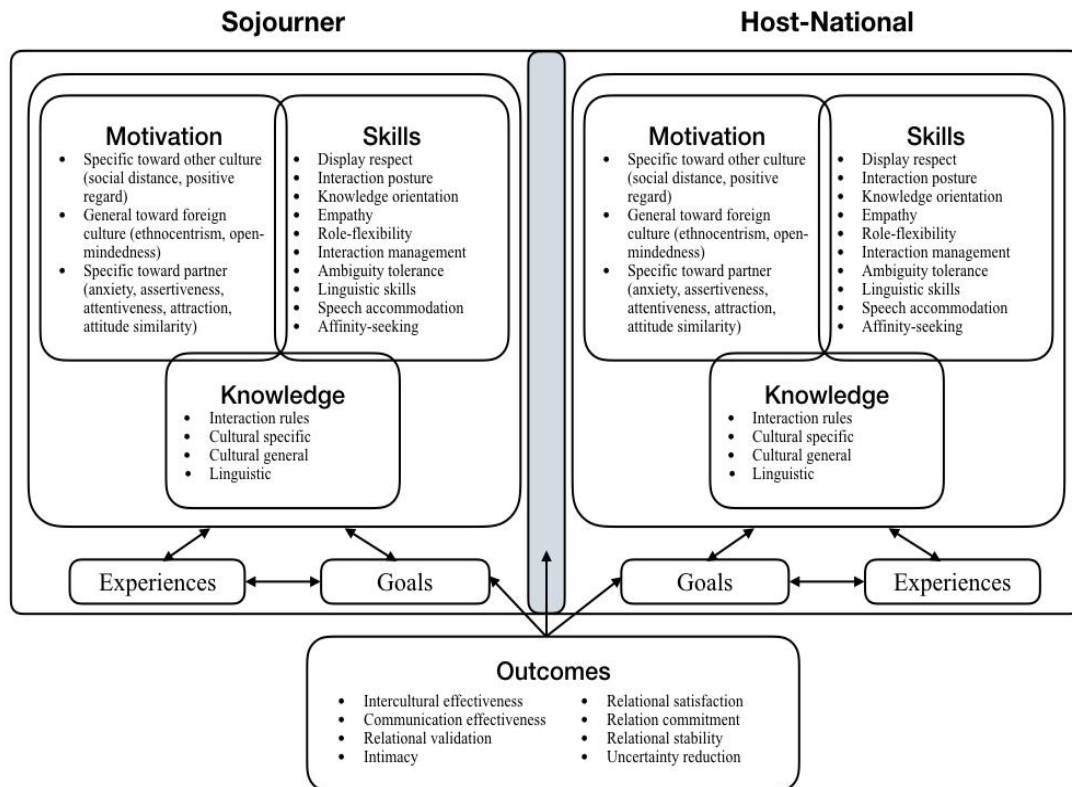
Figure 2. Relational Model of Intercultural Competence

Source: Adapted visualization by Spitzberg & Changnon (2009) from Imahori &

Lanigan (1989), after Spitzberg & Cupach (1984*).*

In this thesis, the relational model is adopted, not only because it indicates that both

sojourner and host-nationals' ICC are equally important, but for the following reasons.

Firstly, comparing to Deardorff's pyramid model (2006), the relational model clearly lists the

key elements or factors within each component of ICC. For example, motivation contains

positive attitudes toward culture and partner (e.g., open-mindedness, assertiveness, attraction

etc.); knowledge component refers to knowledge of interaction rules, cultural specific,

cultural general, and linguistic; and the skills component includes displaying respect,

interaction posture, knowledge orientation, empathy, role-flexibility, interaction management,

ambiguity tolerance, linguistic skills, speech accommodation, and affinity-seeking. Compared

to other general ICC models, such a list gives clear guidance as to what could be assessed or focused on in further research.

Secondly, the relational model considers the correlation between each element. Specifically, this model indicates three issues: (a) operationalizations of competence and relational outcome; (b) relationships between three components of competences; and (c) relationships between competence, relational outcome, and other variables. Unlike the pyramid model, the relational model underlies any casual paths between components and gives more explanation of revealing how ICC, interactants, their goals and experiences, and external outcomes are correlated. However, this strength also reveals one of its weaknesses— being a casual path model, although it underlies all explanations to some extent and posits explicit hypotheses in their component connections, it could build too many feedback loops which might reduce their values as guides to explicit theory testing through hypothesis verification of falsification (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). Hence, it requires extra care when interpreting the data.

Lastly, as pointed out by Spitzberg and Changnon (2009), casual path models have the advantage of their relatively easy adaptation to research purposes. Imahori and Lanigan (1989) suggest that this model could incorporate studies such as communication effectiveness (e.g., Koester & Olebe, 1987), interpersonal solidarity, intercultural effectiveness, intimacy, and relationship stability (e.g., Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984). For example, Koester and Olebe (1987) examined two groups of students—a multinational group living on an "international floor" in a dormitory at a state university and an unrelated group of U.S. students living in another dormitory. They were paired up into nine pairs of intercultural roommates and eight pairs of culturally homogeneous roommates. Intercultural communication effectiveness was measured using questionnaires. Results indicate that communication effectiveness had a significant effect on the dependent measures whereas cultural similarity/dissimilarity did not.

This finding suggests that the degree of communication effectiveness and stableness of the roommate relationship are more important rather than intra- or intercultural nature of the roommate pair (Koester & Olebe, 1987). This study actually provides evidence against one of the assumptions of the positivist paradigm which claims that "culture values determine communication behaviours" (Hua, 2016, p. 9). As Koester and Olebe (1987) argue, some scholars (e.g. Gudykunst & Kim, 1984; Samovar, Porter & Jain, 1981) generally define intercultural communication with the focus on the impact of divergent cultural backgrounds on the communication process. It is the differences in "key variables" (Sarbaugh, 1988, p. 12) such as value orientation, cultural patterns, perception, verbal and nonverbal codes that make the communication become intercultural (Koester & Olebe, 1987). However, this study indicates that, for those who are effective communicators, they might have the skills to adjust to the cultural differences and generally act appropriately in communication with other interactants. Such findings actually fit the non-essentialist view and the concept of ICC developed by Imahori and Lanigan (1989), which focuses on how culture works by itself, how people use culture for their needs, and how people cohere into a social group regardless of their national culture.

In all, as reviewed above, instead of using well-cited model proposed by Deardorff, (2006), this research adopts a relational definition and framework of ICC proposed by Imahori and Lanigan (1989). Setting communicative effectiveness and relational satisfaction as external outcomes, this model provides delineation of overall structure of ICC and gives a clear guidance for further assessment.

4. A Review on Intercultural Training Effectiveness

4.1 The Importance of Intercultural Training in Higher Education Context

Earlier, the importance of intercultural competence has been addressed principally in the context of higher education. However, how could such competence be developed? Does it

develop naturally during students' daily interaction? Is there anything that a university could do to support students? According to Spencer-Oatey and Fanklin (2014), they argue that some of the competences could be developed or acquired by oneself as a result of an interplay among personality, upbringing, socialization and life experience. For example, studying abroad is generally regarded as a way to further develop and expand intercultural competence (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). William (2005) explored the intercultural communication skills of students who study abroad and those who remain on campus. Through a pre-test and post-test of two specific skills, intercultural adaptability and intercultural sensitivity, study abroad students were compared to students who stay on campus to measure their change during the course of the term. The results confirmed that students who study abroad exhibit a greater change in intercultural communication skills than students who stay on campus. Such a finding seems to imply that studying abroad does work in terms of intercultural competence development.

But is just sending students abroad enough? Scholars such as Berg (2007) hold different opinions. He argues that simply sending students to a location abroad for academic study is not sufficient for facilitating the larger goal of creating effective global citizenship. Such an argument is supported by the studies conducted by Paige and his colleagues (2004) and Berge (2004, 2008). They demonstrate a clear difference between the students who were provided with intercultural pedagogy as part of their study abroad curriculum and those who studied abroad without such pedagogy.

Berge's statement is further taken by Pedersen (2009) who investigated three groups of students in a year-long abroad program in central England. Group 1 students had some intercultural effectiveness training, group 2 students were in the same study abroad experience but with no training, and group 3 was a control group of students who stayed home. Statistically significant difference was found from pre-to post-tests between students in

group 1 and the other two groups, whereas students change scores in group 2 and 3 were not statistically different. This finding confirms that it is not enough to send students to study abroad without international pedagogy focused on outcomes of intercultural effectiveness. In all, these data suggest that just studying abroad would not necessarily lead to intercultural development. Instead, it implies that if intercultural effectiveness is a goal of study abroad, there should be more to do than just sending students abroad (Pedersen, 2009). The university needs to look at quality beyond the academic curriculum they are offering and give support to the students such as providing intercultural training or classes. As Pedersen (2009) concludes, university staffs "need to work with students during their experience using guided reflection and intercultural pedagogy to help them to grow interculturally from that experience—it is this intentional work that will ultimately facilitate global citizenship" (p. 79).

In fact, currently in the UK, universities have recognised the importance of intercultural competence and make powerful claims regarding their international mission and goals. However, as Spiro (2014) points out that there are problems with the actual realisation of these claims in a way that is meaningful and visible to the student themselves. For example, studies (e.g., Middlehurst & Woodfield, 2007; McDowell & Montgomery, 2009; and UKCOSA, 2004) report that the international students tended to remain within familiar social networks with fellow nationals, rather than forming social groups with home students. Loneliness and isolation emerged as significant factors in their experience (Erichsen & Bolliger, 2011). Studies also show that international students and home students seem to disengage from one other. For example, international students tend to feel alienated and excluded from higher education settings that are culturally new to them (Spiro, 2014). On the other hand, home students see international students as "threats to their academic success and group identity" (Harrison & Peacock, 2010, p. 877). Furthermore, they have revealed what Harrison and Peacock term "passive xenophobia" which is described as "typified by a

reluctance to interact voluntarily with international students at anything beyond the most surface level" (2010, p. 877). Henderson and Spiro (2007) also noted a "passive xenophobia" in their study of undergraduate students, which suggests that home students felt excluded by their international peers by using their own languages, failing to adapt to the local culture, and receiving extra help from staff.

In Lantz's Ph. D. research (2014), after examining the intercultural development of a cohort of first year UK and non-UK psychology students studying at one UK university at a range of stages, she concluded that although the majority of students reported relatively higher intercultural contact during university, particularly non-UK students, neither group experienced a significant change. Such results further confirm that intercultural contact or increasing such contact alone might not lead to intercultural development. As a result, the non-UK students still have the negative feelings such as not fitting in.

In all, these studies appear to indicate the difficulty of bringing international and home students together (Teekens, 2007). Although home and international students spend significant time in contact in the classroom (Harrison & Peacock, 2010), simply being in an international classroom does not in itself lead to engagement with or deeper understanding of others (Spiro, 2014). For example, international classrooms may be dominated by students of the host culture, unless they are carefully managed (Hills & Thom, 2005), while intercultural exchanges in class can be problematic unless they are managed with sensitivity (Leask, 2010). In all, there is a need for the university to construct and manage to bring international and home students together as equal learning partners.

4.2 Problem caused by the Host in the Context of Communication Accommodation Theory

Although the literature mentioned above indicate the difficulty to bring international and students together or adaptation of international students, few focuses on the role that home

students played in intercultural interaction and what they can do for successful intercultural communication. According to the relational model (1989), to achieve communication effectiveness and relationship satisfaction, the host-national (here as home students) also have equally the same responsibility as international students. Here it is important to clarify again the terms involved here: although host-national, home students, native speakers are defined differently according to different contexts, in this thesis, they all termed as home students who are mainly educated in the UK. Similarly, sojourner, international students and non-native speakers are termed as international students who are not mainly educated in the UK.

In the book *English-Only Europe? Challenging Language Policy* (2003), Phillipson points out the negative role that native speakers played in intercultural communication. He argues that "although native speakers have an edge in many types of intercultural communication, tend to talk more, and may succeed in influencing outcomes more, native speakers can in fact be the cause of communication problems" (p. 167). The idea behind this statement is that language proficiency is not equivalent to intercultural competence. Although native speakers have greater facility in speaking the language, they may not necessarily have greater sensitivity in using it appropriately. According to Phillipson, competent speakers of English as second language are more comprehensible than native speakers in many intercultural settings. For the second language speakers, they may be better at adjusting their language for the people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Such ability may be regarded as a form of communication accommodation (Gallois & Giles, 2015), on which studies state that speech convergence between interactants is positively related to the perception of competence (Gallois & Giles, 2015).

Communication accommodation theory (CAT) initially termed as speech accommodation theory (SAT) was introduced by Giles (1973) in the field of language adjustment. The concept of communication accommodation is that people adjust their speech

or the way they communicate according to different people, about different topics and in different contexts (Gallois & Giles, 2015). However, Giles (1973) argued that such adjustment/accommodation is not only (or even instead of) determined by the context, but also shows our attitude towards one or more conversational partners. Such an attitude could be liking, disliking, admiration and disdain. In the initial formulation of SAT, Giles (1973) noted that there are three types of accommodation. People may converge—make their speech more like that of the partner such as switching to the partner's language, speaking style, accent or non-verbal communication. They may also diverge—make their speech more different from the partner. And lastly there is maintenance, which means people do not make any changes in their communication (Gallois & Giles, 2015). According to Giles (1973), convergence as taken as sign of liking whereas divergence and maintenance as dislike.

In its initial formulation, CAT was used in the context of interpersonal communication as it explores the relationship between people and their motivation to show friendliness and admiration or the opposite (Soliz & Giles, 2014). The theory was then broadened in the intergroup context—the interaction between people with different social identities (e.g., different ethnic groups, gender, professions etc.). Taking the example of gender, men and women often communicate using speech patterns of their own gender in order to show liking for each other. For example, men use deeper pitch and more assertive gestures, whereas women soften and raise their pitch and use less assertive communication (Gallois & Giles, 2015). In terms of intergroup or interethnic communication, CAT seems to be highly appropriate to use in the field of intercultural communication. Back in 1973, Giles was already predicting the impact of convergence and divergence in the context of English-Welsh interaction. It was found that when faced with an exaggerated English accent speaker, the Welsh participants diverged their language by broadening their Welsh accents.

However, Gallois and Giles (2015) argue that the approach of CAT researchers and intercultural communication researchers is different—"whereas the latter emphasized intercultural communication competence and short-term interactions by sojourners and immigrants, CAT researchers are more likely to concentrate on long-standing intergroup context, where communication skills are less important than intergroup attitudes" (p.12). However, whatever short or long-term interactions are focused on, the importance of communication accommodation in intercultural communication cannot be neglected. After all, intercultural communication is a way of interpersonal communication. As Gallois and Giles pointed out, "if we like or admire someone, we can overcome a negative intergroup history and converse with the person as an individual" (2015, p. 6). Such positive attitudes and motivation are signaled by accommodation behaviour. Using other person's language, style, accent or paying attention to the person's needs and desires in the conversation could certainly demonstrate the high intercultural competence of the speaker. That might be the key for successful intercultural communication.

Along with the communication accommodation theory, Samovar, McDaniel and Roy (2015) propose several considerations for the native speaker while interacting with a non-native speaker such as adjusting their speech rate, vocabulary and monitoring non-verbal feedback. Crowther and his colleagues' (2000) paper on *"internationalisation at home"* also recognises that the home student can and should take an equal place in the international learning community without leaving home and that this entails the development of sensitivities, skills and abilities just as complex as those deployed by students studying outside their home culture. However, the literature does not show how these techniques or policies could be applied into classroom setting. In all, previous studies of ICC competence have mainly employed individually focused measures of competence with an emphasis on sojourners' competence alone (Imahori & Lanigan, 1989). It seems there is a gap in the

literature and there is a need to explore the development of intercultural competence from the perspective of home students.

4.3 Gaps in Literature

To conclude the literature reviewed above, intercultural competence might be developed at some point by studying abroad for a certain period of time, but that is not enough. It is still necessary to have some intercultural pedagogy or intercultural training in terms of developing intercultural effectiveness on both home and international students. If universities could provide some training or classes focusing on intercultural effectiveness, both international students and home students could benefit from it. Thus, the development of intercultural competence could be realised. As matter of fact, currently there are over 20 universities in the UK which offer taught courses on intercultural communication at master level (Hua, Handford & Young, 2017). Young and Schartner (2013) evaluated the effects of a masters programme of cross-cultural communication (CCC) at a university of North England. Using mixed methods, they found out that comparing with another similar MA programme in Applied Linguistics and Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages (TESOL) which lacks a specific focus on CCC, the students studying CCC education tend to perform significantly better over different measures of academic achievement. Students exposed to an approach which encourages explicitly critical perspective on key concepts such as culture, communication and the influence of culture seem to perform generally better than others who are not. In all, this study makes contributions and provides evidence of the benefits of a long-term intercultural education (e.g., master programme in intercultural communication) in the UK higher education setting. However, it seems there is a gap in evaluating the effects of short-term training courses in the UK higher education setting. That is the aim of the thesis— exploring on the effectiveness of the training course on both international and home students' ICC development. Currently there is an existing course *Transcultural Communication* at a

university in North England which aims to develop students' intercultural competence. The description of the course is presented below.

5. The Course Transcultural Communication

5.1 Overview

Transcultural Communication is an actual running credit-bearing course at one university of North England starting from 2015 autumn term (which was that when the course was first to put on). The course is organised by CELT (Centre of English Language and Teaching) in the department of Education.

- Timetable: Term 1 (Autumn term) week 2-10

    Terms 2 (Spring term) week 3-10

- Hours per week: 4 hours $\times$ 8 weeks

- Credits: 20 credits or 10 ECTS points for Erasmus students

5.2 Aims

The course is focused on how culture influences the way people think and communicate and is intended to help raise awareness of cultural differences. Above all, the course is practice-based, and students can expect to learn how to be successful international communicators and how to assess their own performance in this endeavour. It is intended for final year undergraduate students preparing for imminent employment. It is particularly intended for those students who need practical and theoretical guidance in envisaging their future working possibilities in a transcultural or global context. In this sense, the module intends to complement other modules in the students' programmes by allowing students to express concepts and practices in a transcultural environment. The module is also intended for Exchange and Visiting students, who have indicated that they would like to undertake

work at level 6, with a strong practical component. Other students at the university are also welcomed to sit in.

5.3 Content

This course aims to help students understand factors and issues in transcultural communication. Key issues in transcultural communication were covered such as culture, identity, language and techniques for analysing transcultural communication data. Students were expected to critically analyse stereotyped or essentialist views of culture, whether national, religious or otherwise socio-historically constructed, and move towards an understanding of communication in a constantly fluctuating context where cultural identities are emergent. It was hoped and expected that participation in this module will bring about cultural and identity shifts, as well as changes in perceptions of culture and language. The students were also required to construct the criteria for the assessment of transcultural competence and evaluate a range of inter/cultural assessment systems.

The full outline of the course is presented in Appendix A.

5.4 Assessment

To fulfil the module the students needed to undertake three tasks.

- Student will participate in a transcultural communicative task (e.g. group discussion mixed with non-transcultural students) and be assessed on their performance (e.g. the ability to engage sensitively with others and to contribute relevant ideas and knowledge).

- The above communicative task will be video-recorded, and students will be required to write an analytical report (1750 words) about interactions in the above task.

- Students will be required to write a self-evaluation and reflection report (1750 words) in which they will show what they have learned and discuss the changes that they may have noticed in your attitudes and behaviours.

6. Methodology

6.1 A Review on Assessing Intercultural Competence

6.1.1 Intercultural Training Effectiveness using Experimental Design

How to assess intercultural competence is the key for exploring intercultural effectiveness. As Deardorff points out (2011), the important first step in assessing ICC is to define the concept itself and specify the overall mission, goals, and purpose of the training course or program. In fact, there are different kinds of intercultural training programmes with different purposes such as business, tourism, and abroad studying. Currently, many of them use experimental designs based on positivist viewpoint. According to Landis, Bennett and Bennetts (2004), a typical intercultural training program combines cognitive material with experiential processes drawn from education and training methodology to simulate cross-cultural experiences and to practise intercultural adaptation skills. They argue that the result of carefully designed training based on coherent theory and rigorous research is the demonstrable development of intercultural competence (Landis, Bennett & Bennett, 2004). For example, Black and Mendenhall (1990) review 29 empirical studies of the effectiveness of intercultural training. They claim that the empirical literature "gives guarded support to the proposition that cross-cultural training has a positive impact on cross-cultural effectiveness" (Black & Mendenhall, 1990, p. 120). However, Kealey and Protheroe (1996) do not seem to agree with above statement as most studies have methodological weaknesses. For example, many of the existing studies fall short in terms of random allocation of participants to

treatment and control groups; longitudinal measures of subsequent performance testing for

change at various intervals (e.g. immediately after training, six months later).

6.1.2 Assessing ICC using Quantitative Approach

From a positivist viewpoint, assessing ICC through experimental design involves using

quantitative data. For example, many studies of communicative competence have used

quantitative methodologies that rely on self-reported, generalised, and often decontextualized

perceptions of appropriate and effective communicative behaviours and the factors that

contribute to them (Jablin & Sias, 2001). Typically, these studies articulate competence in

terms of both performance measurement, particularly through psychological tools (Byram,

1997), and comparisons of variables that can explain or predict effective competence

(Holmes & O'Neill, 2012). However, the nature of such assessment tools has been criticised

by some researchers. For example, Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) warn of the limitations of

conceptualizing intercultural competence as a set of skills and abilities as these may pertain to

one context but not another, and to one perceiver but not another. Also for some assessments

such as diagnostic scales (e.g., Fantini, 2006; Allen & Herron 2003), Ruben argues that "the

validity of data of this type rests fundamentally on the presumption that respondents have the

desire and ability to engage in valid self-assessment" (1989, p. 231). However, that

presumption is problematic as in real life it is possible that any individual can be absolutely

"intercultural competent" but he/she may be easily troubled by the lack of motivation of the

other, or by her/his bad intentions (Dervin, 2010). Besides such presumption, "researcher's

naïve belief in her/his subject's honesty" (Dervin, 2010, p. 160) is another problem. Due to

the nature of questionnaire, there is always the problem that people might give responses out

of social desirability rather than honesty (Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2014). Hence, such

responses may not contribute to the profile created. Based on those responses, the result

might not be sufficiently valid. Last but not least, these assessments might be biased as they

are developed in Western context. For example, Greenholtz (2005) examined the validity of Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (Bennett & Hammer, 1998) on the data obtained using a Japanese translation version. The results indicate strong doubts about the cross-cultural transferability of version one of the IDI. Thus, Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (1986) is questioned as a model for understanding worldviews with respect to difference, in cultures other than US American. This study gives evidence showing that IDI should still be considered to be work in progress rather than a reliable and valid instrument ready to use for all research contexts (Greenholtz, 2005).

In 2014, Lantz did her Ph.D. research examining the intercultural development of a cohort of first year UK and non-UK psychology students at one UK university. Using Bennett's IDI, she assessed students' stages of development upon entry and seven months on. The result shows that students entered university at a range of developmental stages, but there was no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of UK and non-UK students. As time went by, there was no significant change in their development in either group.

Lantz's research (2014) provides important data in examining students' intercultural development especially using quantitative approach (e.g., Bennett's IDI) within the same UK university as this research, however there are a couple of questions remaining to answer. Firstly, Lantz (2014) adopts the general definition and pyramid model of intercultural competence proposed by Deardorff (2016). However, she used another model—Bennett's developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (1986) as a main tool to assess intercultural sensitivity. Defined by Hammer, Bennett and Wiseman (2003, p. 442), intercultural sensitivity refers to "the ability to discriminate and experience relative cultural differences", which is different from the definition of intercultural competence. Although Lantz (2014) further explains that there is relationship between intercultural competence and intercultural

sensitivity, it still falls into the risk of terminology inconsistency. It is still confusing as to what has been examined or assessed by Lantz's research—intercultural competence or intercultural sensitivity?

Another concern of her research using Bennett's IDI lies in the weakness of the tool itself. Apart from the issue of its validity in other non-Western cultures (as argued above), Bennett's IDI also has the problem as being based on a positivist approach. As admitted by Bennett himself (2009), the IDI is not sensitive to individual differences—it tends to overestimate some of the "normative" condition especially in the group profile, individual variations are summarized as group data, therefore it is impossible to counteract the over-simplification. Although Lantz did involve qualitative data combined with IDI, her study still remains as a general indicator of students' intercultural development. The specifics of the attitudes, knowledge, skills are still missing. Lastly, Lantz's work contributes to exploring the development of UK and non-UK students' ICC without any training or educational intervention, which differs from this study. It is still unclear from her research about what happens to students' ICC if they have intercultural training using a quantitative approach.

Together with earlier critiques of the positivists viewpoint, although research results indicate that intercultural competence can indeed be assessed (Deardorff, 2011; Fantini, 2009; Stuart, 2009), using quantitative approach such as self-report instruments seems just to measure the "half of the picture" (Deardorff, 2016, p. 121). Concerns such as over-simplification as well as validity and reliability still remain. Compared to Lantz's research (2014) examining ICC in the same university as this study, the purpose and framework of this thesis are different. While Lantz's study was focused on students' IC development as a general group without any intervention (e.g., intercultural training), the focus of this thesis in on the specific ICC development of the students after the intercultural training. While Lantz's

research is based on a positivist viewpoint, this thesis embraces a combination of interpretative and constructive viewpoint.

6.1.3 Multi-perspective Approaches of Assessing Intercultural Competence in Higher Education Context

If using experimental method is still open to question or "half of the picture", what is the alternative approach? According to Deardorff (2009, 2010), given the complexity of intercultural development, a multi-perspective approach must be used, because no single tool is sufficient to adequately assess intercultural learning. Apart from the definition and framework of ICC, Deardorff's Delphi study (2006) suggests that intercultural competence is best assessed through a mixed method including interviews, observation, and judgment by self and others. Fantini (2009) also suggests that intercultural competence is best assessed by multiple measures on multiple dimensions using a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods. These multi-perspective approach or multi-methods should be focused more on the process of intercultural competence development rather than on an end-result (Deardorff, 2012; Deardorff & Edwards, 2012; Gordon & Deardorff, 2013). Deardorff (2016) lists some examples of how intercultural competence is currently assessed which include embedded course assessment, self-report instruments, reflection papers, critical incident analysis, interviews, observations of behaviour in specific contexts (by professors, internship supervisors, host families, group members, etc.), simulations and longitudinal studies. Furthermore, it is also implied that the assessment should go beyond verbal measures in order to determine whether students can think and act interculturally (Bok, 2006). For intercultural competence is not only about cultural knowledge and facts, it is also important to consider behavioural of successful interaction (Deardorff, 2016).

6.2 Design

As Deardorff (2011) repeatedly points out, one of the first steps in assessment in knowing exactly what is to be assessed in what context, it is important to re-clarify the purpose and framework of this thesis. Embracing interpretative and contractive paradigm, this thesis adopts the Relational Model (Imahori & Lanigan, 1989) and aims to assess the effectiveness of an intercultural training course T*ranscultural Communication* in terms of developing students' ICC at one UK university. Compared to other research (e.g., Lantz, 2014) which focuses on the general development of students' ICC, the focus of this thesis in on the process of such development specifically in attitude, knowledge, and skills.

6.2.1 Pilot Study Using Survey

Although this research is not based on a positivist viewpoint nor on quantitative methods as the main tools to assess ICC, a pilot study using experimental design and self-reported questionnaire was conducted at the very beginning of the research. Bennett's IDI was not utilised because of the expense. Instead, Fantini's survey questionnaire form (2007) was used, given its demonstrable validity and reliability. The survey also covers variables such as personal characteristics, language proficiency, motivation, communication styles, intercultural areas, and intercultural abilities (knowledge and skills). Like any experimental design, two comparison groups were set. The treatment group was the students who took the course *Transcultural Communication*; the control group was students who took the module *Speaking and Writing* which lacks a specific focus on ICC. Both modules involved 12 to 15 students and were both taught by teacher from the same department. To have a pre-post-test, both groups of students were given the survey at the beginning of the term and at the end. However, after one term, the experiment did not seem to work. Firstly, due to the limitation of selecting participants (both modules were self-selected), the sample size was too small for quantitative analysis. Secondly, the survey itself was too long which took more than half an

hour to complete. Thus, of the few students dedicated to the experiment, most failed to complete the survey given at the end of the term. Lastly, as the course only lasted one term, the time for the experiment was too short to show significant changes from the survey. In all, the pilot using Fantini's (2007) survey by experimental design did not fit for this research.

As the failure of the pilot study confirms the critique on using quantitative method alone to assess ICC at least in the context of this research, a mixed of qualitative and quantitative methods as suggested by Deardorff (2006) was adopted instead.

6.2.2 Qualitative Approach

According to Deardorff's Delphi study (2006), case studies and interviews received the strongest agreement (90%) by the intercultural scholars for assessing intercultural competence, followed by analysis of narrative diaries, self-report instruments, observation by other/host culture, and judgment by self and others (all at 85% agreement). Earlier, it has been noted that the course *Transcultural Communication* involves the use of narrative diaries (self-reflection report), observation by others (videoed group discussion), and judgement by self and others (evaluation report) to assess students' intercultural competence (see details in course description above). Thus, within this research, semi-structured interviews were mainly conducted in: 1) exploring the general difficulties of international students (Chapter 3), and 2) development of students' intercultural competence (Chapter 4 and 5.1). Participants or interviewees were encouraged to self-consciously examine their lived experience during the interview. Semi-structured interviews were selected because it could narrow down areas or topics that were asked from the participants A completely un-structured interview has the risk of losing the focus from the topic (Rabionet, 2011). However semi-structured interviews have some degree of predetermined order but still ensures flexibility in the way issues are addressed by the interviewees (Gordon, 1975). While addressing certain topics (as listed above), at the same time it is important to hear the participants' stories. Consequently, semi-

structured interviews were used in the format of an opening statement and a few general questions to elicit conversation. Then additional questions designed to probe for more specific information if it did not arise.

As most of the participants were international students, the interview questions were designed to be simple and straightforward to minimise the misunderstanding caused by language proficiency. By answering the open-ended questions such as "how do you feel about your experience in the UK so far" and "what do you think about the Transcultural Communication Course", interviewees were required to engage in self-reflection and evaluation of their own UK life and intercultural competence.

In terms of analysing the interview data, thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was carried out. According to Clarke and Braun (2015), thematic analysis is a theoretically informed framework for conducting research which can be flexibly applied within any major form of ontological, epistemological and theoretical frameworks from realism and essentialism to relativism and social constructionism. Instead of trying to find out the ultimate "truth", this method aims to understand and interpret the participants' experience and intercultural competence perceived by themselves. For example, Holmes and O'Neill (2012) use thematic analysis on students' reflective journals to assess and evaluate their development of intercultural competence. They found out that developing intercultural competence encompasses process of acknowledging reluctance of fear, foregrounding and questioning stereotypes, monitoring feelings and emotions, working through confusion, and grappling with complexity. Young and Schartner (2013) also used thematic analysis on assessing the development of intercultural competence of the students who took cross-cultural communication as their master programme. For this thesis, while the students try to make sense of their UK general life experience or intercultural training experience, the researcher tried to make sense of the student's sense-making. The process of doing thematic analysis

requires a reading and re-reading of the data, collating codes into potential themes and then reviewing these themes across the entire data set, ongoing analysis to define and name themes, and finally, the selection of vivid and compelling examples. The coding was undertaken by Nvivo 11 which is a qualitative data analysis computer software package produced by QSR International. It has been designed for rich text-based and/or multimedia information, where deep levels of analysis on small or large volumes of data are required (Kath, 2009). It allows users to classify, sort and arrange information, examine relationships in the data, and combine analysis with linking, shaping, searching and modelling.

The qualitative approach is often criticized for its subjectivity. In order to remove or minimise the subjectivity from data analysis, an inter-rater reliability test (Clarke & Braun, 2015) was conducted. This coding frame requires a second coder who was trained to code independently either part or the entire data. Inter-rater reliability scores were calculated using Cohen's Kappa (1960) to determine the level of agreement between independent coders. It is suggested that a Kappa greater than .80 indicates a very good level of agreement and supposedly "reliable" coding (Clarke & Braun, 2015). However, it is worth mentioning that because of the nature of qualitative approach which embraces trustworthiness rather than reliability in quantitative approach, a very good inter-rater reliability score simply shows that researchers have been trained to code in the same way, not that the analysis is "valid" (Yardley, 2008).

6.2.3 Quantitative Approach

Although the measurement of self-scoring survey is not used for this research, quantitative analyses were employed to provide some statistical support. Firstly, although thematic analysis was mainly used for interview data, the number and frequency of each main and subcategory were also assessed. For example, in Chapter 3 international students were asked about their general difficulties during their stay in the UK. By calculating how many

participants reported this issue (e.g., language) as difficult, the relative importance of the challenges they faced could easily be identified. Instead of pure narrative data, frequency counting could provide a more straightforward and clearer picture within the qualitative data.

Apart from IRR test, a quantitative approach was used to examine verbal behaviour (amount of talk) and non-verbal behaviour (eye gaze) in Chapter 5.2. videotapes of participants' discussion were analysed in terms of the duration, frequency, means of each variable. T-tests were used to look at differences between untrained and trained home students. According to Field (2017), the t-test compares two averages (means) to show if they are different from each other. It also shows how significance the differences are. As this research (study in Chapter 5.2) compared two different groups (home students who had intercultural training and who did not), independent t-tests were used. In terms of sample size, the t-test is appropriate for use where sample sizes are small (e.g., N<30) (Agresti & Finlay, 1997), as in this study (N= 16). It is also suggested that at least N= 5 per group may be suitable in two group comparisons as long as one accepts very low statistical power (Campbell, Julious & Altman, 1995). The detailed process of conducting the studies is presented in Chapter 5.2.

6.3 Sample and Data Type

6.3.1 Sample

All the participants were students who were studying at one University in the North of England, UK. They came from different departments at different academic levels. In terms of exploring the difficulties of international students' adaptation (Chapter 3), snowball sampling was used. Snowball sampling is a nonprobability sampling technique that recruit future participants from among their acquaintances (Goodman, 1961). Firstly, potential participants were identified in the population (e.g., one or two Chinese students at the University with whom the researcher was acquainted), then those participants were asked to recruit other

people to participate. These steps were repeated until the needed sample size is found. The participants were given five pounds in cash for their participation.

Due to the nature of the intercultural training (the course *Transcultural Communication* is self-selective*)*, it is impossible to use random sampling for this research. Instead, opportunity sampling—asking members of the population of interest for participation was the only option for the studies in Chapter 4 and 5. Students taking the course *Transcultural Communication* were invited to participate in an interview at the beginning of the course. According to departmental policy (here the department of psychology where the research was registered in), anyone who participated in the research eventually could be given either five pounds in cash or course credit for their participation. As most of the participants were from different departments, they chose five pounds instead of course credit. The research has been approved by the department and all the funds were supported by the psychology department.

6.3.2 Data Type

Overall, both interviews and video analysis were utilised within this research. Interviews were mainly used for identifying difficulties of international students and the development of students' intercultural competence. Video data were analysed mainly for the comparison study between trained home students and untrained.

6.4. Ethical Issue

All the participants were asked to sign the consent form before taking part. This informed participants of the aims of the research, procedure and any possible risks of taking part, as well as of the use of the audio and video recorders. Participants were told that taking part was voluntary, and that their personal data were protected and securely stored. Only participants who signed the consent form were contacted for the study, which had been

approved by the ethics committee of the Department of Psychology. A sample of the consent form is presented in Appendix B.

7. Summary

Currently there is literature exploring the general development of students ICC at UK university (without training), and the effectiveness of long-term intercultural programmes (e.g., master course on ICC) on developing students' ICC. Few studies have been focused on the effectiveness of short-term intercultural training course at UK university. Thus, to fill the gap, the prime aim of this research is to evaluate the course *Transcultural Communication* at one university in the North of England. As Deardorff (2016) points out, intercultural competence should be carefully defined before being assessed, this chapter reviews related literature in the field of intercultural communication. By introducing key terms and theories in the field, it points out that this thesis endorses the interpretative and constructive approach under the framework of relational model of ICC.

The importance of developing intercultural competence in the context of UK higher education has also been stressed. Intercultural effectiveness could not be achieved without intentionally designed pedagogy or curriculum and experimental learning. For an internationalised university, it is not enough to focus only on the international students, but also home students. However, there is a gap in the literature which indicates that home students' intercultural competence is often neglected. For the university staff, they also need to provide relevant courses and guide students in developing intercultural competence. In the final part of this chapter, an existing intercultural training course in a UK university was described, as well as the methodologies utilised in this research, with a particular focus on the assessment of ICC. Due to the theoretical standpoint of this research and the results of a pilot study, it was decided to utilise a mixed-method approach, instead of self-scoring questionnaires. The overall design of the project has also been outlined.

Chapter 3 Difficulties of Adaptation of International Students in the UK

1. Introduction

According to the relational model of ICC (Imahori & Lanigan, 1989) (see details in Chapter 2), it is important to develop intercultural competence for both international and home students in the UK University. As stated in Chapter 2, at the beginning of the research, pilot studies were firstly conducted. This chapter presents the studies which focused on sojourner's (specifically, international students') perspective. Like any format of intercultural training, it is important to firstly know the need of the client. Here in this context, before intercultural training, it is useful to investigate what the participants have already known, what they do not know and what they need to know. By interviewing international students at a university in the North of England, it aims to find out the general difficulties that international students encountered during their staying in the UK. Although there is plenty of literature on international student's adaptation, this study was still carried out as it helps to establish a baseline of international students' experiences before any intervention in this context, such as the course *Transcultural Communication.*

Interviews were carried out with two groups at the university: firstly, it was piloted on Chinese students, then students from other ethnic backgrounds were interviewed.

2. Background

Nowadays, studying abroad is nothing new to the university student. As early as in 1640, university students in Finland had to attend university in Sweden if they wanted to pursue higher education (Cushner & Karim, 2004). Since then, many academic institutions started to receive international students. After the United States, the United Kingdom is the second most popular choice in the world for international students to study—it is estimated

that 15% of the student population in the United Kingdom are international students (King, Findlay & Ahren, 2010). International students contribute one-third of total income for UK universities through their fees (Brown & Holloway, 2008), and it is estimated that by 2025 they will boost the UK economy by £26 billion (UKCISA, 2012). They also make a significant academic contribution (Andrade, 2006) by broadening the perspectives of home students and academic staff (Bartram, 2009; Charles-Toussaint & Crowson, 2010; Wang, 2012) and offering the opportunity to become potential contributors to the local knowledge economy (Tange & Jensen, 2012). For the international students, they also have benefited from their study-abroad experiences which can shape their outlook for the rest of their lives (Furnham, 2004). Hopkins (1999) summarises the advantages of studying abroad as follows:

"Study-abroad programmes take many forms, but all share the characteristics that, by their very nature, they provide students with a healthy dose of experiential learning. Immersing oneself in another culture provides new opportunities for learning-by-doing, virtually twenty-four hours a day" (p. 36).

Indeed, for university students, there are a variety of forms of academic study abroad programs. For example, students may complete an entire degree as an integrated program in a foreign institution outside their home country, or they may join an exchange program spending a year or semester abroad enrolled in an institution in a host country (Cushner & Karim, 2004). No matter which form it takes, results have shown that students who study abroad exhibit a greater change in intercultural communication skills than the students who stay on campus (Williams, 2015).

However, studying abroad may not be as easy as it sounds. Studying abroad means leaving one's home culture for a period of time, entering a new culture, engaging in academic and social pursuits, and returning home afterward (Cushner & Karim, 2004). Harrell (1994)

proposed four phases of such a sojourn: a) pre-departure; b) entry; c) adjustment and functioning in the new culture; d) pre re-entry, re-entry and readjustment into the home culture after the completion of the study-abroad experience. The whole process involves two transitions—first during entry into the host culture and then again upon re-entry into the home culture. Such transitions may create stress involving confrontation and adaptation to unfamiliar physical and psychological experiences and changes (Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Kim, 2001; Martin & Harrell, 1996; Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001). Furnham and Bochner (1986) proposed several types of problems that international students face—language incompetence, loneliness, social communication difficulties and pressures associated with the role of representative of their country in their interactions with host nationals. Subsequently (Ward et al., 2001), they further considered the importance of academic cultural differences and educational expectations in sojourners' intercultural adaptation. These five problems proposed by Ward, Bochner and Furnham have been broadly supported by the literature. For example, loneliness is a serious problem among international students (Robertson, Lone, Jones & Thomas, 2000). There is also evidence that interaction with host nationals plays an important part in international students' adjustment (Chapdelaine & Alexitch, 2004; Trice, 2004). Apart from difficulties to do with general intercultural adaptation, there are difficulties to do with specifically academic adaptation (e.g., Chataway & Berry, 1989; Eng & Manthei, 1984). Other literature highlighted the stress that international students experience in a form of "homesickness" (Chalungsoth & Schneller, 2011), "culture shock", "adjustment" (Brown & Holloway, 2008; Camhell, 2010; Erichsen & Bolliger, 2011; Gornisiewicz & Bass, 2011; Khaway & Stallman, 2011; Sherry, Thomas & Chui, 2009; Tran, 2011) and "culture learning" adaptations (Zhou, Jindal-Snape &Topping, 2008).

There is literature focusing on the Chinese students' adaptation at foreign universities. For example, Tsang (2001) studied the adjustment of mainland Chinese academics and students to life in Singapore. It suggests that even if the host culture is somewhat similar to the home culture, the sojourner still needs to adjust to the host institutional environment. In the context of Chinese students studying in UK universities, Turner (2006) explored nine Chinese students enrolled in taught master programmes in a UK university business school. She found out that participants' underlying approaches to learning did not change substantially over the year owing to the culturally implicit nature of UK academic conventions and other psychological stresses such as emotional isolation and loneliness. Zhou and Todman (2008) examined patterns of adaptation of Chinese postgraduate students in the UK. They found out that patterns of adaptation over time differed in relation to general life, social life, and study life. In particular, there is a difference in the patterns of specifically academic adaptation between students who came in groups and those who came individually.

In all, there is plenty of literature focusing on international students' adaptation (e.g., Young, Sercombe, Naeb & Schartner, 2013; Zhang and Goodson, 2011; Zhou, Jindal-Snape, Topping, & Todman, 2008). As Young et al. (2013) suggest, the success factors for international students' adaptation are strongly associated with academic achievement, satisfaction with life in the new environment, and psychological well-being, and aspects of their intercultural competence, contact with non-co-nationals, including hosts, and with language proficiency. In this research, these problems and stresses are categorised into four aspects—language proficiency, communication obstacles, education differences and culture shock, each of which is reviewed below.

2.1 Language proficiency

When entering another country/culture, language is always the first challenge. Fantini (2006) points out the importance of language when living in another culture: "A total lack of

any proficiency in the host tongue most certainly constrains one's entry, adaptation, and understanding of the host culture on various levels and in many ways; while increased host language proficiency must certainly enhance entry possibilities albeit not an absolute guarantee of success since other factors also come into play" (p. 49).

What does seem clear is that mastering a host language will not guarantee a successful adaptation in another culture, but it will most certainly cause problems and difficulties for the people who do not have any proficiency of the host language. Smalley (1963) also states that unfamiliarity with the language of the host culture can lead to language shock as many social cues are embedded in language.

However, mastering a second language is not easy. Compared to a native speaker, the second-language speaker is confronted with a much greater mental task. Samovar, Porter and McDaniel (2009) point out several challenges that second-language speakers need to overcome. In terms of assigning meaning, they need to be more alert to what others are saying and how it is being said. Meanwhile, they must be thinking about how to respond. This listening-responding process relies on the degree of fluency. It means that the second-language speakers need to mentally translate the received message into their mother tongue, prepare a response in the native language and then cognitively translate that response into the second language (Samovar et al., 2009). For a native speaker, such cognitive processes are not required. Therefore, second-language speakers often find native speaker talk quite fast. In terms of vocabulary, the native speaker may use metaphors, slang and colloquialisms that might confuse the non-native speaker. Additionally, the second-language speaker may not get the point of a funny joke as humour varies from culture to culture and may require appropriate cultural knowledge. All of these make much greater cognitive demands for the second-language speaker with limited vocabulary. But that is not all—the difficulty is increased if the second-language speaker is not familiar with the native speaker's accent.

Now it could be seen that communicating is not easy using a second language. This complicated process can produce both mental and physical fatigue, as the second-language speakers need to be alert for the whole time. Therefore, for the native speaker, possibility of miscommunication may increase if they are not "mindful" or alert to the cognitive demands placed on the second-language speaker (Samovar et al., 2009).

2.2 Communication Obstacles

(i) Communication Strategies

For the international students studying in the UK, English may not be their first language. During communication, they are not only seeking to communicate across linguistic boundaries but also cultural boundaries. Therefore, they are operating at the communication end of what is termed the identity-communication continuum (I-CC) (Kirkpatrick 2007a, p. 173) (see figure 3.1 below for details).

The I-CC basically illustrates two major functions of language: language for communication; and language for establishing identity. If speakers wish to express their identity of a speech community, they will choose to use a highly localized, informal variety of English. Or, they may use a highly specialized variety of English to highlight themselves as members of a certain specialist profession. In these cases, people outside the particular speech community may find it difficult to understand (Kirkpatrick, 2010). As Smith (1992) has pointed out, "our speech and writing in English needs to be intelligible only to those with whom we wish to communicate in English" (p. 75). This helps to explain why there are so many variations in dialects of a certain language, as people wish to express their identity as members of a particular speech community.
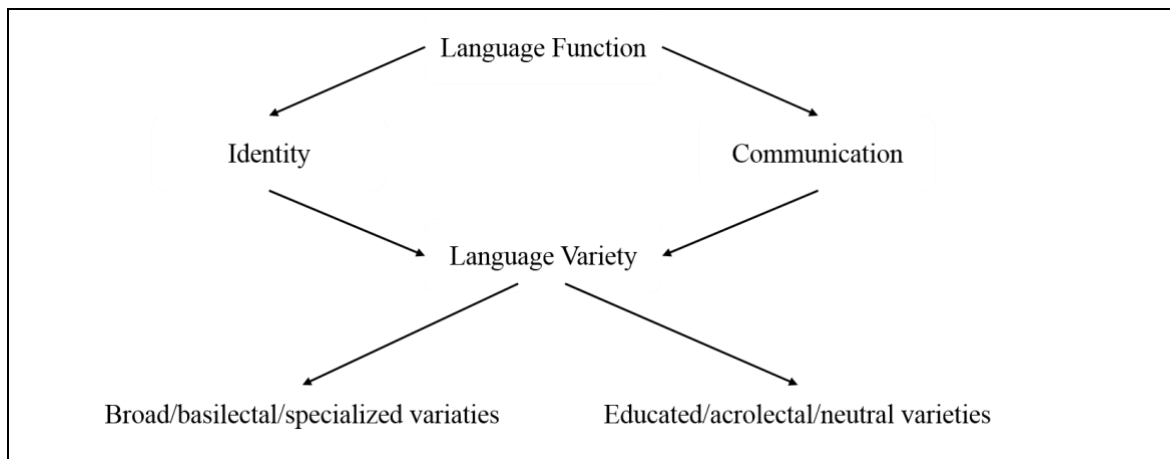
Figure 3. 1 The Identity-Communication Continuum (Kirkpatrick 2007a, p. 173)

The principle behind the I-CC indicates some communicative strategies when English is used as a lingua franca (ELF). Kirkpatrick (2010) points out that the more localised the use of English as a lingua franca, the more variation it is likely to display; conversely the more international its use, the less variation it is likely to display. Thus, in an intercultural communication setting, ELF speakers need to be conscious not to use lexis or idioms that might not be understood by people outside their own speech community. This strategy may sound easy, but it requires a certain level of sensitivity especially for the native speaker. Seidlhofer (2004) reports that "unilateral idiomaticity" is a major cause of communication problems in her ELF corpus (p. 220). In Meierkord's (2004) study, her outer circle subjects displayed little syntax variation when communicating with people who were not familiar with the cultures. They consciously avoided the usage of idioms which contain cultural norms and references in order to ensure all the participants would understand them.

In an intercultural setting, just avoiding local/idiomatic referents is far from enough for a successful communication. In Kirkpatrick's study (2010), 25 examples of the communication strategies adopted by the participants were examined. Although they are for the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) ELF speakers, these strategies are general-purpose

strategies which could also be found elsewhere in the world. These are sub-divided into listener and speaker strategies:

Table 3. 1 Communicative strategies of ASEAN ELF speakers

Strategy type (listener)	Strategy type (Speaker)
Lexical anticipation	Spell out the word
Lexical suggestion	Repeat the phrase
Lexical correction	Be explicit
Don't give up	Paraphrase
Request repetition	Avoid local/idiomatic referents
Request clarification	
Let it pass	
Listen to the message	
Participant paraphrase	
Participant prompt	

(ii) Communication with Natives

The communicative strategies might be useful for effective communication in the general ELF setting, however communicating with native speakers requires more than that. Philipson (2003) points out the language and communication rights are inequitable between native and non-native speakers. As matter of fact, "the term 'non-native' defines users of English as a foreign language negatively, in terms of what they are not, rather than positively—it therefore implies stigmatization and is discriminatory" (Philipson, 2003, p. 170). In UK, native speakers are not only the master of English language, but also the host of the country. As the dominant status of English used as ELF, "it gives native speakers unfair advantages, and non-native speakers a substantial learning burden" (p. 169). In all, when communicating with native speakers, second language users do not only need to cross the

linguistic boundary, but also face the fact that native speakers have more power than them in the ELF interaction.

2.3 Education

Culture is inseparable from education. People raised in different cultures are educated accordingly to the needs of their cultures (Samovar et al., 2009). Compared to home students, the most salient challenge for the international student is "to make a successful intercultural transition as quickly as possible and still remain focused on their academic mission" (Cushner & Karim, 2004, p. 292).The task for the international students is to adjust into the new culture rapidly in order to successfully complete their study. However, the new academic environment may also be a challenge for international students as it may be different from their home country. Just as an ancient Chinese proverb says "by nature all men are alike, but by education widely different", this difference is mainly due to the influence of culture on the world's educational systems (Samovar et al, 2009, p. 329). For some cultures with large power distance, it is common that the teacher stands in the middle of the class and lectures for most of the time; whereas in other cultures with small power distance, students often discuss with each other and they do the talking for a great deal of time. Accordingly, silence and minimal verbal participation are normal for some cultures; whereas others are noisier and more active (Samovar et al, 2009).

In addition, nonverbal aspects inside the classroom differ from culture to culture. For example, space, time, distance and dress code, they all indicate the degree of authority of the teacher. Taking the example of China, deeply influenced by Confucius, proper relations among people and harmony are highly regarded. The hierarchical nature of Confucianism strongly affects Chinese education. It was suggested that Chinese education was based on a much more rigid acceptance of the word of the professor (Philo, 2010). However, for British education, it is less hierarchical and more likely to generate critical and creative work among

its students. Therefore, when Chinese students studying in UK, it may take a while to abandon the rigid textbook teaching style and adjust to the new creative and critical environment. As a result, there is so much for them to adapt to in the classroom, which may not be as simple as "working hard".

For example, a New Zealand study established that working hard did not necessarily result in good grades for international Chinese students (Holmes, 2004). Students had problems with professors' accents, idiomatic styles, humour and choice of examples in lectures. Compared to home students, Chinese students had to read the textbook multiple times and more slowly. For other international students, they can also experience education shock as they attempt to adjust to a new and possibly different academic life (Hoff, 1979). In all, as Young and Schartner (2014) point out, internationals students do not only need to cope the adjective stress in the transition period when they came to the host nations, but also to learn unfamiliar academic conventions and practices specific to the host universities settings.

2.4 Culture shock

Language shock and education shock, both are forms of culture shock. Along with other various terms such as culture fatigue (Guthrie, 1975), cultural adjustment (Paige, 1990), and culture stress (Bennett, 1998), culture shock is an inevitable stressful and disorienting experience (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005). Although people respond to culture shock differently—some need more time to adjust, some even barely notice its existence; normally people go through four stages of culture shock. As there is no clear-cut transition from one stage to another, these four stages are also viewed as a U-shaped curve. Gudykunst and Kim (2003) have given a good summary of the U-shaped curve— "The U-shape depicts the initial optimism and elation in the host culture, the subsequent dip in the level of adaptation, and the following gradual recovery" (p. 377).

Figure 3. 2 U-Curve Adapted from Gaukam and Vishwakarma (2012)

The U-shaped curve gives a visualized understanding of the complex culture shock process. The first stage is excitement phase, which is usually filled with excitement, curiosity, and hopefulness (Samovar et al., 2009). For the people who just arrive in the new culture, they may at first be pleased with all of the new things encountered with positive attitude. Therefore, this stage is sometimes called honeymoon stage or euphoria stage. The second stage begins with the recognition of the differences between the host culture and own culture. Some initial problems such as difficulties in adaptation and communication start to develop and escalate overtime. This stage is often marked by the feelings of disappointment, discontent, and that everything is awful (Dodd, 1995). People may become frustrated and confused by the new cultural environment. Such frustration comes along with negative emotions. People may easily get irritated, impatient, hostile or even incompetent (Samovar et al., 2009). Thus, the second phase is the crisis period of culture shock. After that, the third phase which is also called recovery or adjustment stage appears. People begin to understand the norms and patterns of the host culture and learn to adjust to the new surroundings. During

this phase, culture shock becomes less apparent and people become less stressed. At the final stage, people can manage culture shock successfully as they now understand the major elements of the host culture such as values, customs, communication patterns, etc. (Samovar et al., 2009). People feel comfortable in the host culture and are able to function with some degree of success (Ryan & Twibell, 2000).

Some researchers also suggest that there is also reverse/ re-entry culture shock that often occurs when people return home. The only difference between culture shock and reverse culture shock is that the people do not expect the occurrence of the latter (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963). The stages of reverse culture shock are quite similar to culture shock— honeymoon, reverse culture shock, recovery and readjustment (Storti, 2001). Therefore, the U-shaped curve is often extended to a W-shaped curve which joins two U-curves together. People who have stayed for a long period of time abroad are more susceptible to intense reverse culture shock as they are least prepared for the changes of home (Gaw, 2000). They often arrive home missing the new friends they made overseas. Depression, anxiety, fear and interpersonal problems may also occur during reverse culture shock stage.

Figure 3. 3 W-Curve Based on Oberg (1960) and Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963)

For the international students, culture shock could happen if they are confused about the education systems, customs, and interpersonal relationships (Aubrey, 1991). As a matter of fact, international students are at greater risk than students in general for various psychological problems such as stress and loneliness (Mori, 2000). A modest correlation has also been found in the research literature between acculturative stress and mood disorders for students studying abroad (Rogers & Ward, 1993; Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward & Kennedy, 1993). It turns out that the picture appears surprisingly similar upon re-entry (Cushner & Karim, 2004). Gaw (2000) found out that the after their returning to home country, American college students experiencing a high level of re-entry shock were more likely to report personal adjustment and shyness problems or concerns compared with returnees experiencing a low level of reverse culture shock. Like culture shock, re-entry culture shock is inevitable if one lives abroad for an extensive period of time. Sorimachi (1994) described that among returning Japanese students, regardless of the length of time they spent abroad, all individuals exemplified symptoms of some sort of re-entry shock. One of the reasons is that the sojourners' identity has changed. For example, sojourners may acquire new values, emotions, cognitions, role statuses, managerial methods and behaviours. All of these elements may not be a "good fit" with the once familiar home culture anymore (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005). In order to overcome reverse culture shock, re-entry training and coaching are among the most often recommended strategies (Szkudlarek, 2010). Frazee (1997) explored the importance of similarities between pre-departure training and post-arrival sessions. She argues that the more successful the adjustment in the host-country, the more difficult the repatriation process in the homeland. The most thorough empirical investigation of re-entry services has been undertaken by Szkudlarek (2008), who interviewed 31 re-entry trainers and coaches and analysed their re-entry programs. Such studies suggested that training could be a powerful tool in re-entry transition if the agendas of training were carefully chosen.

3. Research Question

The overall aim of this Chapter is to identify the difficulties that international students at one UK university encounter during their stay in the UK. By doing so, a baseline from sojourner's perspective (here international students) could be set up. In the context of the above review, it is hypothesized that the major problems that participants report will fit in to the existing research literature: 1) language will be their biggest challenge; 2) they may have social communication difficulties especially during the interaction with host nationals; 3) participants will be unaccustomed to the UK academic system due to the differences between UK and their home countries; 4) participants will also experience some general intercultural difficulties related to culture shock which is similar to other cross-cultural travellers such as homesickness or loneliness, food adaptation.

4. Method

Design

A pilot study (semi-structured interview) was firstly conducted with Chinese students at the university. The reason for choosing Chinese students as participants at the first place was mainly due to the relative high proportion of Chinese students at the university. According to UKCISA (2018), since 2012/13 the number of entrants from China each year has exceeded the number from all EU countries combined. Secondly, in a follow-up study more interviews were carried out with other international students. The protocol of the pilot study and the followed-up study was similar. However, in terms of communication difficulties, the interview questions of pilot study were focused on the communication in general intercultural settings, whereas follow-up interviews were focused particularly on the interaction with native speakers. As the researcher's mother tongue is Mandarin, the interviews with Chinese students were conducted in Mandarin to eliminate the language barrier. The interviews were later translated in English. In order to make sure the data were robust, trustworthy and

comparable, the original audio of the interviews and translated transcripts were reviewed and agreed on by an English-Mandarin bilingual student in the department of Psychology.

Given that the rest of the interviewees were from different ethnic background and had different mother tongue, the interviews were conducted in English. All the interviews were transcribed and analysed by thematic analysis (Clark & Braun, 2015). Preliminary coding themes as well as subcategories were created to analyse the data. The frequency of each theme was counted.

Participants

In total, 48 international students participated in the interview, which includes 20 Chinese students from the pilot group and 28 other international students from follow-up group. There were 31 females and 17 males. 22 of them were from the course *Transcultural Communication* (who were interviewed after the course). 28 were from Asian countries (China mainland, Hong Kong and Japan); 20 were from European countries (e.g., Germany, France, Denmark etc.). A detailed description about the participants was shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3. 2 Interview participants N=48 (F=31, M=17)

Pilot Group		N=20 (F=10 M=10)	Follow-up Group		N=28 (F=21 M=17)
Factors	**Description**	**Number & Percentage**	**Factors**	**Description**	**Number & Percentage**
Nationality	Chinese	20 (100%)	Nationality	Asian	8 (28.6%)
				European	20 (71.4%)
Education Level	Undergraduate	1 (5%)	Education Level	Undergraduate	21 (75%)
	Master	13 (65%)		Master	5 (17.8%)
	Ph.D.	6 (30%)		Ph.D.	1 (3.6%)
				Not doing degree	1 (3.6%)
Length of staying in the UK	≤ 3 months	1 (5%)	Length of staying in the UK	≤ 3 months	12 (42.8%)
	4 to 12 months	13 (65%)		4 to 12 months	15 (53.6%)
	Over 12 months	6 (30%)		Over 12 months	1 (3.6%)
Previous intercultural experience	Yes	2 (10%)	Previous intercultural experience	Yes	9 (32.1%)
	No	18 (90%)		No	19 (67.9%)

Procedure

All the interviews were semi-structured in order to follow up interesting and important issues that came up during the interview. Each interview lasted around 10 to 20 minutes and consisted of two main sections. All interviews opened with icebreaking questions on basic personal information (e.g., what are you studying? How long have you been in the UK?). Then the interview moved on to the main questions—how do you feel about your time so far in the UK? Is there any problem or difficulty? Participants were asked to give details or examples of the problems they mentioned. For the follow-up group, question focusing on communication with native speakers were particularly asked (e.g., how is your interaction with native students? Is there any difference when you speak to them and other international students?) The full protocol for both interviews is presented in the Appendix C.

Thematic analysis was used after all interviews were transcribed and translated into English. As reviewed in Chapter 2, it is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It is suitable to use for the research questions focusing on experiences, understanding and perceptions, influencing factors, practice, representation and construction (Clarke & Braun, 2015). As the interview questions were mainly about participants' experience in the UK, thematic analysis was considered to be a suitable method for data analysis. Similar work using this approach could be seen in Young and Schartner (2014) who explored the experience of postgraduate international students' adjustment at on UK university. Although this method is data-driven, thematic analysis needs to be conducted under certain theoretically-informed frameworks. In this research, the framework is the assumption that language barrier, academic adaptation and social communication difficulties might be the major challenges as identified in the Background section to this chapter.

Guided by *Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology* (Braun & Clarke, 2008), the data were read and reread several times in order to generate an initial list of ideas (codes) about what is in the data and what is interesting about them. After the researcher became familiar with the data, they were read again with specific questions in mind (in particular, the three main difficulties—language barrier, academic adaptation and social communication). Based on the semantic and latent meaning of the data, different codes were compared and combined throughout the whole data set to form an overarching theme. At this stage, a collection of candidate themes and sub-themes, and all extracts of data were coded. For the candidate themes that appeared to form a coherent pattern, they were defined and named as a theme.

In this study, using Nvivo (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013), the participants' comments were initially sorted into six broad analytical categories (or themes). A comment was classified as "language barrier" if it identified an aspect of language as problematic (e.g., "I could not understand what they were saying; "they spoke too fast to me). There were comments that

describe language problems in the academic setting (e.g., "it is difficult for me to understand what the teacher says in the lecture"). Such comment was classified in the "language barrier" category instead of "education adaptation". The fine line between these two categories was the latter focused more on the general academic environment such as teaching style or education system whereas the former focused on the students' linguistic proficiency only. Likewise, the category "communicative difficulties in the intercultural setting" focused on the comments that on the process of the communication such as the content of the conversation, which means the influence of language was not considered in this category. For the category "culture shock", the exact term "culture shock" was not asked during the interview as it might sound novel to the participants. Any comment related to their experience as culture shock or the timeline regarding to the culture shock (e.g. "at the beginning of my staying, I felt lonely and alone") was classified in this category.

The typology is presented in full in the Results section, together with frequencies of occurrence (see Table 3.3). Frequency of occurrence of each category was then assessed.

5. Results

Preliminary coding themes and their subcategories of both pilot and follow-up groups are listed below in Table 3.3. The preliminary coding themes were listed according to their frequency. Overall, the main problems that both groups of participants reported were language barrier, education adaptation, communication difficulties, and culture shock. Such findings met the predictions suggested by the literature. A detailed description of each theme is reported below.

Table 3. 3 Frequencies of each preliminary coding theme (both groups)

Pilot Group	N=20		Follow-up Group	N=28	
Preliminary Coding Themes	**Subcategories**	**Number & Frequency**	**Preliminary Coding Themes**	**Subcategories**	**Number & Frequency**
Language Barrier	Speed Accent Vocabulary Culture knowledge	20 (100%)	Language Barrier	Speed Accent Vocabulary Culture knowledge	25 (89.3%)
Education Adaptation	Different education system Personal Effort	16 (80%)	Education Adaptation	Different education system	20 (71.4%)
Communication Difficulties in intercultural settings	Common topic Keep conversation going Culture knowledge	14 (70%)	Communication Difficulty with Native Speakers	More pressure Feeling distant Easier with internationals	20 (71.4%)
Culture Shock	Culture differences Reverse culture shock	7 (35%)	Culture Shock	Culture differences	17 (60.7%)
General Life Adaptation	Homesickness Food adaptation	5 (25%) 4 (20%)	General Life Adaptation	Homesickness	4 (14.3%)
Lack chance to practise English	Too many Chinese	4 (20%)			

5.1 Language Barrier

All the participants from the pilot group (N=20) and 25 from the follow-up group mentioned language as the major problem. That is to say, 93.8% of all the participants encountered language problem during their staying in the UK. In particular, there are four aspects that challenged them the most—speed, accents, vocabulary and cultural knowledge.

(i) Speed & Accent

As suggested by the literature, the speaking speed of the indigenous population seems to be too fast for the international students. What makes it more difficult that sometimes native speakers have their own accents. In the pilot group, one Chinese interviewee reported, "The

speaking speed of local students is too fast for me. Comparing to some European students, local students speak faster with accent". For the interviewees from European countries, some of them also said "sometimes it's hard because of their accents or if they speak fast in the beginning; I had to remind them to speak slowly".

(ii) Vocabulary

Apart from the fast speaking speed with accent, new vocabulary or terminology is another challenge according to the participants. In the academic setting, there are a lot of technical or professional terms which are new to the participants. One Chinese student said "I have more problems in academic terms—it is harder in the course". In the daily interaction, one German student said native speakers used some idioms or local expression that made it difficult to understand—"they (native speakers) talk so fast and they use so many local terms that I don't know and they just use some sort of Yorkshire dialect". Some participants also reported that there is a difference between what they heard in the UK and what they learned from textbooks back in their own countries. For example, one Chinese student said, "it is all right to express myself in the daily use but still I feel my English is not British enough". Not only Chinese, but also other international students found "what I've learned from textbook is different from what I've heard here". These examples indicate a gap between the textbook and the real life in Britain. What international students heard in the UK seemed to be more localised English rather than what they learnt the so called "standard English" from textbooks which may be edited many years ago or by the editors from their own countries.

(iii) Cultural Knowledge

International students were also reported their difficulty in understanding the English involved the knowledge that shared by the local people from the name of a store to the inside

jokes. For example, one international student said, "somebody called me mug and I didn't understand it until I understood it was a joke—and mug means a silly person".

5.2 Education Adaptation

On average, 75% (16 from pilot group and 20 from follow-up group) of the participants reported that the different education system or teaching style was one of the difficulties they encountered during their stay. They need to adapt the British education system or teaching styles as it was different from their own countries. For some Chinese interviewees, they mentioned that "the education system and teaching style are quite different from China. Most of the time, there is no right or wrong answer—quite open. But in China, we just took in whatever the teacher said". One interviewee from Spain also expressed that "The education system is very different. Like in Spain, the teacher gives you notes, helps you a lot. Like, you only have to attend lecture, copy the notes and that's all. And here you have study, you have to read". Similar to this, one participant from Japan said, "I think it (the teaching style) is really different because in the UK it's very active, but in Japan it's really passive—they just sit and listen to the lecture". When facing such a difference, 40% of the participants admitted it was stressful especially at the beginning.

In the pilot group, there were three Chinese participants acknowledged the difference, but did not regard it as stressful. They thought lack of personal effort or being lazy was the reason for academic pressure. For example, one interviewee said, "it is my problem I think—I don't work hard enough".

5.3 Communication Difficulties

In terms of communicative difficulties, the focus of the two groups were different—the former was about communication difficulties in general, the later was about communication with native speakers. Thus, the results differed accordingly.

(i) Communication Skills in the General Intercultural Settings (pilot group)

In the pilot group, when being asked "what were the difficulties during your daily interaction while you stayed in the UK", 14 (70%) participants were worrying more about their communication skills such as how to find common topics and keep conversation going when they talked to people with different cultural background. "I don't know what to say" or "I don't know how to start a conversation" appeared several times during in the interviews. Some participants also said the conversation was quite simple or limited. For example, one participant reported, "When communicating with local students or international students, the topic is quite limited—just about what you are studying or where you are from—very basic. After that, I don't know what to say".

Some of the interviewees related communication skills with cultural knowledge. One said, "I think 80% of the problems are from language; 20% problems are from culture". Another Chinese student admitted "English ability is one thing, but good communication skill is another thing. Sometimes good English ability doesn't make you understand the joke English people make—even though you know every word they say". What he said is a good example of I-CC principle. As an outsider, it was not surprising that the interviewee found it difficult to understand the inside jokes made among the English people whom he was talking to—as they do not have the same identity or share the same/similar culture background.

(ii) Communication Difficulties with Native Speakers (follow-up group)

In the follow-up group, questions about communication with native speakers were asked. It turns out that as predicted, most international students (89.3%) felt more difficulty when they communicated with native speakers comparing to the interaction with other international students. To be more specific, there are three aspects that participants reported in which they have difficulties.

Firstly, 6 (21.4%) participants mentioned that it was more stressful when speaking to native speakers as they were afraid of making mistakes. For example, one Japanese interviewee said "if I have to talk with native speakers, I feel really nervous—because they are natives… I don't know what is appropriate or what is inappropriate". One girl from Germany also mentioned that "I feel a lot more under pressure when I talk to native speakers because I feel like maybe 'oh that word was wrong' or I won't understand what they say because they talk really fast".

Secondly, native speakers seem to be distant or hard to approach for international students, thus it is difficult to develop intimate relationship with them (e.g., friendship). 8 (28.6%) participants reported this issue. One Italian interviewee talked about her experience during class— "the English people just go together, because the teacher is like 'ok make groups' and the English people go together". In terms of developing friendship, she said "I don't know why it is, but English people are very grumpy sometimes, you can't approach them. For example, during class they don't say hi to you, but they are very kind because if you ask a question—'ooh yes I can help you' but that's all. I realise that if I insist, we could become friends, but I have to do the first step and the first move". A French participant said, "I feel like there is a problem with being an international student here because I feel like the native students and native speakers here just see you as different".

Lastly, when being asked who were easier to communicate—the native or other international students, 12 (42.8%) participants admitted that it was the latter. Even if some international students have accents when they speak English, it is still easier to communicate. For example, one participant from Switzerland said, "Some of them (internationals) have really strong accents but the way that they speak is easier so we can interact with each other without any problems and without any difficulties. With native speakers it always a bit complicated and I have really got to concentrate and try not to be too tired". He also acknowledged the

importance of the use of "international English"— "maybe they (home students) don't know what a simple word is. That is the problem and actually I have noticed. I just asked if they could use simpler words instead of slang words, but it is difficult for them because they are so used to using those kinds of words and they don't know what the basic words are".

5.4 Culture Shock and Reverse Culture Shock

In all, 24 participants (50%) from both groups mentioned they experienced culture shock directly and indirectly (here "directly" means the interviewees used the exact term "culture shock"; "indirectly" means they talked about culture differences they needed to get used to and gave a positive response when be asked whether it was culture shock). Contrary to the research literature, the U Curve shape indicates it would be honeymoon stage when just arrived in the new culture (see details in Background), the result shows that the first month in the UK was a difficult period. For example, one Chinese interviewee recalled that he really did not want to speak English in the second week of his arrival in the UK. One interviewee from Italy mentioned that "At the beginning, it was quite stressful. It has been difficult because I'm alone. I have to communicate in another language, and, yes, make new friends, talk with new people. So it was a shock in the beginning".

In terms of reverse culture shock, only two Chinese participants admitted that they felt uncomfortable or needed time to re-adapt the life in China. Such a small proportion was not surprising due to the fact there were just 7 participants who had lived in UK over a year and most of them did not go back to their home countries by the time of being interviewed. For the interviewee who mentioned their reverse culture shock experience, both of them had been in the UK more than three years. They both mentioned the issue of politeness. One interviewee said, "(too many people and crowded street) is the most annoying part, also some of them don't sound polite when they speak". "…The attitude with which people treated me was different from I treated them. I am used to the atmosphere in the UK. So I found it a bit rude or offensive

when I went back home", said a PhD student who has lived in the UK since 2010. He also noticed a timeline of reverse culture shock—he did not have any problem until he came back home after his third year in UK.

5.5 General Life Adaptation

Like other cross-cultural sojourners, some of the participants encountered difficulties of general life such as homesickness and food adaptation. In terms of homesickness, most of the participants said they were "OK" or "not really" when being asked whether they missed home. However, there were 9 participants (18.6%) admitted that they really missed home and wanted to go back to their home countries especially when they got ill. In terms of food adaptation, 4 (8%) Chinese participants said food adaptation was difficult especially when they just came to the country. One of them said "food here is not that tasty which made me learn to cook".

5.6 Lack of Chances to Speak English

It seems this issue was specially raised by the Chinese students in the pilot group. 6 of them (12.5%) said they did not expect there were so many Chinese students in the UK. Even 50% to 80% of the students are Chinese in some courses. One female Masters student in education said, "What frustrated me was all of the class are Chinese girls except few international students. I really want to practise my oral English, but it is difficult to find a way as I even can't meet any local students in class". One male Masters student in the Department of Management said his concern was that there were too many Chinese students after he came to the UK. "I am in the UK, but I am still speaking Mandarin all the time". When being asked about how they felt about too many Chinese in the UK, some participants admitted they did have mixed feelings—"On the one hand, communicating with people from your own country is easier and efficient; on the other hand, it also reduces the chances to practise English".

6. Discussion

In general, it seems that all participants had settled well by the time they were interviewed. Overall, they started to adapt well after three months after their arrival. When being asked about how they felt about their staying in the UK, they all answered using similar terms or expressions as "not bad" "it is OK" or "quite good". For them, the life in the host country—Britain is "peaceful" and "simple"; the people in the host culture are "quite nice". Overall, the result of both groups confirmed the hypothesis. No matter whether Chinese students or other international students, most of the participants needed to overcome language barrier, adjust themselves to the British education system, and get over culture shock especially when they just arrived in the UK. In the general intercultural settings, lack of common cultural knowledge and communication skills made it difficult for them to communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds. When communicating with native students, it was more difficult because of their passive attitude—not mentioning the pressure and anxiety that international students feel when facing native speakers.

In terms of culture shock, although the actual term "culture shock" was not included in the protocol considering it might not be known by the participants, most of the participants described their experiences of culture shock and gave positive responses when interviewer mentioned the term after hearing their experiences. According to the literature, both language shock and education shock are forms of culture shock. Thus, the result of both groups showed that nearly all the participants experienced some level of culture shock. However, in terms of timeline, the results did not fit in the literature. According to the U-Curve shape (Gaukam and Vishwakarma (2012), the first three months of just arriving in the new culture is a honeymoon stage, then culture shock stage came after four months (see details in Background figure 3.2). The result of both groups of participants indicated actually the culture shock stage came at the very beginning of their arrival (usually the first month) and the adjustment stage was around

three months after their arrival. This result differed from what might have expected from the literature suggested given they are international. One possible explanation might be that as the nature of international students, they have to figure out the new environment quickly and focus on the study. Hence, they have to adjust themselves more quickly comparing to other cross-cultural travellers. Thus, their culture shock stage came earlier than what was suggested in the literature. Meanwhile, as the UK universities are quite multi-cultural, international students could make friends easily and take part in different events and activities. Thus, their adjustment might be accelerated.

6.1 Differences between Different Ethnic Groups

Most of the participants addressed the cultural differences between the UK and their home countries. For instance, one German student said, "Because although it's just England, for me as a German, it should be quite similar, but I actually think it's really quite different. Because, first the money is different, that's just a minor problem. I don't know, it's just minor things that are different". However, there are some differences in terms of degree among these ethnic groups. The results indicate that the closer two cultures are, the less difference they will experience. Especially in terms of academic adaptation, although most of the participants reported that they needed to get used to the UK university classroom, it seems to be easier for students from some European countries (such as Germany, Denmark, France and Switzerland) as there was not a big difference comparing to their home countries. There were 6 participants reported that they felt the education system and teaching styles were similar to their home countries. Therefore, it did not take much time to adapt. For example, one participant from France said, "(the teaching style) is pretty much the same actually…I caught it pretty quickly". However, students from Asian countries (e.g., Chinese mainland, HK and Japan) and some other European countries (e.g., Spain and Italy) they had more difficulties to adapt, thus it took more time. For example, one participant from Italy reported that "especially in the classroom

because it was very difficult to (adapt)…21 years (I have got used to the Italian system) and then you have to forget about everything. So yes, it takes me time". One student from Japan mentioned that the UK classroom was more active whereas Japanese was passive and teacher-centred. This example is similar to what Chinese students reported from the pilot group. One of the reasons might be both Chinese and Japanese culture are more collective and contain more power distance whereas some European countries such as Germany and UK are more individualist and have less power distance (Neuliep, 2017). In terms of general life adaptation, it seems that only Chinese participants raised the issue of food adaptation. However, for the European students, they replied "it was OK" or "it was similar to my country" when being asked about food adaptation. Hence, due to the huge difference in food between China and UK, it suggests that Chinese students needed more time or had to find the other way (e.g., cooking by themselves) for food adaptation. In all, despite the fact that international students do have similar difficulties, it is suggested that European students found it easier to adjust in the UK comparing to Asian students especially in terms of academia and food. After all, geographically European countries such as France and Germany are much closer to UK than Asian countries.

6.2 Overall Summarised Difficulties of International Students

In total, there were 48 international students at one UK university who participated in the interview. Despite the differences that the subjects or the education level they were studying and the length they have spent in UK, they faced similar challenges in the UK. In general, the result of these interviews fits in the prediction suggested by the literature but needs to be qualified in terms of findings for culture shock. In terms of language barrier, international students needed to deal with difficulties in terms of listening, speaking and lack of vocabularies and host culture knowledge. Overall difficulties that international students experienced during their stay in the UK are summarized in table 3.4.

Table 3. 4 Overall Summary of Difficulties of International students

Difficulties	Subcategories and Details		
Language Barrier	Listening	Speed	
		Accent	
		Vocabulary	
	Speaking	Self-expression	
		Vocabulary	
	Host Culture knowledge		
Education Adaptation	Different education system and teaching style		
Communication Difficulties	General intercultural interaction	Communicative skills	
		Culture knowledge	
	Interaction with native speakers	Emotional (pressure, motivation)	
		Linguistic (accent, speed, international English)	
Cultural Shock	Cultural differences		
	Language shock		
	Education shock		
	Reverse culture shock		

The results from the interviews confirms the challenges that second language speaker needed to overcome proposed by the literature. The results confirm the statement proposed by Aubrey (1991) that culture shock could happen to the international students if they are confused about the education systems, customs, and interpersonal relationships. In terms of forming general interpersonal relationship, the result suggests that international students need some culture knowledge in order to find common topics to talk to each other. Also, communicative skills and are needed in order to break through culture boundaries.

One of the most important findings from the follow-up interviews is the role that native speakers played during intercultural interaction. In particular, international students have more difficulties when they speak to native speakers. The difficulties come from two aspects—linguistically and emotionally. Linguistically, the natives speak faster and

sometimes with accents that makes international students hard to follow or understand. Even if when native speakers speak slowly, "still sometimes it doesn't help". It turns out that the English of native speaker is more local with the use of informal terms or slangs, whereas the English that international students speak is simpler or more "international". Therefore, international students find it easier to understand each other as they all speak international English. One of the participants from Switzerland pointed out the importance of the use of international English or simpler English— "for many (native) people the biggest problem is to know what the basic words are". Emotionally, as second language speaker, international students felt more stressed when they speak to natives as they were afraid of making mistakes. They are less confident or reluctant to dare to speak English especially when they just arrived in the UK. Furthermore, international students felt distant from the native speaker. To them, native students seem to be less motivated for communication and hard to approach. Thus, the participants said it was really difficult to form or develop intimate relationships such as friendship with native students. That confirms the result from former literature in terms of "passive xenophobia" (e.g., Harrison & Peacock, 2010, Henderson & Spiro, 2007).

Lastly, the results provide empirical support for the conceptual model of international student adjustment and adaption proposed by Schartner and Young (2016), who argue that international students' adjustment and adaptation include academic adjustment, psychological adjustment and sociocultural adjustment. (N.B. The study reported in this chapter was conducted in 2014, before the publication of Schartner and Young's model). The findings from this study fit in these three aspects. Academically, international students need to accustom themselves to the UK university conventions. Socioculturally, they need to learn cultural knowledge and skills which enable them to communication with host national and international students. The more cultural differences they had between British and their home

countries', the more difficulties they needed to overcome. At the same time, they need to cope with the psychological stress that comes from culture shock, academic and social interactions.

7. Summary

To sum up, this chapter explored the difficulties that international students encounter during their staying in the UK. Although there were plenty of literature on this topic, this study still carried out as it helps to establish a baseline of international students' experiences before any intervention in this context. Combining the results from the two interview groups, the overall difficulties of international students have been summarized. There were novel findings from this study—it turns out that international students have particular concerns with their relationship with home students. It also makes it possible to compare whether the intercultural training (e.g., the course Transcultural Communication) is effective in developing intercultural competence and solve these problems.

Chapter 4 The Development of International Students' Intercultural Competence after the Course Transcultural Communication

1. Introduction

Following Chapter 3, this chapter is still focused on the international students at a university in the North of England. In particular, interviews were conducted with the international students who took the course *Transcultural Communication.* By doing so, it aims to answer to two questions: 1) whether the participants' intercultural competence have been developed after the TC course; 2) if yes, in what way?

2. Background

In Chapter 2, the definition of intercultural competence and different models of intercultural competence were reviewed. It was suggested that the core components of intercultural competence are motivation (affective, emotion), knowledge (cognitive), and skills (behavioural) (Bloom, 1956; Havighurst, 1957). However, it is still unclear what exactly are the specific elements associated with intercultural competence. Commonly the literature summaries a list of skills, abilities and attitudes to reflect useful guidelines for competent interaction and adaption. For example, Spitzberg (1989) produces a partial list of the factors of intercultural competence after a review of studies (see details in table 4.1).

Table 4. 1 Empirically Derived Factors of Intercultural Competence (Source: Spitzberg, 2000)

Ability to adjust to different cultures	Frankness
Ability to deal with different societal systems	General competence as teacher (task)
Ability to deal with psychological stress	Incompetence
Ability Jo establish interpersonal relationships 4H	Intellectualizing future orientation
Ability to facilitate communication	Interaction involvement
Ability to understand others	Interpersonal flexibility
Ada ptiveness	Interpersonal harmony
Agency (internal locus and efficacy/optimism)	Interpersonal interest
Awareness of self and culture	Interpersonally sensitive maturity
Awareness of implications of cultural differences	Managerial ability
Cautiousness	Nonethnocentrism
Charisma	Nonverbal behaviors
Communication apprehension	Personal/Family adjustment
Communication competence (ability to communicate)	Opinion leadership
Communication efficacy	Rigidity (task persistence)
Communicative functions	task accomplishment
Controlling responsibility	Transfer of "software"
Conversational management behaviors	Self-actualizing search for identity
Cooperation	Self-confidence/Initiative
Cultural empathy	Self-consciousness
Cultural interaction	Self-disclosure
Demand (long-term goal orientation)	Self-reliant conventionality
Dependent anxiety	Social adjustment
Differentiation	Spouse/Family communication
Empathy/Efficacy	Strength of personality
Familiarity in interpersonal relations	Verbal behaviors

However, the abilities or attitudes in the list seems to be independent from each other. There is no sense of integration or coherence across lists. As acknowledged by Spitzberg (2000), it is impossible to tell which skills are most important in which situations, or even how such skills relate to each other. It is also unclear which category (motivation, knowledge or skills) that is appropriate for each ability/attitude. In the more recent literature, Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) summarized different theories and identified more than 300 terms and factors that associated with interpersonal and intercultural competence and listed them according to a hierarchical structure. However, it seems impossible or impractical to check this list of 300 plus terms one by one every time when evaluating intercultural competence.

Therefore, there is a need to provide a simpler model that can successfully integrate such diversity (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). Before such a more integrated and simpler model is produced, this study still follows the relational model of intercultural competence proposed by Imahori and Lanigan (1989) (see details in Chapter 1). Thus, the general elements within each component of intercultural competence are defined accordingly below.

Motivation means being motivated to communicate. Although this may sound a simple and normal action, actually it often keeps people from trying to understand the experiences of people far removed from their personal sphere (Samovar et al., 2009). Pittinsky, Rosenthal and Montoya (2007) point out that motivation as it relates to intercultural communication means that people possess a personal desire to improve their communication abilities. According to Imahori and Lanigan (1989), the components of motivation include: a) specific attitudes towards the other's culture such as perceived social distance and positive regard toward members of the other culture (Wiseman et al., 1987), and b) general attitude about foreign cultures such as ethnocentrism and open-mindedness (Gudykunst et al., 1977; Wiseman et al., 1987). Besides, Imahori and Lanigan (1989) also proposed that attitudinal orientations towards specific partner are important variables of competence. Such variables include social anxiety (Henderson & Furnham, 1982), assertiveness (Collier, 1986; Rose, 1975), attentiveness (Spitzberg, 1982) attraction and attitudinal similarity (Gudykunst & Kim, 1984; Simard, 1981; Sunnafrank, 1984). In all, for a successful intercultural communication, people need to be motivated to go beyond personal boundaries and attempt to learn about the experiences of people who are not part of their daily life (Samovar et al., 2009).

In the skills component, Imahori and Lanigan (1989) suggested that Ruben's (1976, 1977) seven dimensions of behavioural competence (e.g., display of respect, interaction posture, orientation to knowledge, empathy, self-oriented role behaviour, interaction

management, and tolerance for ambiguity) are plausible variables. In addition, linguistic skills are also considered as important in ICC competence (Nishida, 1985; Schneider & Jordan, 1981; Fantini, 2006). For the sojourner, the linguistic skill refers to his/her proficiency in the host-national's language. For the host, linguistic skill is based on his/her skill in communication accommodation (see details in Chapter 1). Moreover, affinity-seeking behaviours (e.g., behaviours enhancing interpersonal attraction) are indicated as important skills in ICC (Bell & Daly, 1984). For example, being friendly and showing concern and interest could enhance the effectiveness of interactions (Martin & Hammer, 1984). In short, the idea of the skill component is that people must be able to listen, observe, analyse, interpret and apply these specific behaviours to adapt to the rules of interaction that are appropriate to the host culture or the context (Smith & Bond, 1994).

The knowledge component of intercultural competence means the understanding of the rules, norms and expectations associated with the culture of the people with whom they are interacting (Pittinsky et al., 2007). To be more specific, in the knowledge dimension, Imahori and Lanigan (1989) proposed the following factors: a) appropriate knowledge of interaction rules (Collier, 1988); b) cultural specific and cultural general knowledge (Wiseman et al., 1987), and c) linguistic knowledge (Nishida, 1985; Fantini, 2006). Here cultural knowledge refers to one's "knowledge about another person's culture—its language, dominant values, beliefs, and prevailing ideology" (Miller & Steinberg, 1975, p. 226). In terms of culture specific knowledge, it means the knowledge or the understanding of the target person or host culture. Back in the 1970s, researchers have found that knowledge of the host culture has a positive effect on the sojourner's ability to make isomorphic attributions, which means understanding behaviour from the host culture's perspective (Fiedler, Mitchell, & Triandis, 1971). On the other hand, cultural general knowledge is concerned with dimensions or frameworks that can be used to describe and compare all cultures. That is to say, cultural

general knowledge is more focused on the key behavioural patterns that can be found in every culture.

In the field of identifying cultural patterns or classification, Hofstede's (1984) work was one of the earliest attempts to use extensive statistical data (survey of employee values by IBM) to examine cultural values. He identified five value dimensions which are: individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, masculinity/femininity, and long-term/short-term orientation. He also proposed a ranking list of the countries for each dimension. For example, the U.S ranks first in individualism; Malaysia has the highest power distance (Hofstede, 2001). Another means of examining cultural similarities and differences in both perception and communication was suggested by the anthropologist Hall. He categorized cultures as being either high or low context, depending on the degree to which meaning comes from the setting rather than from the words being exchanged (Hall, 1976). According to Hall, a high context communication is "one in which most of the information is already in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicitly transmitted part of the message" (1976, p. 91), which means many of the meanings do not have to be communicated through words. Whereas a low context communication is just the opposite— "the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code" (p. 91), which means low context tends to be more direct and explicit, and more relying on the spoken words. Similar to Hofstede (2001), Hall also proposed a scale showing the ranking of the countries on this particular dimension. For example, Eastern countries such as Japan, China and Korea are high context cultures; Western countries such as Germany, Switzerland and the U.S are low context culture. Although both Hofstede and Hall's frameworks have the risk of over-generalisation, these patterns or values do offer a clear picture of what is valued in each culture (Samovar et al., 2009). That might be helpful to make comparisons between cultures. In all, the cultural general knowledge involves an understanding of the norms and patterns of cultures, it

provides important information upon which the behaviour of self as well as people from other culture can be understood—as long as it could be used mindfully to avoid over-generalisation or stereotyping.

Although motivation, knowledge and skills are the main components of ICC suggested by Imahori and Lanigan (1989), another dimension - awareness - could not be ignored. Some researchers address the importance of awareness in different terms such as sensitivity (Samovar et al., 2009) and mindfulness (Ting-Toomey, 1993). According to Fantini (2000), awareness is not only an important component of ICC, but also of a different order from the other three (see details in figure 4.1). He argued that awareness (of self and others) is the keystone on which effective and appropriate interactions depend. Stevens (1972) and Gattegno (1976) cite awareness as the most powerful dimension of the A+ASK quartet, thus awareness is shown at the centre of the graph below.
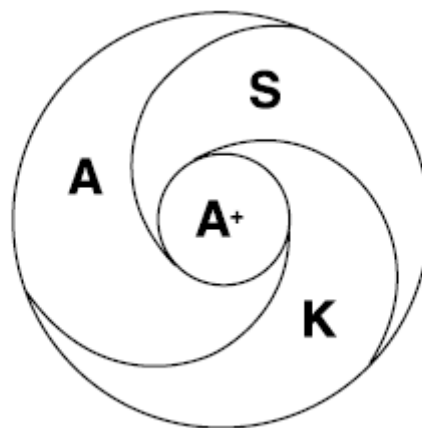
Figure 4. 1 Components of ICC (A=Attitude, S=Skills, K=Knowledge, A+=Awareness)

Source: Fantini (2000)

According to Fantini (2000), awareness is about the self in relation to someone or something—thus all awareness is "self"-awareness. Awareness involves exploring,

experimenting and experiencing (Stevens, 1971). As awareness is reflective and introspective, it could also be optionally expressed or manifested both to the self and to others. The power of awareness is that it is difficult to reverse, which means once people become aware, it is difficult to return to a state of unawareness (Fantini, 2000). Thus, it could lead to deeper cognition, skills and attitudes as it is also enhanced by their development. Freire (1970, 1973, 1998) reinforces this notion and proposes that awareness involves the a) awareness of selfhood, and b) a critical look at the self in a social situation. As an outcome, awareness could produce a) a transformation of the self and of one's relation to others, and b) lead to dealing with critically and creatively with reality (and fantasy).

So far, the components of ICC and factors within each dimension have been reviewed. This framework provides a general pathway to explore what it takes to be an intercultural competent communicator. Although traditionally, motivation, knowledge and skills have been considered as the core of ICC, in this research awareness is also considered an important component for intercultural success. Thus, the focus will be on these four main aspects as well as the subcategories.

3. Research Question

The overall aim of this chapter is to explore the development of international students' intercultural competence after the course *Transcultural Communication* at the university in the North of England. In Chapter 2, it is suggested that intercultural competence could be developed after well-designed intercultural training. Currently at the university, the course *Transcultural Communication* is an ongoing training course. Therefore, along with the context of the above review, it is hypothesized that after the course, students' intercultural competence would develop in the above four main aspects—motivation, knowledge, skills and awareness.

4. Method

Design

Interviews were carried out with the students who took the course *Transcultural Communication (TC)* at the university. The interviews were semi-structured with questions focusing on how the participants thought about the course and what they have learnt from it. All the interviews were taken at the end of the course. Similar to the procedure presented in Chapter 3, the interviews with Chinese participants were conducted in Mandarin and later translated in English. The original interview audio and translated transcripts of the Chinese interviewees have been reviewed and agreed on by an English-Mandarin bilingual student at the department of Psychology. The rest of the interviews were conducted in English and transcribed and analysed by thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006) (see details in Chapter 2 p. 60-61 & Chapter 3 p. 81-82). Preliminary coding themes as well as subcategories were created to analyse the data. The frequency of each theme was counted.

Participants

As the students signed up for the TC course at their own will, it is impossible to select the participants or determine the sample size. Thus, all the participants were opportunistic samples, which refers to samples from people who are available at the time the study is carried out and fit the criteria (here the students who took the course) (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). Data were collected for four academic terms (2015 autumn, 2016 spring, 2016 autumn and 2017 spring) as the TC course ran every autumn and spring term since 2015. In total, 20 international students participated in the interview. There were 15 females and 5 males. 5 were from Asian countries (mainland China, HK, and Japan); 15 were from European countries (e.g., Germany, France, Denmark etc.). A detailed description about the participants was shown in Table 4.2

Table 4. 2 TC Interview Participants (N=20, F=15, M=5)

Factors	Description	Number &Percentage
Nationality	• Asian: China mainland (1), HK (1) , Japan (3)	5 (25%)
	• European: France (3), Germany (3), Netherland (1), Spain (1), Switzerland (1) , Belgium (2), Denmark (1), Italy (1), Malta (1), Russia(1)	15 (75%)
Education level	• Undergraduate	15(75%)
	• Master	3 (15)
	• Ph.D.	1 (5%)
	• Not doing degree	1 (5%)
Length of stay in the UK	• Less than 3 months (including 3 months)	9 (45%)
	• 4 to 12 months	10 (50%)
	• More than 12 months	1 (5%)
Previous intercultural experience (e.g., living in another country over 3 months)	• Yes	5 (25%)
	• No	15 (75%)

Procedure

The interviews were carried out each autumn and spring term at the end of TC course (23rd Nov 2015, 2nd Mar 2016, 29th Nov 2016, and 13th Mar 2017). Each term at the beginning of the course (week 3), the researcher went to the class to introduce herself and call for participants. The students who signed up for the interview were contacted around week 8-10 (when the course nearly finished).

As noted in Chapter 2, all the interviews were semi-structured. Each interview lasted around 15 to 30 minutes and consisted of two main sections. The first sections followed the same protocol as the one in Chapter 3, which focused on the participants' personal information and their experience in the UK. Then the interview moved on to the second section. Main questions were asked such as—why did you choose the TC course? How do you think about the course? What did you learn from it? Participants were asked to give

details or examples of the point they mentioned. The full protocol for the interview is presented in Appendix B.

Following a similar process as Chapter 3, thematic analysis was then employed on all interview transcripts. Similar work using this approach to analyse the development of intercultural competence could been found in Lantz' Ph.D. work (2014). Through thematic analysis, she suggests that students' development may have been hindered by the intercultural challenges they experienced at university. For this study, the data were analysed under the framework reviewed above and initially sorted into four broad analytical categories— motivation, knowledge, skills and awareness. The subcategories were created under each theme according to (but not necessarily the same as) the Relational Model (Imahori & Lanigan, 1989). For example, the subcategories suggested by the relational model within the "motivation" category are "specific toward other culture (e.g., positive regard)", "general toward foreign culture (e.g., open-mindedness), and specific toward partner (e.g., assertiveness, attentiveness)". If the interviewee indicated a clear position which might involve the use of the key terms such as open-minded, that comment was classified into the subcategory "general attitude towards foreign culture". As Spitzberg (2000) suggests confidence is one of the key components in attitude, comments involving the expressions such as "I become more confident when speaking to home students" was classified as a subcategory in "motivation" category and became a subcategory as the high occurrences from the comments. Other comments involving the clear use of expressions such as "I am happy to meet more people", "I am willing to learn more and do better" were classified in the motivation category and named as "improving oneself" according to the content.

The subcategories within "knowledge" category follows the relational model which contains knowledge of "culture general", "culture specific", "language", and "communication skills and interaction rules" (Imahori & Lanigan, 1989). In general, comments involve the use

of "I know", "I learnt" gave a hint for the "knowledge" category. The fine line between "cultural general knowledge" and "cultural specific knowledge" is the latter focusing on the comments relevant a specific culture (most of the comments from the interviewees related it to a national culture such as Japanese culture or Chinese culture). If the comments contain the key words such as "theory", "concepts" related to Hofstede's dimension (2001) that were classified as "cultural general". If interviewees mentioned communication skills such as "let-it-pass", "paraphrasing", such comments were classified to "communication skills and interaction rules".

Three subcategories created in "skills" are from the relational model such as "displaying respect" (e.g., key words as "do not judge", "being neutral"); "linguistic skills" (e.g., key expressions as "my English got better"), and "flexibility" (e.g., key expressions as "altering my behaviour", "do differently in different situations"). Two new subcategories— "evaluating self and other" and "communication skills" were created according to the high occurrences of the comments. For example, any description or reflection of their own and other people's performance (e.g., "I did really bad during the task as I blocked a girl") was classified in the "evaluating self and other" subcategory. The fine line of the subcategory "communication skills" between "knowledge" and "skills" was distinguished by looking at the specific choice of words. For example, if the interviewee said, "I **learnt** the communication skills such as let-it-pass", that goes to the knowledge category. However, if the interviewees used the words indicating actual action or what they did about it (e.g., "I **used** to let-it-pass all the time"), it was classified as "skills".

As there is no "awareness" category in the relational model, nor subcategories suggested by Fantini (2009), all the subcategories were created based on the content of the comments. The clear sign for "awareness" is the use of "I am aware of", "I realised", "I am more conscious".

As reviewed earlier, the components of intercultural competence are interdependent. Therefore, it is possible that one comment could be classified as one or more of the categories. For example, in the comment "I am more aware of things that I was doing but without noticing, like using some strategies such as let-it-pass", the frequency of awareness (key words "I am aware"), knowledge (key words "strategy—let-it-pass"), and skills (key words "using") were all counted in each category.

The typology is presented in full in the Results section, together with frequencies of occurrence (see Table 4.4 and Table 4.5). Frequency of occurrence of each category was then assessed.

Inter-rater reliability analysis (IRR) (see details in Chapter 2) was performed to assess the degree that coders consistently assigned the four main categories rating to subjects in this study. A third-year undergraduate student (observer 2) in psychology department was trained for 60 minutes on the category of motivation, knowledge, skills and awareness. Four transcripts which was 20% of the entire data (N=20) were selected and coded by observer 2. Then a summary table was drawn up in which all categories used by both observers appear in the same order in both lists. A sample of the table is shown below. After filling all the data from both coders in the summary table, Cohen's Kappa *(K= .751)* was calculated accordingly (Hallgren, 2012).

Table 4. 3 Example of IRR Analysis

	Observer 2					
	Motivation	Knowledge	Skill	Awareness	NA	Total
Observer 1						
Motivation						
Knowledge						
Skill						
Awareness						
NA						
Total						

5. Results

5.1 IRR Analysis

The inter-rater reliability for the two coders was found to be *Kappa* = .751, indicating that coders had satisfactory agreement. According to Landis and Koch's guidelines (1977), it also suggests that .61 to .80 indicates substantial agreement.

5.2 Why taking the course Transcultural Communication

As the TC course was not compulsory, participants were asked about their reason for choosing it at the outset. Results showed that 10 participants (50%) acknowledged that they chose the course out of their own interest. In particular, they would like to learn about culture and communication skills. As international students, they also said the course itself was relevant to their own identity— "after all we are doing it (transcultural communication) while we live in the UK" (quoting from interview). For the participants who were studying linguistic and education, they said they chose the TC course as they thought it was relevant to their own study.

Table 4. 4 Reason to choose TC course

Reasons to choose TC	Details	Number & Percentage
Interest	• Learning Culture • Learning Communication Skills • Relevant to own identity (international student) • Relevant to own major/study	10 (50%)
Credits	• Erasmus Students Only	9 (45%)
Meeting People and Practising English		4(20%)

There were 9 European students (45%) who acknowledged that they chose the course

mainly for the credits (20 credits). All of them were from the Erasmus programme (European

Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students). They were originally

doing undergraduate degrees at their home countries and were in the UK as exchange

students for 3 months or longer (no more than a year) period. Thus, they needed credits to

fulfil their programme. The TC course was one of the courses from which they could choose.

Another four participants (20%) said that they thought the course would provide a place

to meet more people and practise their English—thus they chose it.

A detailed description of the result is reported above in Table 4.4.

5.3 The Development of Intercultural Competence

Preliminary coding themes and their subcategories of the interview are listed below in

Table 4.5. The frequency of each preliminary theme and the subcategories of each theme

were assessed according to their occurrence (how many people mentioned such category).

Overall, the main ways in which participants' intercultural competence developed were

motivation, knowledge, skills and awareness, which meets the predictions suggested by the

literature. The subcategories of each aspects fitted with the literature as well. A detailed

description of each theme is reported in table 4.5.

Table 4. 5 Frequency of each preliminary coding themes

Preliminary Coding Themes	Number & Frequency	Subcategories	Number & Frequency
Motivation	17 (80%)	• General attitude towards foreign culture	8 (40%)
		• More confidence/assertiveness	11 (55%)
		• Improving oneself	4 (20%)
Knowledge	20 (100%)	• Culture general	9 (45%)
		• Culture specific	9 (45%)
		• Language	5 (25%)
		• Communication skills & Interaction rules	12 (60%)
Skills	19 (85%)	• Evaluating self and other	12 (60%)
		• Communication skills	11 (55%)
		• Language proficiency	6 (30%)
		• Flexibility	4 (20%)
		• Displaying respect	3 (15%)
Awareness	16 (80%)	• Self and culture	10 (50%)
		• Culture differences	10 (50%)
		• Self-reflective performance	10 (50%)
		• Consciousness	11 (55%)

5.3.1 Motivation

In total, 17 participants (80%) reported that their motivation developed after the course.

Although the actual term "motivation" or "motivated" was not mentioned directly by the

participants, the latent meaning indicated that participants were more motivated in the

following three aspects. For example, any comment such as "I am more willing to meet more

people in the future" or "I really want to do better in the coming task" were classified as

motivation.

(i) General attitude towards foreign culture

According to the literature, one of the components of motivation is the general attitude towards foreign culture (Imahori & Lanigan, 1989). Such an attitude includes ethnocentrism (negative for IC development) and open-mindedness (positive for IC development) (Gudykunst et al., 1977; Wiseman et al., 1987). As a matter of fact, the term "open-minded" and similar expression such as "more understanding (of other people)" were mentioned by 8 participants (40%). For example, one interviewee said, "(after the course) my attitude towards different cultures perhaps, (becomes) more open minded and more neutral". When asked to give an example, the interviewee continued, "Like it's not only about yourself talking to the person. It's like, there's another person. He or she has their background, his background or her background and she has another way of thinking than I do. So I have to take into consideration everything". Some other terms such as "more tolerance", "not stereotyping", "do not judge" and "more patience" were also mentioned by the participants. These terms suggest a change or development of the participant's attitude—they became less ethnocentric but more open-minded towards people they met who might have different cultural backgrounds. As one of them said, "I am trying not to impose their own culture to other people".

(ii) More confidence and assertiveness

11 participants (55%) reported they became more confident after the course. In particular, the interviewees reported that they were more confident a) when they were expressing themselves especially in English; b) when they met new people especially native speakers. For example, one Italian exchange students said "(before taking the course) I was more embarrassed to talk in English because of my Italian accent, but now I am confident. Thanks to this course, I know that as long as I can communicate and other people can

understand me, it is fine." During the TC course, the participants understood that "there are different ways to communicate and it is always fine—in English there is not a standard language". Therefore, they became more confident to speak English even if they made mistakes in grammar or pronunciation. In terms of meeting new people, the participants said they were more motivated and comfortable— "I am meeting people and it is positive"; "I am more comfortable to meet people all over the world". Taking the course also made the participants less stressed or intimidated by the native speakers. As one interviewee said, "I am still quite intimidated by the native speakers, but rationally I think 'OK I know two languages, maybe three, and they know just this language (English)—so I have the power not them'—I am still working on it". From this extract, it could be seen that the participant's attitude towards native speakers has been changed—she became more assertive and tried to overcome the stress when talking to native speakers.

(iii) Improving oneself

Four participants (20%) pointed out that they were more motivated to improve themselves in communication. One of the assessments of the TC course was self-evaluation based on their group discussion performance which were video recorded (see details in Chapter 1). After watching the videos, the participants acknowledged their motivation or eagerness to improve their performance in the future. For example, one interviewee said, "I really want to try and improve more in the coming communication task". One interviewee also said she would like to improve and make a change after watching other people's performance from the video— "I will try to change and to answer the questions of everyone to be as active as she was".

5.3.2 Knowledge

All of the participants (100%) reported that they have had learnt some theories or knowledge after the course. Such knowledge includes cultural general, cultural specific, linguistic, communication skills and interaction rules.

(i) Cultural general

As suggested by the literature, the cultural general knowledge is mainly about the framework or patterns across all cultures. When being asked about what has been learnt from the course, 9 participants (45%) answered "theories" "information" and "concepts". Examples of these "theories" and "concept" were given such as "power distance", "high context", "collectivism vs. individualism". For example, one interviewee said, "now I know the differences between cultures—for some cultures, silence is comfortable, for some culture it is rude" which indicated the high context ("silence is comfortable") and low context ("silence is rude") (Hall, 1976). Such a result is not surprising, as one of the main aims of TC course is to provide theoretical guidance in the transcultural context. Key materials and references such as Hofstede's classification (1984) and Hall's high/low context (1976) were given to the students to read and discuss during the class. According to the participants, cultural general knowledge "helps to understand why we are different "and "a better understanding of why I am acting as I am, why I am perceived as the way I am perceived from others".

(ii) Cultural specific

There were nine participants (45%) who mentioned that they learnt some information or knowledge about some particular culture. As the TC course does not aim to provide cultural specific knowledge explicitly (e.g., what is British culture, Japanese culture etc.), students actually learnt this knowledge from each other. For example, one interviewee from Hong

Kong said, "I found out that Belgium uses both Dutch and French" after he spoke to a Belgian student from the class. The European participants started to know about Asian culture as well. For example, one Dutch participant said, "[I realized that] people from Asia have way more difficulties coming here because first of all the language and the culture is completely different and things like dressing". Last but not least, after communicating with native students from the TC course, the international participants started to "know native speaker's ideas and opinions which I haven't heard before".

(iii) Language

Here the knowledge of language mainly refers to the status/use of English as lingua franca. Five participants (25%) addressed that during the course, they learnt that "in English there is not a standard language" or "in England there is no standard English accent". Also some participants found out the differences between the English spoken by the native speakers and internationals. For example, one interviewee pointed out the native speakers' problem: "Like if I'm speaking to a native speaker and we're trying to communicate or they're trying to communicate with someone else and it doesn't work out then I usually notice why – because they're speaking really quickly or they're using idiomatic language or whatever". As a matter of fact, knowing the status of English helps the participant improve their use of English. As one participant said, "maybe my approach to English as a language has changed".

(iv) Communication skills & interaction rules

Twelve (60%) participants indicated that they have learnt theories about communication skills and interaction rules. Materials and references such as communication strategies (see details in Chapter 1) were asked to be read during the course, thus this result is not surprising. For example, one interviewee mentioned the technique she learnt such as "back channelling",

"turn taking" and also provided an example for "asking for clarification"—"for instance, as a listener in the conversation, if you don't understand the speaker's point, you have to clarify". One PhD interviewee said she had communicative problems with her supervisor before the course, but "now when I am talking to my supervisor, I am thinking I should use don't-give-up because some time ago I used let-it-pass and it didn't work. Now I know I should not give up". Some other communication skills were mentioned by the participants such as "memorising one's name at the beginning", "what to do with my body language".

5.2.3 Skills

In all, 19 participants (85%) suggested that they gained skills from the TC course. Such skills include: the ability to evaluate self and others' intercultural performance, communication skills, linguistic skills, flexibility, and displaying respect.

(i) Evaluating self and others' ICC performance

As one of the assessments of the TC course was writing an evaluation report on both self and others' intercultural competence based on their performance in group discussion, all the students who took the course for credit had to do it anyway. By the time of being interviewed, the participants had not started to write the report. However, 12 of them (60%) had demonstrated that they were already able to do so even outside the class. One interviewee from Germany said, "well I analyse them (my friend) a little bit, I analyse their speech which is really interesting". Then she provided an example of evaluating her friend as a good communicator—" I've got a friend and she is actually German but I never talk German to her because we always meet in a group of 3 or 4…the other girl is Chinese and the other girl is Spanish. She explains Biology to us in really simple terms so that we can understand it with our English, and she explained to us like theory of evolution, how bacteria multiply, and stuff like that". This example indicates that this interviewee could not only be able to tell her

friend as good at communication, but also in what aspect—by using simpler terms. Other participants evaluated their own performance and pointed out what they should avoid in the future. For example, after watching her own performance from the video, one Italian participant admitted that "I was really disappointed with my performance. I blocked a girl. I felt so bad. I didn't realise because I was the only one that asked her and sometimes it was like, like I was talking to her and I was looking at her, but she didn't feel like comfortable with the task".

(ii) Communication skills

In the above knowledge session, it suggests that the participants have learnt some theories and concepts of communication skills. It turns out that 11 (55%) participants considered themselves able to use such communication skills "in the interaction on a common day basis". For example, one interviewee said, "Now I always think about let-it-pass and don't-give-up strategy, also back channelling—I am doing it all the time". Some participants also mentioned that although they did not use the communication skills all the time, they would use them in some circumstances or whenever needed. For example, "maybe I don't use them (the communication skills) a lot, but I know about them and I try to use it when I find it hard to communicate with someone. I remember that I have some skills that I was taught, and I should use them. It makes me better".

(iii) Language proficiency

As the TC course provided a multi-cultural environment, the students had a lot of time for group discussion using English, thus 5 of them (25%) reported that their linguistic skills improved after the course. For example, one Chinese interviewee said "I have had more opportunities to speak with others in the English language, especially the chance to speak with locals. These opportunities are good practice". Two participants mentioned that they

could better express their point of view in English because of the course. For instance, one of them pointed out that "I am a lot faster in organising my thoughts to be expressed. Throughout the course, I have grasped every opportunity to practise speaking skills. So overall I have learnt to plan my answers quickly and express myself fluently—that made me more confident".

(iv) Flexibility

Four participants (20%) indicated that they were able to switch their behaviour or performance according to different contexts. For example, one Japanese interviewee said "I can use this (skill) to request repetition but in other situations it is different". Another participant said that "I did not do much in the relaxed conversation, but if it is in an academic context; a discussion or conversation, in other seminars and so on, I am ready taking care of it as well". Also, they could switch their behaviour according to the person with whom they are talking. One Danish student pointed out that "I think I have become more aware of what I do when I do in the conversation, and I also think in terms of altering your way of being, compared to who you are talking to". One example from a German student is she admitted that "I don't think it (using communication skills) is always necessary because with my friends I know communication works—so I don't pay attention to it. But I think if I meet new people, I'd do that". Based on these examples, it is clear that the participants became more flexible in changing their behaviour according to different contexts and with different people.

(v) Displaying respect

Three participants gave examples to show how to display respect when interacting with people from different cultures. In general, the key words were "don't judge", "be impartial" and "being more patience". For example, one interviewee said to display respect means "I can't impose my culture. I have to be impartial". Another participant recalled her

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performance in the group discussion. She mentioned that "if I have a girl who doesn't participate much (in the discussion), I think we should just be silent and give her a few second perhaps". From this example, it could be seen that for this participant, pausing and giving another person time to speak is a way to display respect.

5.2.4 Awareness

16 participants (80%) indicated that their awareness had been developed after the course. The key terms "I am aware of", "I noticed" and "I realise" have been mentioned 67 times in total. It turns out that after the course, they became more aware of: a) their own culture and how it affected themselves in return; b) cultural differences while interacting with different people; c) how to improve their ICC performance; and d) they became more conscious of their own attitude/behaviour during the interaction.

(i) Self and Culture

Ten participants (50%) said they had a better understanding of culture in general as well as their own culture—thus they were more aware of how these cultures were affecting people' (and their own) behaviour. For example, one interviewee said, "I feel like I have a better understanding of why we are different, why I am acting as I am. I have become much more aware of the perception of my behaviour, of my language and stuff like that". From what she said, it shows that the participant had a better understanding of her own culture and how these perceptions affected her behaviour in return. Another interviewee from Belgium mentioned that he had a better understanding of his identity after the course as "I don't really feel a strong link to my county, but my global identity is bigger. I did not really know why I would identify as Belgian first". It seems that he was confused about his own identity—why he did not relate himself more to his country. But after the course, he realised his global identity and accepted the way he was. The participants not only became more aware of their

perceptions and behaviour, but also their attitude. For example, one Japanese student mentioned that "I realised that especially when I am talking with native speakers, my attitude is really different when I am speaking to them". Another Italian interviewee also reported "I realised it during this course because before I didn't realise that my attitude with native speakers was different in contrast to the attitude with others". These examples indicate that the participants became aware of how their own culture affect their emotion/attitudes—that might be the key to relieve the stress when interacting with native speakers.

(ii) Cultural Differences

Ten participants (50%) reported that they became more aware of cultural similarities and differences after the course. For example, one Italian interviewee said, "I realise that we are all the same—at least I think that the European culture is quite the same, we don't have many differences". While she saw more similarities among people, other participants saw the differences between themselves and others. One interviewee said "I think it (the course made me more aware of people having different backgrounds. For example, I am more aware that people from Asia have way more difficulties coming there as their language and culture is completely different". Another interviewee also admitted that what she developed the most was awareness— "especially awareness of differences because if you are not explicitly told that other cultures have different way of communicating, you just don't think about it." Identified as international students, three participants mentioned that they were aware of the native speaker's role or behaviour during the interaction especially in terms of the use of English. For example, one French participant said, "now I can notice when I am speaking with native speaker—if they are aware of my difference, if he/she using idiomatic sentences". Similarly, one interviewee from Germany also reported that "I usually notice why (the interaction with native speaker failed) because they (the native) are speaking really quickly or using idiomatic language". It indicates that the participants do not only notice "the native

speakers' problem", but also in what aspect the problem occurs—there is a difference of the use of English between native and international.

(iii) Self-reflective performance

Ten participants (50%) mentioned that they became self-reflective after the course. That is to say, the participants could reflect on their behaviour (e.g., what they have done and how they did it) from past communication and noticed where it needed to be improved. For example, one interviewee admitted that "I had some habits during communication where you could think that I didn't pay attention. I sat like this, but only because I thought it was more relaxed. But I mean it could give the wrong impression, so I am taking more care in how I behave and listen". From this example, it turns out that the participant became aware of his old habit and how it might affect his communication. With such awareness, he could be able to change his behaviour and improve his communication. Other participants also pointed out they would like to improve their performance especially after watching the video of their own group discussion. They admitted that watching their own and others' performance in the video made them realise where they did not do well. For example, one participant said "I didn't speak a lot than I expected (group discussion). But I need to improve more—I need to facilitate the conversation such as not only listening or not only speaking but to ask further questions in the conversation".

(iv) Self-Consciousness during interaction

Eleven participants (55%) reported that they were more conscious of what they were doing and what others were doing during the interaction. Four participants mentioned that they noticed a change of self-consciousness before and after the course. For example, one interviewee said "I am about to notice when I do communicative strategies, like back channelling. Now I am aware that I am doing it. Before I was not aware". Similarly, other

interviewee said, "I am aware of things that I was doing but without noticing, like using some strategies such as let-it-pass or don't-give-up". It seems that a change from unconsciousness to consciousness was the first step for self-awareness development. Then some interviewees mentioned that they were more consciously choosing strategies to use during interaction. For example, one participant pointed out that she altered the way she spoke when she noticed someone's English was not that good— "I can just use simpler language to explain everything". Meanwhile, the participants were also aware of the status of the people they were talking to. One participant recalled that during the TC course, the participants spotted each other's behaviour (e.g., using some communicative strategies) such as "see what you just did?" Outside the TC course, one German interviewee told her interaction with her sister—"my sister was here and (we were talking) I am like 'yeah, you are doing that (the communicative strategy) right now'". What is more, the participant was also aware of other people's unawareness. For example, one Japanese evaluated the people who did not take TC course as "the attitude of awareness is very different when someone does not do what he/she supposed to do".

6. Discussion

According to Spitzberg (2000), as communicator's motivation/knowledge/skill increases, communicative competence increases. The results of this study not only provide evidence for the development of the above three aspects, but also another important dimension—awareness. Thus, this study indicates participants' overall intercultural competence has been developed after the TC course.

It is notable that although these four components/aspects have been analysed individually, they are not independent from each other but interdependent. As argued in Chapter 1, the components of intercultural competence are closely associated. Interactants may be seen as interculturally incompetent if they: lack motivation to perform competently,

or/and knowledge of the competent lines of action in the context concerned, or/and the communication skills to carry off a deft interaction (Spitzberg, 2000). Also, they may be viewed as incompetent because they are not sensitive/mindful enough about the context and the people they are talking to. Because of such interdependence, differentiating them clearly seems impossible. To be more specific, demonstrating some communication skills indicates related knowledge has been previously gained. Meanwhile, it also requires awareness to trigger the behaviours.

Taking as an example from one interview, one Ph.D. participant told her interaction with her supervisor before and after the course. She said, "Now when I am talking to my supervisor, I am thinking I should use don't-give-up because some time ago I used let-it-pass and it didn't work, now I should not give up". From this example, it could see that firstly she was aware of the situation (there was a communicative problem between her and her supervisor). During the TC course, she learnt different communicative strategies, then she reflected herself to figure out why the communication failed (because of wrong communicative strategies). Lastly, she was motivated and determined to try another strategy to avoid similar problem in the future. These examples give a clear demonstration of how four components of intercultural competence work together and how Fantini's A+ASK quartet (2006) works.

According to Fantini's A+ASK quartet (2006), awareness leads to deeper cognition, skills and attitude, just as it is also enhanced by their development. This study provides good support for this assumption. The results in the awareness category shows that none of the data was just analysed as awareness itself—they were all related to and analysed as other categories such as knowledge, skills and motivation. Whereas there were other examples that could only be analysed and included in one category, such as knowledge. For example, only cultural general knowledge was mentioned in this sentence "we learnt a lot of theories about

why things as they are, for example power distance". Therefore, as Fantini (2006) suggests, awareness development is the key for ICC development. Questions such as how to enhance awareness, what kinds of activities and experiences help participants develop awareness should be considered before designing intercultural training.

7. Summary

This chapter is focused on the international students at a university in the North of England, especially those who took the course Transcultural Communication. Whether and how their intercultural competences were developed after the course have been explored. The testimonies from the interviewees indicates that after the course, four aspects of ICC—motivation, knowledge, skills and awareness have been enhanced. Thus, this study will be useful to answer the question raised at the end of Chapter 3—whether intercultural training (TC course) could solve the difficulties/problems that international students encountered. Also it provides evidence for the main research question of this thesis—whether the course Transcultural Communication is effective in developing students' intercultural competence. A general discussion of these issues will be given in Chapter 6.

Chapter 5 The Development of Home Students' Intercultural Competence

Chapter 5.1 The Development of Home students' Intercultural Competence after the Course Transcultural Communication—a Qualitative Analysis

1. Introduction

In Chapter 2, it was mentioned that this research adopted the relational model of ICC (Imahori & Lanigan, 1989) which is focused on both sojourners' and hosts' intercultural competences and how they contribute to the external outcome such as relational satisfaction and communication effectiveness. While Chapters 3 and 4 explored the development of intercultural competence from the international students' perspective, this Chapter switches the focus to the home students. This section followed the similar protocol as Chapter 4. Interviews were carried out with home students who chose the course Transcultural Communication. By doing so, the aim was to find out the development of home students' intercultural competence after training. The interaction between home students and international students from the home students' perspective was also addressed.

2. Background

In Chapter 2, communicative accommodation theory (CAT) was introduced (see details in Chapter 2 p. 46). In Chapter 4, it was also pointed out that for the host, linguistic skill is based on his/her skill in communication accommodation (see details in Chapter 4 p. 99). That is to say, home students' intercultural competence is to some degree influenced by their communication accommodation ability. However, to what extent should the home students

accommodate their English? In fact, during the interviews (Chapter 3), some international students pointed out the biggest problem for the native speaker is "to know what the basic words are"; some interviewees pointed out explicitly the term "international English" and its important during their interactions with the native speaker.. Thus, it is needed to define the term "international English" here.

English as International Language (EIL)

As this thesis does not have a specific focus on language, it will not discuss EIL or international English in much more detail. However, the purpose of discussing such concept here is: 1) clarify the terms that mentioned by the participants involved in the research.; 2) addressing its relevance to this study.

"International English" is a shorthand for "English as an international language" (EIL) which highlights the international use of English. According to Modiano (1991), international English is the concept of the English language as a global means of communication in numerous dialects, and also the movement towards an international standard for the language. As McKay (2002) suggests, international English could be used both in a local sense between speakers of the diverse cultures and languages within one country and in a global sense between speakers from different countries. In all, international English simply refers to the array of varieties of English spoken throughout the world.

During the interviews (in Chapter 3 and 4), the interviewees mentioned "international English" as comparing to the English used by the speakers of English as mother tongue. From their comments, it shows that they were aware the differences between these two and admitted that it might be one of the reasons that caused communication difficulties when interacting with native speakers. Together with literature reviewed in Chapter 2 (problem caused by Native Speakers in the Context of Communication Accommodation Theory, (p. 46-47), it is important to investigate how native speakers could cope with "international

English". However, there is a little literature focusing on native speakers in terms of EIL. For example, questions such as whether and how much native speakers should know about "international English", whether and how much they should switch their English into international English still remain to be answered.

In relation to this study, CAT (Gallois & Giles, 2015) and the concept of international English provide an important perspective to explore what it takes to be a competent communicator for the native speaker. In communication between native and nonnative speakers, if the native speakers could converge their English to more "international English", that does not only indicate their knowledge of EIL but also their positive attitude (motivation) and skills. Such intercultural competence could be helpful for sojourner-host relationship, and possibly be the key to solve the "problem caused by native speakers".

3. Research Questions

The overall aim of this chapter is to explore the development of home students' intercultural competence after the course *Transcultural Communication*. This section focuses on the home students who chose the course. Using a similar protocol as Chapter 4, interviews were carried out at the end of the course. It was hypothesized that after the course, home students' intercultural competence would develop in the four main aspects—motivation, knowledge, skills and awareness. Home students' interaction with international students is also explored. In particular, the study was intended to find out what they think about interactions with international students, and whether they could be able to accommodate their speech/communication when they speak to them. It should be noted again that as clarified in Chapter 1, although there is some debate about distinctions between the term "native speaker" and "home students", here they are used synonymously.

4. Method

Design

Using the similar protocol as Chapter 4, interviews were carried out with the home students who took the course *Transcultural Communication (TC)* at one university in the North of England. The interviews were semi-structured with questions focusing on how the participants thought about the course and what they have learnt from it. Questions about interaction with international students were also asked in the interview. All the interviews were conducted in English, transcribed and analyzed by thematic analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2015). Preliminary coding themes as well as subcategories were created to analyse the data. The frequency of each theme was counted.

Participants

Similar to Chapter 4, the participants were an opportunity sample which means it was impossible to control either the size or the gender of the sample. As a matter of fact, there were no home students choosing the TC course until 2016 autumn term (one year after the course started running). In total, 8 home (British) students who took the TC course participated in the interviews. They were all females. Among the eight home students, there were three who came from a mixed-race family background (e.g., mother or father was American, grandmother was Italian). Five of them had previous intercultural experience (e.g., living in another country at least over a month). A detailed description about the participants is shown in Table 5.1.1.

Table 5.1. 1 Interview Participants (N=8, F=8)

Factors	Description	Number &Percentage
Nationality	• British	8 (100%)
Education level	• Undergraduate • Master	7 (87.5%) 1 (12.5%)
Mixed race family background	• Yes (UK & US; UK & Italy) • No	3 (37.5%) 5 (62.5%)
Previous intercultural experience (living in another country over one months)	• Yes • No	5 (62.5%) 3 (37.5%)

Procedure

Together with the participants from Chapter 4, the interviews with home students were carried out each autumn and spring terms from 2015 to 2017. Each of the interviews was semi-structured and lasted around 15 to 30 minutes. The interviews with home students consisted of three main sections. Firstly, personal information was asked, such as family background, any previous intercultural experience (e.g., staying in other country for a long term). Then the interviews followed the same questions as Chapter 4 which focused on participants' TC course experience such as why they took the course, what they learnt from it (see details in Chapter 4). Finally, participants were also asked about their interactions with international students such as how they thought of their interaction with international students and other home students, were there any difference or difficulties. The full protocol for the interview is presented in Appendix C.

Following the same process as Chapter 3 and 4, interviews with home students were also analyzed by thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For these interviews, data were analyzed from the same perspective as Chapter 4—home student' intercultural competence will be developed after the TC course in motivation, knowledge, skills and awareness. Under

the literature reviewed above, whether and how the trained home students would accommodate their English when they interact with international students was also focused on. Detailed procedure of doing thematic analysis could be found in Chapter 4 **Method** (p. 103).

5. Results

5.1. Why taking the course *Transcultural Communication*

Table 5.1. 2 Reason for Taking TC Course

Reasons to choose TC	Details	Number & Percentage
Interest	• Learning Culture • Relevant to own identity (mixed family background, dual nationality) • Relevant to own major/study (language, education, geography, arts)	5 (67.5%)
Credits	• Easier than other modules	1 (12.5%)
Practical	• Future career • Abroad internship	2 (25%)

Similar to the international students who took the TC course, the home students also chose the course of their own free will. Results showed that five of them (67.5%) chose the course out of interest. Apart from being willing to learn about culture, two out of five participants said the course itself was relevant to their own identity as they had a mixed culture family background. They thought the course could be helpful to figure out their "strange cultural mixed" identity. For one home student, being a dual national (UK and US), having lived in both UK and US made her eager to "develop the concept for my personal identity". For the other three participants who chose the course out of interest, they thought the course would be relevant and helpful for their own study such as language, education, geography and arts. For example, one student studying geography said "my course is all

about different culture and development, politics, economics. The TC course would be good to look at them in a broader way".

Two participants (25%) chose the course from practical considerations. They thought the course would be helpful for future career and internship in other country. For example, one said she planned to travel and do an internship, thus the TC course would be "beneficial especially if you are working and everywhere is getting multicultural".

There was one participant did not choose TC course at first but switched to it, as it was easier than the module she originally chose. She said, "I started out doing syntax, but it is really hard, and I don't want to do that." Then after consulting with her supervisor and another home student who took TC course, she came over onto the TC course.

A detailed description of these results is reported above in Table 5.1.2.

5.2 The Development of Intercultural Competence

Preliminary coding themes and their subcategories of the interview are listed below in Table 4.4. Each preliminary theme and the subcategories of each theme are presented according to the frequency of their occurrence (how many people mentioned such category). Overall, the main aspects in which participants' intercultural competence were the same as the result for Chapter 4. After TC course, all of the home students' motivation, knowledge, skills and awareness were developed. However, there are some minor differences in terms of the subcategories particularly in knowledge and skills. A detailed description of each theme is reported in Table 5.1.3.

Table 5.1. 3 Frequency of each preliminary coding themes

Preliminary Coding Themes &	Number & Frequency	Subcategories	Number & Frequency
Motivation	8 (100%)	• General attitude towards foreign culture	7 (87 .5%)
		• More confidence	6 (75%)
		• Improving oneself	2 (25%)
Knowledge	8 (100%)	• Culture general	7 (87.5%)
		• Culture specific	7(87.5%)
		• Communication skills & Interaction rules	3 (37.5%)
		• Native's problem	1 (12.5%)
Skills	8 (100%)	• Evaluating self and other	6 (75%)
		• Communication skills	6 (75%)
		• Linguistic— Communication accommodation	4 (50%)
Awareness	8(100%)	• Self and culture	5 (62.5%)
		• Culture differences	6 (75%)
		• Self-reflective performance	7 (87.5%)
		• Consciousness	6 (75%)

5.2.1 Motivation

In total, all of the eight participants reported that their motivation was developed after the course. In general, they became more open-minded and confident toward people with different backgrounds, they would also be willing to improve themselves for future communication.

(i) General attitude towards foreign culture

There were 7 participants (87.5%) who reported that they became less ethnocentric and more open-minded towards people from different cultures. The key terms mentioned by them were "open-minded", "trying to understand", "more respectful", and "not to stereotype". These terms indicated a positive attitude towards people from different cultures. For example, one participant said "I understand the fact that other people will exhibit the culture baggage that they are maybe not aware of and it is not fair to expect people to behave like Americans for example". She continued saying that "at least if I can't understand it, to be aware of or try

to be a bit less biased in my perspective or be bit less wary people from different cultural backgrounds". The key words "less biased" "not fair to expect" showed her less ethnocentric, which in return made her "less wary" for intercultural interaction. When being asking to give an example, she said "if a person doesn't grin when they say hello to you, then (I used to think that) they don't really like you. (But now I realise) that's not fair (to think in that way) because in some cultures that may not be an appropriate thing. So I guess (I become) less concerned about that". For a participant who grew up in a mixed cultural family background (e.g., living with her Italian grandmother), she said "I thought I was open-minded beforehand, and I feel like I have just become even more open-minded (after the course)". In all, whether the home students came from a mixed or homogeneous cultural background, the participants learnt to look beyond their own culture, and try to be more understanding of different cultures.

(ii) More confidence

There were 6 participants (75%) mentioned that they became more confident to interact with different people. In terms of intercultural interaction (e.g., interacting with international students), one participant said "[this course] helped me to feel more confident and to not expect other people to behave that way I have been taught. I have learnt to be more confident in myself like not holding them to that standard and judging the situation based upon those standards". From this example, it shows that during the course, this participant understood there was no what was so called "standard behaviour"—each individual has his/her own cultural background. Thus, she became more confident to be herself and also to accept people with whom she was interacting. Another participant said she got more active to communicate and approach people with different culture— "I've like just spoken to people like I was speaking to a girl who is half Ukrainian half Canadian and she was lovely. I've never really made effort to talk people in my class out of fear."

Apart from interacting with international students, some participants reported that they became more confident when communicating with native students too. For example, one participant said "I have definitively got more confident. I have actually started talking to people in my own modules as well—just even native speakers as well. I just did not really talk to anybody. But I feel like this course has actually helped me with that [my confidence]." Another participant also mentioned that "at the start I'd be a bit shy about say something because I'd be like maybe my point is not relevant, but actually it doesn't matter if your points are relevant. It is just important to get your opinion out there". This excerpt indicated the course helped the participant to overcome her shyness and become more confident and assertive to express her opinion. In all, as native speakers, the participants became more confident in 1) expressing their own opinion; 2) interacting with people (both native and non-native); and 3) actively approaching and meeting new people.

(iii) Improving oneself

When being asked about their performance in the assessment (group discussion—see details in Chapter 2, p. 46), two participants (25%) admitted that they wanted to improve themselves in the future especially in the coming summative assessment. One of them said "I did bad things [in the informal assessment] and I want to improve". She even wrote down in her note and did a chart on the points that she needed to work on. Another participant said as she did not engage with people in the group, so she was "going to try more to do in the second [summative assessment] to [make sure] really encourage people." These examples clearly indicated a high motivation to improve themselves for a better intercultural communication.

5.2.2 Knowledge

All of the participants (100%) reported that they had learnt some theories or knowledge after the course. Such knowledge includes cultural general, cultural specific, communication skills and interaction rules and lastly the "native speakers' problem".

(i) Cultural general

Seven participants (87.5%) reported that they have gained cultural general knowledge (see more details in Chapter 4). Theories or concepts they mentioned were "third culture", "individualism vs. collectivism", "face saving", "high and low context" "power distance" etc. For example, as one participant said (who came from a low context culture, the UK) "if I am going to be in a classroom where it is a high context environment where you don't need to speak to fill the silence, it's good to be able to just think about the way in which the culture of the group of the people behave in a classroom." Studying TESOL (teaching English to speakers of other languages), she also pointed out knowing general concepts of culture could be helpful for her future career as a teacher— "there are also the power distances and the esteem that the teacher has. If I am in a classroom like in America it is very much (different from other culture which has larger power distance)". For the participant who has already had intercultural experience (i.e. she did internship overseas in East Asia countries), she said "I find especially the information about the different cultural types like collectivism and individualism, I didn't know that before. But (during the course) that was explained to me, it made more sense different experiences I have had". In all, it shows that gaining cultural general knowledge could not only be helpful for the participants understanding people they are interacting with, but also preparing for the future interaction and reflecting their previous intercultural experience.

(ii) Culture specific

Seven participants (87.5%) pointed out that they learnt information about certain cultures such as Chinese and Japanese. As pointed out in Chapter 4, the TC course does not aim to provide culture specific knowledge explicitly, students actually learnt this knowledge from each other. For example, one participant said, "I can understand things better like one of the Chinese girls she was saying how in China to ask if you have had lunch". It shows that she now has a better understanding of Chinese culture, as asking someone whether he/she have had lunch was a common way to say hello and start the conversation in China. Another participant said after talking with student from Japan on the TC course, she realized that "they are really polite and really happy all the time".

(iii) Communication skills and interaction rules

Three participants (37.5%) suggested that they have learnt theories about communication skills and interactions rules. The strategy "don't-give-up" was mentioned by two of them. Another participant mentioned some strategies in nonverbal communication such as giving eye contact and nodding to display respect. Although not many participants named the skills and rules they learnt explicitly, they agreed that such knowledge was helpful in "how to approach situations and in control of a situation by not explicitly showing that". One of the participants also said learning communication skills and rules gave direction to improve herself— "on top of some of the techniques that I have learnt and it is kind of something I knew I needed to improve on. It's kind of…I have seen the evidence of why".

(iv) Problems Caused by The Host

One participant (12.5%) explicitly pointed out that she started to know the communication problems caused by native speakers from the course. She said, "I remember

we were reading this one about the problems of native speakers in other countries". She also told that she was living with four non-natives and one British— "I just had to change how I speak and so it was interesting having this course to read up on why that is".

5.2.3 Skills

Overall, it is suggested that all the participants gained skills from TC course. Such skills include: the ability to evaluate self and others' intercultural performance, communication skills, linguistic skills particularly in communication accommodation.

(i) Evaluating self and others' ICC performance

Similar to the participants in Chapter 4, the home students had not started to write the evaluation report when they were interviewed. However, six of them (75%) have demonstrated that they were already able to evaluate self and other people's intercultural competence performance. In terms of self-evaluation, one participant recalled her performance in the formative (mock) assessment. She said "at first when we came out of the room, I thought I'd been like, really in charge and like pushy. But when we watched the video back, I realised I wasn't actually. I also let everybody else talk and tried to give everyone equal amount of time. And I found that I was just writing things down and making sure that we all were on the same page." From this example, it shows that actually this participant evaluated her performance in the group discussion twice—firstly immediately after the assessment, then she was more at ease of not being "bossy" when watching the video back. As a native speaker (and sometimes the only native speaker in the group), one participant evaluated her role in the group discussion as "sort of having like a leadership role without talking the most". She further explained that "I ended up putting myself in that position of maybe having a leadership role, but it was more kind of 'has everyone got it', also bringing it back to the thing (topic)".

Participants also showed their ability in evaluating other people's ICC performance. One participant said she could "definitely tell the difference between the people who were good at communicating and not". She mentioned that some volunteers clearly had less motivation for communication as "they were sat there and not interested in what was happening". As native speakers themselves, the participants also evaluated other native speakers at the group discussion who did not take the course. One interviewee pointed out a misunderstanding caused by a native speaker when she was watching another group's video. She pointed out that the untrained student "does not even realise [what she said] was very [cultural] specific—this is an idea very specific to the UK and ingrained in British culture and University culture. That's the kind of thing I would avoid saying". Another participant also mentioned that while she was trying to avoid saying too much or dominating the group conversation, the other untrained native speakers "seemed speaking too much for the most times".

(ii) Communication skills and interaction rules

There were six participants (75%) considering themselves able to use communication skills in practice. For example, one participant said "one of the things I have learnt is, some countries don't celebrate Christmas. Instead of being like oh my god, who don't you celebrate Christmas, you can be like, tell me why you don't celebrate or what do you do instead". This extract is a good example demonstrating the participant's skills—not only displaying her respect to the person she was talking to, but also the ability to keep the conversation going. Another participant mentioned that the communication skills she learnt from the course were "really useful", especially when she was talking to someone who did not speak much English at all.

(iii) Linguistic skills—Communication Accommodation

Four participants (50%) reported that they would accommodate their English depending on the situation. When speaking with non-native speakers, one of them said she would "speak slower or I will simplify what I say on purpose, or I will kind of notice how much they understand me and then make sure". Another participant she said would use "less British English" not only in the way of "intonation and speed, but also the words that I'm using and the cultural references [embedded]". It turns out this participant did not only use communication accommodation in her native and non-native interaction, but also in other context where all the speakers were native. She gave an example of the use of filler word "like" such as in the sentence "I was like 'I actually got this'". To her, the use of filler word "like" was "impeding the flow of the conversation". It is all right to use in the informal conversation with other native speakers as "home student wouldn't have any trouble and they'd just block it out". But in the intercultural setting, there will be somebody "who is working hard to understand". In the formal setting such a previous job interview, the use of "like" will "make me sound unprofessional so I was very careful with what and how I was speaking".

5.2.4 Awareness

All the eight participants indicated that their awareness had been developed after the course. Similar to the international interviewee in Chapter 4, the key terms home students mentioned were "I am aware of", "I spotted" and "I realized". The results suggest that the participants were more aware of: a) their own culture/identity and how it affected themselves in return; b) cultural differences while interacting with different people; c) how to improve their ICC performance; and d) the consciousness of their own attitude/behaviour during the interaction.

(i) Self and culture

Five participants (62.5%) said they were more aware of how culture affects people as well as their own. Particularly as native speakers, they became aware of the cultural reference embedded in the language they use. For example, one participant said "I am more aware of the way I speak and the way I act. I think over the years I have built up the way I listen to the international speakers. Things like talking too fast or talking a bit slower and more clearly are quite obvious. But (after the course) I think I am more aware of the English I'm using, and not like the intonation and speed but also the words that I am using, and the cultural references". What she said is a good example which shows a deeper understanding of the relationship between language and culture. She realised that communication skills such as speaking slowly and paraphrasing could help for communication, but the awareness of the cultural references embedded in the language would be more helpful for intercultural interaction.

For the three participants who had a mixed culture/race family background, they had a better understanding of their own identities. For example, growing up with her Italian grandmother, one participant said "(before the course) I'd always assumed I'd identified as British Italian, but then the more we talked about like culture and identity, the more I was bit like—oh actually I don't know what I am". To her, how to identify herself is always the biggest challenge. After the course she said "I am still confused, but it is a process—in a good way. I am becoming more thoughtful of what I am thinking about. It is a mouthful being like I am half British half Italian. So I can just go with—I am just me". From this example, it shows her development of the understanding of herself. She did not take it for granted and simply define herself in the stereotypical way anymore (e.g., half Italian half British). Instead, she started to be aware how the culture impacted on her and formed her as she was. For another participant who had been living in both the UK and USA for years, she

realised that "I exhibit a lot of American traits (as I thought). I wasn't actually aware that because with this whole identity thing I never really identified as very much American. But I didn't realise all the time that I was exhibiting very American sort of behavioural standards and the way I interact with people and the way I read people". In short, after the course this participant became aware of her "hidden Americanness" and how it affected her. The awareness of "such cultural baggage within" in return affected the way her perceiving other people—"I need to understand the fact that other people will exhibit the cultural baggage that they are maybe not aware of in the same way and it is not fair to expect people to behave in Americans for example".

(ii) Cultural differences

Six participants (75%) reported they were aware of cultural differences. For example, one participant said "I just remember recently with the fencing team I became a good friend with a girl from Norway where awkward silences do not matter—you don't have to talk all the time. Whereas in my culture awkward silences are like the bane of everyone's existence". This example shows that after gaining the knowledge of high and low context, the participant realised the difference between her and her Norwegian friend in terms of dealing with awkward silence. Another participant also mentioned the issue of silence. She said, "at that time (group discussion with other international students) I realised I am going to be the only one that is going to speak in the silence, because everyone else seemed comfortable with the silence". In all, the participants started to realise "people are different and why we are different".

(iii) Self-reflective Performance

Seven participants (87.5%) mentioned that they were able to reflect on their behaviour from previous communication experiences and pointed out what needed to be improved. For

example, one interviewee described her "cultural clash experience" with her ex-boyfriend who was half Indian. She said "he was very English but his family were very Indian and we had a lot of trouble—like I'd accidentally offend someone would say something really rude to me and I'd be 'I know you don't mean that rudely', which I think is where it's now doing this (taking the TC course) has been so interesting because I look back on things that happened there". Her example clearly demonstrated how intercultural competence would help to avoid or solve misunderstandings caused by cultural differences. She started to realise what went wrong and how to deal with that when the cultural clashes happened. Other participants commented on their performance in the group discussion assessment. For example, "I think I ended up with putting myself in that position of maybe having a leadership role but it was more kind of 'has everyone got it', like bringing it back to the topic"; "I kind of had like a role where I wasn't speaking the most but I'd sort of bringing us back in because I'd be 'what you are trying to say is the same thing'". Both of them had the awareness of what kind of role they took and how they did it in the group discussion.

(iv) Self-Consciousness

Six participants (75%) mentioned that they were more conscious of what they were doing and what others were doing during the interaction. For example, one participant said "I find myself being more aware of how someone is talking to me and what they are talking about. And I might be interpreting it like in a British way when really I shouldn't be. So I find myself trying to think about that". This example does not only show the participant's consciousness about another people's behaviour, but also her own thinking towards them and more importantly how she tried to change that way of thinking. Another participant even mentioned "I think there is this worry in a couple of us (TC students) what we are going to end up overthinking it". Such worry indicates the consciousness of the struggle on the degree of "appropriateness" of their behaviour.

5.2.5 Native and non-native interaction from home students' perspective

In Chapter 3, native and non-native interaction was explored from the international students' perspective. In this Chapter, for the home students who participated in the interviews, they were also asked about their experience with international students. Based on what they said, it could be categorised into two aspects.

(i) "What do I think of international students?"

In Chapter 3, it is suggested that the international participants reported they felt more pressure to speak to the natives. So it is important to know from the home students' point of view about how they think of international students' English ability. As a matter of fact, six participants (75%) commented that "most of their English are really good" and "I don't have problem with it at all". Two participants (25%) said "[their English] are quite mixed—some are really good, but then others are kind of…" However, even for the one who were "not that good" at English, the participant pointed out that "but I can still understand exactly what they mean, it is just the grammar and the way they say things—sometimes a bit backwards". So in all, the participants think positively in terms of international students' English proficiency.

Apart from language proficiency, three participants (37.5%) also explicitly indicated that international students are "open and more approachable" or "nice to get on". One of them even suggested that "I do actually prefer talking to international students because there is just no expectation". What she meant is comparing with home students who "expect you to be funny or to say the right things", talking with international students are actually "less pressure" and "less competitiveness".

(ii) "What do I think of myself as native speaker?"

In the **Result** skills (5.2.3) section, it was pointed out that 4 participants (50%) would accommodate their English especially when speaking to international students. Such a result also indicates the different roles that home students played in one-to-one interaction. Being asked about whether there was any difference when interacting with British students and internationals, the participants admitted that "[when speaking with British students] we assume that they know everything because we have the same culture, we live in the same place, and we do the same things like Christmas, Easter and the way schools work. Whereas with someone from different culture I feel like I'd explain myself a lot more". It is also indicated by another home student that she "feels like the conversation is a bit slower as I need to check 'do you know what I mean'". As summarised by one of the participant— "even if an international student has lived here for a long time you can't assume that they have seen everything you have or that they know about of all these cultural references that home students do so." One even said she found that "non-native speakers are nervous to talk to us, but we are nervous to talk to them". Thus, the participants seem to be more careful or wary of what they are saying when talking to internationals. What is more, they reported they "had quite a high tolerance for mistakes for non-native speakers", whereas with British people "there is a bit of competitiveness as there is more expectations".

In terms of the role home students played in the multicultural setting which involved more people (such as group discussion of TC assessment), the participants regarded themselves as a medium who "can interpret people 'oh so you mean this and you mean that'". Especially in the setting where they are the only native speaker, four participants (50%) admitted that they felt they had more responsibility as "everyone else is speaking my language" so that they need to "make sure everyone was on the same page". However, they also pointed out as the only native speaker, they "tried not to lead the conversation as much

so let other people lead it as well". Such responsibility does not mean "being bossy or pushy".

6. Discussion

6.1. Similarities and differences of ICC development between international and home students

As predicted, the main aspects that home students' intercultural competence developed were the same with the result as international participants in Chapter 4. After the TC course, all of the home students' motivation, knowledge, skills and awareness were developed. Similar to Chapter 4, the development of home student's ICC also indicates the four components are interdependent rather than independent. For example, one native participant said "I have learnt a lot particularly the best ways in how to approach situations and ways in being in control of a situation but not explicitly showing that—having that knowledge to deal with confrontations or disputes or making sure that everyone's got a say, but not making it awkward". What she said is a good example of how intercultural competence works—the knowledge she gained from the TC course enabled her to deal with different situations in a more appropriate way. "Making sure everyone's got a say" indicates her positive attitude (showing respect) towards people. Last but not least, all of these could not be achieved if there is no awareness. This again confirms Fantini's A+ASK quartet (2006) (see details in Chapter 4, p. 101).

Although all the participants (international from Chapter 4 and home from Chapter 5) took the same TC course sitting in the same classroom, there were some minor differences in terms of the subcategories, particularly in linguistic skills. For the international participants, the development of the linguistic skills refers to their English proficiency—they were better at expressing themselves clearly and quickly after the course (see details in Chapter 4

Results). Whereas for the native participants who do not have any problem with their English, the development of linguistic skills meant communication accommodation ability. Although the CAT was not covered in the TC course, the results indicated that half of the trained home students developed awareness to accommodate their speech in the intercultural setting—they could simplify the words they used, slow the speed and be more careful to choose the topic to discuss. Such difference confirmed the statement reviewed in Chapter 4—for the sojourner, the linguistic skill refers to his/her proficiency in the host-national's language; for the host, linguistic skill is based on his/her skill in speech/communication accommodation (Nishida, 1985; Schneider & Jordan, 1981; Fantini, 2006). According to the CAT (Gallois & Giles, 2015), the native speaker who accommodates their speech into "international English" indicate their motivation to show friendliness towards international students. Thus, it again confirms their development of intercultural competence— "as communicator motivation increases, the intercultural competence increases" (Spitzberg, 2000, p.381).

6.2 Native and non-native interactions

In Chapter 3, the result of interviews with international students suggested they had more pressure to speak to the natives and felt distant from the home students. In this study, interviews with home students who took the TC course show that the they seem to have a mixed feeling towards international students. On the one hand, they think positively towards international students' English proficiency and their attitude (such as openness) but talking to them does require more carefulness and more effort, as they need to accommodate their English. On the other hand, some of them do prefer talking to international students to home students as there is less expectation or competition. However, it is important to note that the home students involved in this study were all trained by the TC course (especially they were interviewed after the training) which means they probably had higher intercultural competence than the untrained home students. Not mentioning the sample size (N=8) is quite

small. Thus, the result just represents the trained home students but not home students in general. Therefore, in order to have a more representative result on what home students think about their interaction with international students, it is necessary to involve more home students who do not take the course for the further research in the future.

7. Summary

The focus of this chapter was switched to the home students. Interviews were conducted with home students who chose the TC course. Through qualitative analysis, the results suggested that all the participants' intercultural competence was developed in the aspects of motivation, knowledge, skills and awareness. Although the main aspects of ICC development were the same as those with the international participants in Chapter 4, there were also some differences in the subcategories, such as linguistic skills. Combined with the study in Chapter 4, this study was also useful in answering the questions raised at the end of Chapter 3—whether intercultural training (TC course) could solve the difficulties/problems that international students encountered. In order to know more about the development of home students' ICC, a comparison study was taken between trained and untrained home students in Chapter 5.2.

Chapter 5.2 Comparison Study of Home Students' Performance between Trained and Untrained—a Mixed Method

1. Introduction

Following Chapter 5.1, this section continues focusing on the home students' intercultural competence. In particular, a comparative study was conducted comparing home students who took the TC course (labelled as trained group) and who did not (labelled as untrained group). By examining their performance in group discussion, two specific aspects—eye gaze and amount of talk were analysed by both quantitative and qualitative techniques. By doing so, the aim is to find out in what way the trained group might be more interculturally competent than the untrained group.

2. Background

2.1 Gaze in Nonverbal Communication

In human interaction, nonverbal behaviour is an important symbol system. The importance of nonverbal communication has been asserted by Knapp and Hall— "the list of all the situations where nonverbal communication plays an important role would be interminable" (2002, p. 230). Although for most people, nonverbal communication refers to "communication effected by means other than words" (Knapp & Hall, 2002, p. 5), the definition of nonverbal communication (similar to that of culture) is more complicated. For this research, the definition proposed by Samovar and his colleague is adopted —"nonverbal communication involves all those nonverbal stimuli in a communication setting that are generated by both the source and his or her environment and that have potential message value for the source or receiver" (Samovar et al., 2009, p. 246). From this definition, three primary units of nonverbal communication can be identified: the communication environment (e.g., physical environment and spatial environment), the communicators' physical

characteristics (e.g., person's physical appearance), and body movement and position (e.g., gestures, posture, touching behaviour, facial expressions, eye behaviour and vocal behaviour) (Knapp & Hall, 2002). While there is much to discuss for each unit, for this research the focus is on one particular stimulus—that of gaze behaviour.

The eyes and the power of eye contact have been addressed extensively in research. Generally, it is argued that the eyes are important to the communication process as they can send limitless messages (Samovar et al., 2009). As matter of fact, when one looks, where one looks and how long one looks during interaction are generally studied in the field of gaze. According to Knapp and Hall, gaze refers to "an individual's looking behaviour, which may or may not be at the other person"; mutual gaze refers to "a situation in which the two interactants are looking at each other, usually in the region of the face" (Knapp & Hall, 1995, p. 371). The term "eye contact" (looking specifically into each other's eyes) is just one feature in the study of gaze, which is not reliably distinguished by receivers or observers from gazing at the area surrounding in the eyes (Von Cranach & Ellgring, 1973). During human interaction, no matter what culture it is, people pay attention to gaze behaviour as sometimes it is an indicator of interest, attention, or involvement (Knapp & Hall, 1995). Kendon (1967) identified four functions of gaze: 1) regulatory—responses may be demanded or suppressed by looking; 2) monitoring—people may look at their partner to indicate the conclusion or thought units to check their partner's attentiveness and reactions; 3) cognitive—people tend to look away when having difficulty processing information or deciding what to say; and 4) expressive—the degree and nature of involvement or arousal may be signalled through looking. In short, people do not look at the other person during the entire time of talking. But when they do gaze, they are signalling that the communication channel is open, seeking feedback concerning the reaction of others, expressing their emotions/attitudes towards the partner. In terms of interpersonal relationships, back in the 1960s studies (e.g., Exline &

Eldbridge, 1967) indicated that the same verbal communication was decoded as being more favourable when it was associated with more eye gaze than when it was presented with less. Generally, people seem to gaze more at people they like (although longer and harder looking may indicate dislike), thus it makes sense to predict that "we will look more at those who like us, if for no other reason than to observe signs of approval and friendliness" (Knapp & Hall, 1995, p. 378).

In terms of intercultural communication, different cultures have established a number of eye related norms. For example, in the dominant culture of the USA (which refers to the main culture in a society that is shared and accepted by the majority of a population), looking another person directly in the eye is not only very common but also highly valued (Triandis, 1994). In fact, it is suggested that gaze avoidance is usually associated with "lack of interest, dishonesty, slyness and negative attitudes" (Nishiyama, 2003, p. 23). Thus, eye contact is regarded as an important interpersonal skill offered by communication textbooks—"you can improve your eye contact by becoming conscious of looking at people when you are talking to them" (Verderber & Verderber, 2001, p. 140). While many cultures such as the dominant U.S., French, German and British culture employ direct eye contact, some other cultures such as Japanese and Korean regard direct eye contact as taboo or an insult (Samovar et al., 2009). For example, in Japan prolonged eye contact is considered rude, threatening, disrespectful, and even a sign of belligerence (Nishiyama, 2000). In some parts of Africa, "making eye contact when communicating with a person who is older or of higher status is considered a sign of disrespect or even aggression" (Richmond & Gestrin, 1998, p. 88). In short, cultures such as Korean, Japanese, African and East Indians employ nominal eye contact (Samovar et al., 2009). Overall, Knapp and Hall (1995) suggest that the differences in gaze patterns between cultures lie in "contact" and "noncontact", the duration of gaze, and where and whom to gaze at. Although misunderstandings or problems may arise between cultures (e.g.,

an American doing business in Japan), this study is focused only on British students in a UK university. In this context, it is assumed that gaze is valued and important in interpersonal interaction.

Harrigan (2013) summarised several variables that could be measured in gaze behaviour: eye direction (left/right, up/down); eye contact or mutual gaze between interactants; one-sided gaze (one person looks at another who does not return gaze); glancing (brief looks towards and away from another person or object); staring (continual gaze at another); and gaze aversion (looking away from another person) (Kleinke 1986; Noller 2005). It is pointed out that these variables are recorded as frequencies or durations, and the most commonly studied are: mutual gaze, glance frequency, gaze duration at partner, and proportion of looking during a specified activity (e.g., listening, speaking); many of these are intercorrelated (Duncan & Fiske, 1977). Harrigan also pointed out one difficulty in precise measurement is that of face gaze (looking towards another's face) versus eye gaze (looking into another's eyes). It is argued that one moves the head when redirecting gaze, and interactants tend to look at each other or well away (Exline 1972; Kendon 1967). Also as discussed above, eye contact is not reliably distinguished by receivers or observers from gazing at the area surrounding in the eyes (Cranach & Ellgring, 1973).Thus, in terms of measurement, eye-to-eye contact may be less critical than the direction of one's head in relation to another person. Validity estimates for eye-directed gaze are considered worse than those for face-directed gaze (Exline & Fehr 1982). Therefore, as suggested by Harrigan, it may be "more useful to record the extent to which interactants direct their face toward one another, rather than suffer cumbersome intrusions with eye tracking devices". In terms of reliability estimates for gaze variables, it is suggested that live interactions and videotaped records are often quite high because of their advantages of re-play, slow motion viewing and resolution of measurement errors (Argyle & Cook, 1976; Exline & Fehr, 1982).

2.2 Communication Problem Caused by the Host

In Chapter 2, the "problem caused by the host" is reviewed. Although Phillipson (2003) proposed "native speakers as the cause of communication difficulties" (p. 157) , he gave no further information about it. Therefore, one of the main aims of this research is to find out what the problems are (a summative discussion will be presented in Chapter 6). Apart from the one of speaking too fast or/and using idiomatic terms pointed out by the international students (see results in detail in Chapter 3 & 4), the home student who took the TC course also noted another potential problem when evaluating each other's performance in the group discussion. One of them pointed out that "other ones (untrained home students in the video)—it seems their amount of talk was really heavy in the native speaking for the most times" which indicated the native students spoke too much in the multicultural setting. Also five out of eight home students who took TC course admitted that they were trying to avoid dominating the conversation or speaking too much in the group discussion. These findings lead to the hypothesis in this study: in the multicultural setting (e.g., a group discussion mixed with native and non-native speakers) the untrained home students might speak more and that might give an impression of dominating the conversation for the non-native speakers.

To summarise, as suggested by the literature and previous findings from Chapter 3 &4, this study is focused on two stimuli—eye gaze and amount of talk. Videotapes were used for both measures. In terms of eye gaze, as the nature of the videotape quality and the lack of eye-tracking facility, gaze behaviour is recorded from face gaze, which refers to "the movement and orientation of the actor's head" (Duncan & Fiske, 1977, p. 43). Gaze duration at partners, proportion of looking during group discussion, and the total amount of glances were measured. In terms of amount of talk, duration of talk, proportion of talking during group discussion, and the total amount of turns were measured.

3. Research Questions

As pointed out in previous section, the overall aim of this chapter is to explore the development of home students' intercultural competence after the course *Transcultural Communication*. Previously, only home students who took the TC course were focused on. This section aims to compare the intercultural competence between home students who took the course and those did not. Using videotapes of group discussion from the TC assessment (see details for assessment of TC in Chapter 1), eye gaze and amount of talk of both groups were analysed. As argued above, it is hypothesized that 1) nonverbally the trained home students had more eye gazes (in terms of frequency) than the untrained home students; 2) verbally the untrained home students talked more than the trained home students.

4. Method

Participants

In total, sixteen home students (13 females and 3 males) were involved in the study. Again, they were all opportunity samples. Eight of them (all females) who took the TC course were labelled as the trained group. The other eight participants (5 females and 3 males) were volunteers who signed up only for the communicative task of the TC course. They were labelled as the untrained group. All the participants were full-time students at the university.

Apparatus

Videotapes

As noted in Chapter 2, one of the main assessments of the TC course is participating in a communicative task such as a group discussion. In the task, the participants were given a topic to discuss and asked to try to come to an agreement within 20 minutes. All of the participants' performances were video recorded for later evaluation (see details in Chapter 2

for module description**).** In total, 12 videotapes were used for analysis. All of the participants gave their consent to be recorded. The videotapes were collected from the TC course leader. Each video comprised one group of participants' performances (usually 4 to 5 people) and lasted around 20 to 30 minutes.

Procedure

Eye Gaze Measurement

As the communicative task involved both international and home students in stage 1 of the measurement, everyone who appeared in each video was measured individually. It should be noted here that one glance was counted no matter whom they were looking at, or when. That is to say, as long as the participant was looking at the group member(s) while he/she was speaking and listening, it counted as one glance. Gaze duration—the length of time (in seconds)-was counted as long as the participant was looking at someone during discussion (here the short gap when he/she switched away from one to another was dismissed). After everyone's gaze duration and frequency of glances were counted in the group, the proportion of looking during discussion (gaze duration/the whole length of conversation) and average length of glancing (gaze duration/total amount of glances) were calculated. An example of stage 1 measurement on eye gaze is shown below:

Table 5.2. 1 Example of stage 1 eye gazing measurement (data from one videotape)

T=Transcultural student (international)

T (HM)=Transcultural student (home)

N=non-transcultural student

HM=home student

Participants	Duration (seconds)	Proportion (of the whole conversation)	Glances	Mean length of glances (seconds)
T1	824	93%	37	22.27
N1	701	79%	64	10.95
N2(HM)	426	48%	128	3.33
T2 (HM)	632	71%	94	6.72
N3	762	86%	49	15.55

After everyone in all twelve videotapes was measured and listed in the table above, the data of the home students were picked out. Two new groups were generated—participants labelled as THM (as T stands for transcultural students, HM stands for home students) were grouped as *Trained*; participants labelled as NHM (as N stands for non-transcultural students) were grouped as *Untrained*. These two groups of data were put into SPSS. A t-test was performed to compare the variables between two groups.

Amount of talk

Similar to the procedure for eye gaze measurement, participants' amount of talk was analysed in two stages. In stage 1, everyone's talking duration and total amount of turns were counted individually within their group. The proportion of each person's talking during discussion (talking duration/whole length of conversation) and average length of turns (total amount of turns/ talking duration) were calculated accordingly. An example of stage 1 measurement on amount of talk is shown below in Table 5.2.2. In stage 2, home students' data have been allotted to an untrained group and a trained group. A t-test was performed to compare the variables between the two groups.

Table 5.2. 2 Example of stage 1 amount of talk measurement (data from one videotape)

T=Transcultural student

N=non-transcultural student

HM=home student

Participants	Duration (seconds)	Proportion (of the whole conversation)	Turns	Mean length of turns (seconds)
T1 (HM)	244	25%	41	5.95
N1 (HM)	202	20%	52	3.88
T2	222	22%	27	8.23
N2	167	17%	38	4.39
N3	156	16%	31	5.03

Follow-up Analysis for Amount of Talk

In order to further examine the differences between the participants' speech, a follow up analysis was performed using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Firstly, a qualitative analysis was conducted after all the videos had been transcribed. As the purpose of the follow-up analysis was to find out whether there was any difference in the speech content of the two groups (there was no specific hypothesis), thematic analysis was conducted from an inductive perspective (Clarke & Braun, 2006). By reading the transcripts several times, it appeared that the instead of solely talking about themselves, the trained TC students involved quite amount of expression such as "what do you think?", "shall we move on?", "that's a good idea" to address other participants in the group discussion (which is termed as *other-oriented speech* in this study). In order to test this hypothesis, the contents of home students' talk were coded to see whether there were repeated patterns. Then similar to other thematic analysis process (e.g., Chapter 3, 4 & 5.1) repeated patterns were created as subcategories. For example, all the usage of "that's a good idea", "that's a good point" were classified as "giving positive feedback" sub-category. Any comment that tried to bring the conversation back to the topic such as "shall we move on to the next point" or summarising participants' suggestions were classified to the "stick to the topic" subcategory. Lastly, one

main theme was generated and named as *other-oriented speech* as they all have the feature that focus or acknowledge other group members comparing to self-oriented which is solely self-expressive (e.g., "I think we should do xxx" or talking about their own story). The detailed category and subcategories with examples are presented in the results.

After the preliminary coding theme was generated, a quantitative measure on that theme was performed on the two groups. Specifically, the amount of other-oriented speech appeared in each home students' speech was counted. Then the proportion of other-oriented speech during discussion (turns of other-oriented speech/the total amount of turns) was calculated. These data were then put into SPSS. A t-test was performed to compare the variables between the two groups.

Inter-rater reliability analysis (IRR) was performed to assess the degree that coders consistently assigned categorical other-oriented speech rating to subjects in the study. A third-year undergraduate student (observer 2) in psychology department was trained for 20 minutes on the category of other-oriented speech. Four transcripts which was 25% of the entire data (N=16) were selected and coded by observe 2. Then a summary table was drawn up in which all categories used by both observers appear in the same order in both lists. A sample of the table is shown below. After filling all the data from both coders in the summary table, Cohen's kappa (*K=. 796*) was calculated accordingly (Hallgren, 2012).

Table 5.2. 3 Example of IRR Analysis

	Observer 2		
	Self-oriented	Other-oriented	Total
Observer 1			
Self-oriented			
Other-oriented			
Total			

5. Results

5.1 Eye Gaze

Four variables (duration, proportion, glancing and average length of glancing) in eye gaze were compared between the trained group (N=8) and the untrained group (N=8). There was no difference between two groups in duration (untrained mean = 451. 8, SD = 299.5, trained mean = 718.0, SD= 219.8; t (14) = -2.027, p = .062) or the frequency of glancing (untrained mean = 99.5, SD = 38.6, trained mean = 80.6, SD = 34.6; t (14) = 1.03, p = .321).

However, the mean of proportion of looking during discussion was significantly different (t (14) = -2.182, p = .047). For the trained group, they looked at the other participant(s) 67 percent of the whole discussion time (mean = 67.0%, SD= 19.0). That was significantly larger than the untrained group (mean = 43.0%, SD = 24.5). Also the mean of average length of glancing was significantly different (t (14) = -2.323, p = .036). The trained group shows longer average length of glances than the untrained group—the mean length of each glancing of the trained group was up to 10.48 seconds (SD = 6.01) whereas the untrained group was just 4.91 seconds (SD= 3.2). Details of these results are shown in Table 5.2.4.

Table 5.2. 4 Means and standard deviation (untrained and trained) of eye gaze for various measure

	Mean (SD)		t	Sig.
	Untrained (N=8)	Trained (N=8)		
Duration	286.4 (145)	316.1 (110)	-.460	.653
Proportion	28.3% (13.8)	30.8% (13.7)	-.367	.719
Turns	46 (23)	48 (13)	-.213	.835
Average length of turns	7.20 (4.95)	7.14(3.39)	.029	.977

5.2 Amount of Talk

(i) T-test on Overall Amount of Talk

Four variables were compared in amount of talk (duration, proportion, turns and average length of turns). Surprisingly, there was no difference between untrained and train group on any of these variables (see details in Table 5.2.5).

Table 5.2. 5 Means and standard deviation (untrained and trained) of amount of talk for various measure

	Mean (SD)		t	Sig.
	Untrained (N=8)	Trained (N=8)		
Duration	451.8(299.5)	718.0 (219.8)	-2.027	.062
Proportion	43.0% (24.5)	67.0% (19.0)	-2.182	.047
Glancing	99.5(38.6)	80.6 (34.6)	1.030	.321
Average length of glancing	4.91 (3.2)	0.48 (6.01)	-2.323	.036

(ii) Qualitative Results

As the above result from the t-tests suggests that the untrained home students spoke no more than the trained home students, further analysis was conducted on the quality of their speech. After thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2008), it turns out that the trained home students used a lot of other-oriented speech during group discussion. Here the theme *other oriented speech* contains five subcategories as: 1) stick on the topic (of group discussion), 2) acknowledging other person, 3) paraphrasing/asking for clarification, 4) giving positive feedback to other person, and 5) showing interest to another person. A detailed description and examples of each subcategory are reported in Table 5.2.6.

Table 5.2. 6 Subcategories and examples for other-oriented speech

Preliminary Coding Themes	Subcategories	Examples
Other-oriented Speech	Stick on the topic	• "Shall we start with introducing ourselves?" • Summarising the topic and participant's suggestions • "Shall we move on to the next facilities?"
	Acknowledging another person	• "Jiayu do you have any suggestions on food?" • "Do you think we should have xxx?" • "What do you suggest Josh?"
	Paraphrasing/asking for clarification	• "Do you mean like colourful walls and pictures?" • "Sorry what were you going to say?"
	Giving positive feedback	• "That's really good idea!" • "That's a good point."
	Showing interest to other participants (personal)	• "Where are you from?" • "Have you been there?"

(iii) T-test on Other-Oriented Speech

The result indicates a significant difference in the proportion of other-oriented speech (t (14) = -4.205, p = .001). Trained home students had a larger proportion of other-oriented speech (mean = 46.2%, SD =14.6) than the untrained home students (mean = 18.8%, SD = 11.3). Details of this result is showed in Table 5.2.7.

Table 5.2. 7 Means and standard deviation (untrained and trained) of other-oriented speech

	Mean (SD)			
	Untrained (N=8)	Trained (N=8)	t	Sig.
Proportion	18.8% (11.3)	46.2% (14.6)	-4.205	.001

(iv) IRR Analysis

An inter-rater reliability analysis using the Kappa statistic was performed to determine consistency among coders. Inter-rater reliability was determined using 25% of the data acquire by the two coders (4 trials). The inter-rater reliability for the two coders was found to be *Kappa* = .796, indicating that coders had satisfactory or even substantial agreement (as the result was closed to K = .80).

6. Discussion

Although there are numerous aspects to look at through videos in terms of nonverbal behaviour, this study only focused on eye gaze. The results confirmed the prediction proposed previously that the trained home students had more eye gaze towards other person(s) during the group discussion than the untrained group. Not only so, their average length of each glance was also much longer than the untrained home students. As suggested by the literature above, greater gazes give signs of approval and friendliness (especially here

in the British culture). With more and longer eye gaze, the trained home students might give the impression of more involvement and friendliness than the untrained home students towards other group members. More and longer eye gaze could also indicate that the trained home students were more confident or comfortable in communicating during the group discussion. As being friendly and confident are important factors in motivation, such results suggest trained home students had higher motivation than the untrained. Furthermore, the results also suggested the trained home students performed better in the skill level—as addressed in the literature above, making eye contact or eye gazing is regarded as an important interpersonal skill. Therefore, in short, the results of eye gaze measurement provide good support for the effectiveness of TC course, indicating that trained home students were more interculturally competent than the untrained home students, especially in terms of motivation and skill in the multicultural interaction setting.

In terms of the amount of talk, it was predicted that the untrained home students might talk more than the trained home students. This prediction was drawn from the testimonies from previous interviews as well as some untrained home students' performance in the group discussion. There was one untrained home student who spoke 52% of the whole conversation and each turn was up to 18.6 second on average. It turns out that this participant was just an extreme case. As matter of fact, the result suggests that the untrained home students talked no more than the trained home students during group discussion. However, after further analysis the result did show a significant difference in the amount of other-oriented speech between two groups. This result showed that although the trained and untrained group had similar amounts of talk, their content was different. For the trained home students, they focused more on the other group members rather than just talking about their own opinion. For example, they showed interest in the other participants by asking "where are you from", acknowledged them by explicitly asking their opinion, gave positive feedback when they tried to contribute

the discussion, and paraphrased whenever needed. Besides, the trained home students also demonstrated good management skills—they opened the discussion by introducing each other, structured the discussion by summarising group member's suggestions, and tried to bring back the conversation to the topic when needed. This other-oriented speech suggested that the trained home students were more skilled in intra-group communication—as proposed by Hargie, the key skills in small group leadership are "preparing, opening the discussion, structuring and guiding discussion, naming conflict, regulating participation and closing" (2017, p. 472).

The results for other-oriented speech are also consistent with previous findings from interviews with the trained home students. When talking about the role they played in the group discussion, the trained home students regarded themselves as a medium or mediator and tried to lead the conversation but not dominate it (see details in Chapter 5.1). That indicates a level of self-awareness. This supports Hakansson and Montgomery's argument that "being other-oriented involves a conscious effort to consider the world from the point of view of those with whom you interact" (2005. p. 267). Being other-oriented is not a single skill but a package or collection including essential communication skills, being self-aware, being aware of others, using and interpreting verbal and nonverbal messages, and listening and responding to others (Argyle, 1994).

In all, as suggested by Beebe, Beebe and Redmond, being other-oriented means "focusing on the interests, needs and goals of others while being true to your own principles and ethical credo" (2015, p 26). The results for the amount of talk, especially other-oriented speech, provide a good support for the value of intercultural training, as trained home students were more skilful and mindful in multicultural communication.

7. Summary

In order to further explore the development of home students' intercultural competence, a comparative study was conducted in this section. Eye gaze and amount of talk were measured and compared between trained and untrained home students. The results showed that trained home students not only had more and longer eye gazes than the untrained students during group discussion, but also they used more other-oriented speech than the untrained. Such findings indicate that the trained home students were more interculturally competent than the untrained especially in the multicultural intra-group interaction setting.

Chapter 5.3 Evaluation of the Course Transcultural Communication—an Overview of Results

1. Introduction

Starting from Chapter 3 which focused on the international students' difficulties, this thesis set up a baseline for the international students' need for adaptation during their staying in the UK. In Chapter 4 and 5.1, the results of the interviews suggested the development of intercultural competence of the participants after the course *Transcultural Communication*. In chapter 5.2, a comparative study has been done which indicated the trained home students were more interculturally competent than the untrained home students. In this section, more results from the interviews will be presented. Then an overview of how participants evaluated the TC course will be given by relating with the results from Chapter 4 and 5.1.

2. Evaluation of the Course Transcultural Communication—from Participants' Perspective

In total, 28 students who took the TC course participated in interviews. In order to find out the development of their intercultural competence, interview questions were structured in three steps. As the course was self-selective, the participants were firstly asked why they chose the course. Then they were asked what they learnt or gained from the course. Lastly, they were asked to evaluate the course or give feedback and comments on the course (see details of the interview protocol in Appendix C). In terms of the results on what they learnt from the course, this has been discussed in great detail in Chapters 4 and 5.1. Despite the differences in the subcategories between international and home participants, on the whole all the participants reported their intercultural competence was developed. An overall summary table is presented below.

Table 5.3. 1 Overall result of participants' ICC development (N=28)

Development of ICC	Number and Frequency
Motivation	25 (89.2%)
Knowledge	28 (100%)
Skills	27 (96.4%)
Awareness	24 (85.7%)

From the table, it can be seen that when being asked what they learnt from the TC course, 25 participants (89.2%) reported they were more motivated for communication after the course. All of the participants (100%) reported they learnt some knowledge about intercultural communication. 27 participants (96.4%) reported they had gained some skills and put them into practice in their daily life. 24 participants (85.7%) mentioned and also demonstrated a development of self-awareness.

As the interviews were carried out at the end of the course, apart from asking what they learnt, the participants were also asked to evaluate the course. A detailed summary of the results is presented below.

Table 5.3. 2 Summary of Participants' Evaluation of TC Course (N=28)

Positive Aspects	Number & Percentage	Negative Aspects	Number & Percentage
TC course is helpful in: • Communication in general • Own study • Future career	26 (93%)	The content of TC course lacks: • Cultural specific knowledge • Theories of communication skills	2 (7%)
TC course is: • Platform for meeting people and practising English • Friendly, relaxing, encouraging and diverse	15 (54%)	It is unclear of: • The purpose of some classes • The purpose of creating criteria	2 (7%)

2.1 Positive Aspects

Among the 28 participants, 26 of them (93%) evaluated the course positively. They evaluated the TC course as helpful in their own study (e.g., education and linguistic), future career and communication with people in general. For example, one participant from Italy said "maybe this experience (taking the course) gave me more curiosity to know other things and I think I will be like this forever throughout my life—curious, open-minded, and yes, aware of the problems that internationals or foreign people have in my country, in my city". Another interviewee from Russia said "I took a lot from the course—the experience and knowledge and some feelings that maybe it will take me a year here to understand. But I have understood them in 8 weeks, so it is good I took this course". For the home students, they also reported that "I would maybe like to be involved with in the future as well as working in educational issues—in a multicultural setting. So I think that kind of context this course would really help. Britain is full of different cultures especially I live in London. So, I think it is something that's very important for me just as a person who I meet through my life rather than necessarily important for my job".

Apart from being helpful in the above aspects, 15 participants (54%) also pointed out that the atmosphere of the course was friendly, relaxing, encouraging and diverse. For example, one of them said "I have been baffled by how much I have been enjoying this course, I don't think I've enjoyed a course at Uni as much as this". Some international participants said, "I didn't have much confidence, the teacher encouraged me and they were all nice and friendly". One interviewee also pointed out the physical arrangement of the course was different from others— "we were given ample opportunity to practise that, even from the simplest things such as rearranging the tables and chairs in the classroom away from the centre to allow us to sit in circle. I feel like this, physically eliminates the distance between students, and hence encourages more interaction". What's more, it was also

mentioned by the interviewees that the course provided a platform for them to meet people from different culture so that they could learn from each other. For example, one participant said "we had diversity. We had native speakers. And I think it is good to know native speakers' ideas and opinions. I haven't heard their opinions before so it's a very good experience and also I could exchange my opinions as well". For the home students who took course, they reported that "I am meeting people every week that I wouldn't have met. It gives me the chance to experience different people and everybody wants to learn a bit from each other".

2.2 Negative Aspects

On the other hand, there were some negative feedback from the participants. Two participants (7%) said they expected to learn more theories about different cultures (especially some specific culture) and how to behave in the cross-cultural setting. Also, two participants (7%) mentioned that they felt it was too vague to understand the purpose of some classes or creating the criteria for self-assessment. For example, one said "I expected a little more theory—we had a few courses where we were talking about these communication techniques so that was really interesting, but I expected to have more of these like telling you how to behave and cross-cultural communication. Sometimes classes were a bit too vague after the 2 hours I wonder…yeah. I just feel like I've tried to understand the text for the two hours." Such result was not surprising as according to the teacher, the main purpose of course was not teaching students about specific culture knowledge but to inspire them to figure out by themselves. One possible explanation for the negative feedback might be the communication gap between the teacher and the students. The description of the course on the website seems to be too general that students might assume they would learn about different cultures when they chose the course. Also, the teacher should make it clear about the purpose, content and

structure of the course not only at the first class of the course but also at the beginning of each class.

In terms of creating criteria for self-assessment, it seems that only one participant was confused about the purpose of it. On the contrary, positive feedback was given by other participants. For example, one said "the criteria and the task really gave us time to reflect and think of ourselves. The marking scheme is rigorous." Also one participant regarded this scheme as very "democratic". Other participant also mentioned creating the criteria and writing reflective report was useful when she found out it was the same process during her application for a job position. In all, although there was just one piece of negative feedback according to the marking scheme, more participants rated it as positive.

2.3 Goals and Accomplishment of the Participants

In Chapter 4 and 5.1, tables were presented to summarise the reason why participants chose TC course at the beginning (see more details in **Table 4.4 and Table 5.1.2.**). The above **Table 5.3.1** and **Table 5.3.2** shows the result that what the participants gained from the course and how they evaluated the course at the end. By comparing these results, it gives an idea of whether the participants' goals (the reason to take the course) have been accomplished. A detailed summative table is presented below.

Table 5.3. 3 Goals and Accomplishments of the TC Participants

Goals (why chose TC course at first)		Accomplishments (How TC being helpful at end)	
Details	Number & Percentage	Yes/No/Not sure	Number & Percentage
To learn: • Culture and communication skills	10 (35.7%)	Yes for knowledge of culture general No for knowledge of specific culture	28 (100%) 2 (7.1%)
To connect: • With own study	9 (32.1%)	Yes	15 (53.6%)
To prepare: • For future career • For abroad internship	3 (10.7%) 1 (3.6%)	Yes Yes	12 (42.9%) 1 (3.6%)
To get: • Credits • Opportunities to meet people and practise English	10 (35.7%) 4 (14.3%)	Yes Yes	10 (35.7%) 6 (21.4%)

As shown in the table, the left column presents the goals of the participants (why they chose TC course). The right column shows the final accomplishments after taking the course (according to what they said). The numbers (how many participants reported so) and frequency were counted. By comparing the results horizontally, it could be seen that overall the participants' goals have been accomplished in getting credits, learning culture general knowledge and communication skills and preparing for abroad internship. Some aspects even exceeded their expectations. Nine participants (32.1%) chose the course as they assumed it would be related to their own studies. It turned out that 15 participants (53.6%) reported the TC course was helpful for their own studies at the end. Similarly, more participants reported the course was helpful in preparing for the future job (10.7% at the beginning and 42.9% in the end) and meeting people and practising English (14.3% at the beginning and 21.4% in the end). However, as discussed above regarding negative feedback, two participants' (7.1%) goals for culture specific knowledge learning were not accomplished from the TC course.

3. Summary

Previously, the development of participants' intercultural competence has been discussed in separate chapters (Chapter 4 on international participants, Chapter 5.1 on home participants). This section combined and compared these results and gave an overview of the participants' evaluation of the course *Transcultural Communication.* In general, the results suggest that 1) overall the participants evaluated the course positively; 2) apart from learning culture specific knowledge, all participants' goals were not only accomplished, but also exceeded their expectation. Such results are helpful in answering the question: whether the course if effective for students' intercultural competence development, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

Chapter 6 General Discussion and Conclusion

1. Introduction

This chapter summarises the main findings from the previous chapters. By integrating the results with the *Relational Model of Intercultural Competence*, it will answer the main research questions: 1) what are the general difficulties that international students encounter during their stay in the UK; 2) does participation in intercultural training—the course *Transcultural Communication* have an effect on students' intercultural communication effectiveness? It will also discuss the findings related to "problem caused by the host" and other factors influencing students' intercultural competence. Lastly, limitation and recommendation for further research will be addressed.

2. Summary of Main Findings by Relational Model of ICC

Before answering the main research question, firstly it is important to go back to the definition of intercultural competence and the model of ICC that this thesis adopted. As mentioned in Chapter 2, this research adopts the *Relational Model of ICC* proposed by Imahori and Lanigan (1989). This model has two major components: a sojourner and a host national. Each of them possesses three major elements: intercultural competence, experiences, and goal. All of these elements contribute to relational outcome. According to this model, studies of intercultural competence need to examine or consider: 1) sojourner's intercultural competence, 2) host-national's intercultural competence, 2) each dyadic member's goal, 3) each dyadic member's experience, and 4) the relational outcomes. Thus, the main findings of this research will be summarised accordingly.

2.1 Relational Outcomes

In all, three empirical chapters were presented in this thesis. Starting from interviewing international students who had no intercultural training at the one university in the North of

England (Chapter 3), it was found that the main difficulty encountered by international students during their staying in the UK was culture shock which included language shock, education shock and adaptation for cultural differences. The results also indicated the need of the international students for developing interpersonal/intercultural relationships. Especially interacting with home students, they had more difficulties linguistically and psychologically. Overall, the purpose of this study was to set up a baseline of international students' intercultural experiences before any pedagogical intervention. Apart from language skills, what international students need are: 1) cultural knowledge and communicative skills that enable them to communicate effectively with people from different cultures especially with the host, and 2) satisfactory relationship or intimacy with home students. Hence, one element in the model—relational outcome has been set: intercultural effectiveness and relational satisfaction.

2.2 Sojourner's Intercultural Competence

Chapter 4 focused on sojourners'—international students' development of intercultural competence. By interviewing international students who took the course Transcultural Communication, it was found that their intercultural competence was developed not only in the aspects of motivation, skills and knowledge (as suggested by the model), but also in awareness. In particular, after the TC course, international students reported they: 1) became more confident and assertive when speaking English especially with home students (motivation), 2) learnt some knowledge of culture general, culture specific and communication rules (knowledge), 3) were able to display respect, to use communication skills when needed, and their English ability were improved (skills), and 4) were more aware of the culture of themselves and others, and became conscious during interaction (awareness). Together with findings from Chapter 3, these results imply that international students' needs could be partly fulfilled by developing their own intercultural competence. With the

knowledge and skills they learnt from the course, they might be able to 1) understand the process of culture shock and then cope with it, 2) break through cultural boundaries to communicate with people from different background, and 3) their English ability improved as they had plenty of chance to practise during class. Importantly, with the confidence gained from the course, they were less intimidated by the native speakers, hence it would be easier to form relationship with home students.

2.3 Host-National's Intercultural Competence

However, the relational outcomes could not be completely achieved without the effort from host-nationals. Chapter 5 focused on home students' intercultural competence. The results of interviews with home students who took TC course suggested that their motivation, knowledge, skills and awareness were developed as a consequence. Particularly as native speakers, their communication accommodation skills were improved—half of them reported they had awareness to accommodate their English in the intercultural setting, which they might not do consciously before taking the course. This finding implies the power of awareness—it enabled them to accommodate their speech even though they did not learn communication accommodation theory in the TC class. It also indicates one of the possible solutions for international students' biggest problem—the language barrier. As pointed out in Chapter 3, home students' English was found to be fast and difficult to understand. With home students' communication accommodation skills and awareness to do so, it is possible that the language barrier for international students could be minimised at some point. Another important development which will contribute to relational outcome is home students' motivation. Home students were found to be more confident, open-minded and active for communicating with both international and other native speakers. Such motivation might be helpful in solving home students' "passive xenophobia", thus promoting more communication between home and international students.

2.4 Goals—Effectiveness

According to Imahori and Lanigan (1989), only when effectiveness and appropriateness are examined, will the actual process of how sojourners' and hosts' competent intercultural interactions be achieved. In order to examine the effectiveness, firstly it is important to make it clear of the term "effectiveness" in this context. In fact, this term has already been defined in Chapter 2. According to Deardorff (2016) effectiveness is the degree of which the individual's goals were achieved. This statement identifies the core of "effectiveness" as to whether and how much the individual's goals have been accomplished—that is another element of relational model. In Chapter 5.3, by comparing the goals and accomplishment of the students taking TC course, it found out that overall the participants' goals (NB: the goals of the participants and the goal of the course were different. The former goals are the reason why they chose the course; the latter goal could be found in the Appendix A). have not only been accomplished at the end of the course, but also exceeded their expectations. Such findings provide some evidence for the effectiveness of the course at least from the students' perspective.

According to Spitzberg (2000), effectiveness "is the accomplishment of valued goals or rewards relative to costs and alternatives" (p. 380). This definition points out the need of considering other alternative training methods for developing intercultural competence. As a matter of fact, currently at the university, the Centre for Global Programmes also offers a short course for intercultural studies and events such as *International Conversations Afternoon* (ICA). For the intercultural studies course, although it is free to attend for university students, it is mainly open access and aiming for the overseas partner universities. The sessions consist of group work, thought experiments, role play, problem solving, poster presentation and debates, which cover topics related to culture. However, it is just a three-week course which only takes place once a week for an hour. That makes the total duration of

the course four hours only, which is much shorter than Transcultural Communication (4 hours × 8 weeks=32 hours). Such short-term training might work in developing knowledge and skills, but it is doubtful for the development of awareness and motivation which need more time in training. Also there is no assessment for the participants to perform at the end of the course. Thus, the actual outcome of the training is unclear. Moreover, the participants of this course seem to be primarily international students, as they are from overseas partner universities (e.g., Tohoku University, Tokyo University, and Chinese University of Hong Kong). As the course takes place during summer vacation when all the home students go back home, it is rare for the home students to volunteer themselves to participate. Hence it will disappoint the students who wish to interact with home students during the course. In all, for the short course *Intercultural Studies*, it is suitable for the students who want to have some hands-on skills and cultural knowledge. It might have an immediate effect on intercultural learning, however its intercultural effectiveness in the long term is debatable. Even if it could achieve some degree of intercultural effectiveness, international-home students' relationship would not be developed with the absence of home students.

Another event organised by Centre for Global Programmes is *International Conversations Afternoon (ICA)*. As it sounds, this is an event for students to meet each other and interact. It takes place once a week during the academic term in one of the colleges' common room. Like any other event, ICA is free to come and provides a relaxing environment for students to communicate. Therefore, it is suitable for students who wish to practise English and seek opportunities to meet people from different culture. However, as it is not an academic course, there is no teacher or organizer for theories or knowledge learning on culture and skills. The participants might be able to learn from each other during interaction. However, for the international students, going to ICA is just an add-on experience to their lives abroad. As the literature suggested, simply going abroad for a certain period of

time is not enough for developing intercultural competence. It is also not enough for developing intercultural effectiveness if only going to event such as ICA without some systematic training.

Overall, compared to other alternatives for developing intercultural competence, the course Transcultural Communication is more academic and intensive. The four aspects of intercultural competence are covered by the content of the sessions and the assessments. By reading handouts beforehand and discussions during seminars, students can learn theories about culture. Creating criteria for assessing intercultural competence makes them have the chance to reflect and integrate the knowledge they have. Attending the final assessment (group discussion) gives the chance for students to actual demonstrate their intercultural competence in an actual intercultural interaction. Lastly, reflective journal and evaluation report show the degree of their awareness in their own intercultural competence development and the consciousness during interaction. In terms of developing home-international students' relationships, as discussed in Chapter 5.3, the TC course created a friendly and diverse environment where both home students and international students were involved to learn and communicate. It provided a platform for developing home and international relationships, as they could hear each other's ideas and opinions especially under the culture-related topics. As a matter of fact, it was found that some students had developed good friendships with each other after the course. Thus, taking the course could solve the problem of lack of opportunities to meet people and form intimate relationships, as reported in Chapter 3. To summarise, the course Transcultural Communication is a better choice for developing intercultural competence, especially for the student seeking intercultural effectiveness and satisfactory relationships.

Besides effectiveness, another aspect of intercultural competence is appropriateness. According to Imahori and Lanigan (1989), "the process of communication can be defined as

either competent or incompetent depending on the appropriateness of behaviours in communication process" (p. 276). As pointed out in Chapter 1, the degree of appropriateness is determined by the interactants involved in the interaction. These statements indicate that appropriateness should only be examined by each other based on interactants' behaviour during the communication. The assessment of the TC course did provide video data to observe participants' behaviour in the group discussion, however it is not valid to determine participants' appropriateness from the researcher's or any third party's perspective. Instead, it is only valid when the participants involved in the group discussion evaluate each other. In Chapter 2, it has been introduced that students taking the TC course for credits were asked to do so through writing evaluation report about themselves and other members' performance. Due to the limited time for this research, it does not include the studies in this research. However, it will be a good direction for the further research in the future.

2.5 Problem Caused by the Host

However, the videos from the TC course did provide valuable data for exploring the issue of "the communication problem caused by the host". As pointed out in Chapter 2, there is a gap in the literature in studying home students' intercultural competence. To find out what exactly the "problem caused by the host" is, a comparison study was performed on the video data between the home students who were trained by the TC course and those who were not. By measuring eye gaze behaviour and amount of talk, the findings in Chapter 5.2 suggested that trained home students not only had more and longer eye gaze than the untrained students during group discussion, but also used more other-oriented speech than the untrained. Such findings not only indicate that the trained home students were more intercultural competent than the untrained, but also implies problems native speakers might have if they not trained. Firstly, less and shorter eye gaze from untrained home students might indicate that home students are less motivated for communication especially

intercultural communication. Such a finding fits in with previous studies on home students'

passive xenophobia (Spiro & Henderson, 2007). Not mentioning the number of home

students who took the TC course is much fewer than the international students. In total, this

research involved TC students from 2015 autumn term to 2017 spring term (four terms in

total). Among them only eight were home students comparing with over 30 international

students. For the 2015 autumn and 2016 spring term, there was no home student at all in the

class. There was also one home student who quit the course halfway through. Together with

the testimonies from international students in the interview—they felt distant from home

students, these findings all indicate one problem of the host—low motivation for intercultural

communication.

The result of the comparison study also showed that even for home students who were

sufficiently motivated for intercultural communication (those who volunteered for

participation in the group discussion) also had the "problem caused by the host" in the way

they spoke. In the research literature, it has been found that native speakers tend to talk more

and succeed in influencing the outcomes more, hence they might be the cause of

communication problems (Phillipson, 2003, p. 167). Such an argument is supported by results

on the amount of other-oriented speech. The finding that trained home students used more

other-oriented speech not only implies the effectiveness of the intercultural training, but also

the problems that might be caused by native speakers. Without any intercultural training,

home students tended to talk more about themselves and their own opinions, which was good

in terms of contributing for group discussion. However, it might leave impression of being

self-centred and inconsiderate of other group members, even if not intended to do so. As

matter of fact, this assumption has been confirmed by the result from interviews. Some

participants did evaluate untrained home students' performance in the group discussion as

"dominating", "spoke too much but not listening", and "conversation is unbalanced". In all,

these findings imply that there is a lack in hosts' awareness and skills in intercultural communication. By examining the type of home students' speech, it provides evidence for Philipson's argument that "native speakers have greater facility in speaking the language, but not necessarily greater sensitivity in using it appropriately" (2003, p. 167).

What else might be the cause of communication problems is the hosts' English. The result from interviews on international students pointed out the importance of "international English" for home-international interaction. Comparing to non-native speakers, natives' English seems to be less "international" which makes it difficult for non-natives to understand. As there is a lack in the literature on how native speakers could cope with "international English", it seems difficult to solve such problem if native speakers have no knowledge of it. Having said so, the result from trained home students did provide evidence for a possible solution. With awareness and communicative accommodation skills, native speakers could be able to change their English when needed. For example, more paraphrasing or adjusting their English according to the interactant's English ability could complement to the lack of the knowledge on international English.

In all, in terms of the "problems caused by the host", this research gives good support for the previous literature. All of these problems discussed above indicate the need for developing native speakers' intercultural competence. It also provides evidence for the effectiveness of interactional training on home students.

2.6 Past Experiences

The last component in each dyadic member is past experiences. According to Imahori and Lanigan (1989), past intercultural experience influences one's level of intercultural competence in one or more components. Such argument has been supported by this research. It found out that among 28 participants who took the TC course, five international students

and five home students had long-term (three months above) intercultural experiences previously such as living in another country with family, doing exchange programme as a student. All of these international students admitted that the experience of previously studying abroad encouraged them to pursue further study in the UK. It also helped them to adapt to UK life easier and faster. This finding suggests prior success in mastering environments create self-fulfilling prophecies. Thus, individuals are willing to engage in further exchanges. For the home students who took the course, three of them had lived in another country for years. Such experiences required them to develop intercultural competence since childhood. Another two home students had one year abroad studying experience in other country. Being a sojourner in another country and speaking a foreign language made them more open-minded and sympathetic towards the international students in UK, as one of them said "I know how it felt like and how frustrated it would be when you speak a second language". One of them even had demonstrated communication accommodation skills when she was in China. She switched her British accent to American as she found it was easier for the host-national to understand. In all, these findings suggest positive experiences in the past may result in higher level of both behavioural skills and motivation. Not mentioning the knowledge have been gained from past experiences.

On the other hand, as Imahori and Lanigan (1989) suggest, an individual's competence level influences the nature of his/her experience in intercultural interactions. Among the 28 participants who took TC course, 26 of them said they were willing to have more intercultural experience such as doing internship or further study in another country. One of them said "now I think I could live in anywhere in the world". This indicates a high level of motivation. It is reasonable to assume that they might enjoy their intercultural relationships more than those who did not take the course. However, there were two participants who admitted that they would not have long-term intercultural experience such as living abroad anymore. This

was due to their negative intercultural experience as a sojourner. Both of them experienced severe culture shock such as home sickness when living in another country. Such a finding supports the results of previous studies according to which simply studying abroad is not sufficient for creating effective global citizenship (Berg, 2007). On the contrary, the negative abroad experience might result in the avoidance for further intercultural communication.

2.7 What the *Transcultural Communication* Course is Not

So far, it is clear that the course *Transcultural Communication* course had a positive effect for intercultural competence development on the students who chose the course. However, its wider effectiveness for students at the university in general is still unclear. As the course was self-selective, the willingness to choose the course indicates a level of motivation. It is possible that the students who took the course were interculturally competent than those who did not at the beginning. Thus, what the course did was "making the good into better". However, it is the students who did not take the course who really need the training especially the ones who are more ethnocentric. It has been mentioned earlier that there was a native speaker who took the course at the beginning but quit after three weeks. From the feedback from the course leader, the reason he withdrew from course was his ethnocentrism. He could not accept the opinion that "there is no standard English". As a native speaker, he believed that "everyone should speak the way as I do". Such a statement indicates his tendency to see his culture as superior than others. Thus, there is a need for intercultural training for home students to mitigate polarization and ethnocentrism. However, due to ethical issues and current university policy, the TC course is still self-selective. Thus, so far it is not possible to see its effect on the students who have an ethnocentric worldview.

3. Limitations

While this research provides valid evidence for the effectiveness of the intercultural training, it does have a number of limitations.

As the course is self-selective, all the participants were opportunity samples. It is impossible to control for sample size. For the qualitative data, this research involved data generated from 48 interviews for Chapter 3 and 28 from Chapter 4 and 5.1. That fulfilled Braun and Clarke's recommendation—a sample of at least six if using interviews (2006). However, for the quantitative portions of the comparison study in Chapter 5.2 was limited due to the low participation of home students.

A second concern is the possible existence of the "demand characteristics" phenomenon (Orne, 1962). For the students who were on the TC course, they knew that their performance in group discussion contributed to their course assessment and to their study. They had also been exposed to theories of intercultural communication in the course and may have wished to reflect these in their performance. Comparing to the volunteers for the group discussion, they might have greater incentives to perform as well as they can. Without being told the real purpose of the group discussion, volunteers might not be motivated as well as TC students. Thus, their performance might be under evaluated. It would be less biased if they could receive the same information as TC students. That requires an improvement of the assessment-design for the course leader.

Third, the research design did not show a long-term effect of the course. All the interviews were carried out at the end of the course, which indicated an immediate effect of the course. Further studies are needed to track the participants to see long-term effects. For example, how the international students cope with reverse culture shock after the course going back to his/her country; and how the course helps for the home students in his/her

career and internship life. Also, this research did not show a before-after effect of the training. To get a more accurate picture of the effect of the course, it is calling for a developed methodology which could indicate any "bottom-line" outcomes in improved performance.

Language proficiency may also influence the results. Although interviews with most international students proceeded in a fairly smooth fashion, the content of the interview is still limited by the participants' and researcher's English ability. As English is used as lingua franca, there were cases that participants' thought could not be seamlessly transferred and communicated during interview.

As it was impossible to control the sample type, gender differences were not considered in this thesis. However, it should be noted that there were more female students participating on the TC course than males (23 females vs. 5 males). Especially for the home students who signed up for the course, they were all females. Further studies are needed to enrich our understanding of whether females and males perform differently in intercultural interaction. For example, due to the absence of trained male home students, it is still unclear which gender uses more other-oriented speech during interaction within this study.

Finally, this research is just a start for the "problem caused by the host". In the comparative study in Chapter 5.2, only two stimuli were examined. However, more could be explored and compared for further research such as the correlation between amount of talk and eye gaze, other non-verbal behaviours such as facial expression and body gesture. In terms of communication accommodation, more work could be done to explore what extent the trained home students successfully accommodate their speech comparing to the untrained, and how the accommodation reduces the misunderstanding during intercultural interaction.

4. Implications and Recommendation for Future Research

The outcomes of this thesis suggest several new lines of research.

4.1 Relational Model's Research Implication

In Chapter 2, it has been discussed the reason of choosing relation model for this research instead of other well-cited Deardorff's pyramid model (2006). By carrying out this research, it confirms that: 1) the relation model has more guidance in assessing intercultural competence as it clearly points out the key factors within each component, in particular it is useful during the procedure of coding and generating themes; 2) as the summary presented above, relational model provides a general structure to summarise findings and relate them together. However, as suggested by Imahori and Lanigan (1989), pragmatically it is impossible to measure all these variables in one study. For the future research, more research is encouraged to test the validity of the model especially on the "relational" data of competence and outcome variables (Imahori & Lanigan, 1989). For example, most of the comments from the interviews in this thesis were self-descriptive, it will be worthwhile to examine the discrepancy or congruency from self- and other-perception of competence or outcome variables. Furthermore, more research of observation of dyadic behaviours instead of individual behaviours are needed.

4.2 Possible Modifications to Training Course *Transcultural Communication*

The findings of this thesis suggest several recommendations for the course Transcultural Communication. Firstly, as pointed out in Chapter 5.3, the course leader should make it clear about the purpose of the course (as well as the purpose of each class) and the content of the course at the very beginning to avoid disappointment and confusion. To involve more home students to participate, the description on the website should be written in the format that is less "international student oriented". In terms of the content, the theories of communication accommodation should be added into the teaching material given its positive effect on home

students' intercultural competence. The findings on other-directed talk indicate that being-other oriented is a set of important communication skills which should be considered to add in the course material.

The format of the teaching could be more diverse as well. For example, the book *Intercultural Sourcebook: Cross-Cultural Training Methods vol. 1 &2* (Fowler & Mumford, 1999) introduces various training tools and methods (e.g., role play, simulation games, and case studies etc.) that aim to develop intercultural competence at different level for different purposes. The students would enjoy the class if more activities were involved in the classroom rather than just reading and discussion. Hence the training might be more effective.

4.3 IRR Analysis for Assessing Intercultural Competence

In this research, the second coder was given one-hour training for the coding. It will be interesting to find out the results if the second coder was given more training on the theories of intercultural communication. It is hypothesised that an interculturally competent coder is more likely to be aware of the cues identified in the data.

4.4 The Application of Communication Accommodation Theory

The findings of the thesis point out the importance of communication accommodation in the multi-cultural setting. Especially for the native speakers, with the absence of the knowledge about "international English" or "world English", to mindfully accommodate their speech is the key for the efficient intercultural communication. However, given the lack of research literature on native speaker's intercultural competence, there are few studies focussed on the application of communication accommodation in this context. Although communication accommodation is regarded one of the key skills in intercultural competence in the Relational Model, more studies are needed on how to apply communication

accommodation in intercultural training, how to assess it, and how effective this skill will be in the actual ELF interaction.

4.5 Confidence Building through Language Teaching and Intercultural Training

The findings from these data suggest proper guidance could build up international students' confidence, especially when they speak English with native speakers. This applies particularly in language teaching as well as intercultural training. It is important to let the second language learners know that learning foreign languages is not a route towards pretending to be native speakers. What is more important is to be able to express themselves effectively in English with people from anywhere in the world. Only when people realise that the language belongs to its users, wherever they come from, and however they express themselves, then they are one step closer towards equitable communication (Philipson, 2003).

4.6 University Policy Making and Staff's Intercultural Training

If a relative long-term training course works, in the sense of contributing positively on the integrity of students and internationalisation of the university, then this seems an important reason to build it into higher education programmes in general. The training course should not only be a self-selective, but also encouraged to be taken by all the students (international and home). Meanwhile, university staff and lecturers' intercultural competence should not be neglected. Previous studies (e.g., Chen, 2008) found that teachers' views around cultural difference had an impact on students. Holmes (2005) also found that the classroom does not itself foster intercultural friendship or develop intercultural competence—it may even reinforce cultural stereotypes. Hence, staff and lecturers are also encouraged to take intercultural training. By doing so, they could mindfully manage the classroom, group work, and supervision meeting in the intercultural manner.

5. Conclusion

In the current decades, much has been achieved in the field of intercultural communication. The framework has been systematised; the training methods have been refined. Institutions of higher education across the globe now recognise the need to offer courses and experiences that foster the knowledge, knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for intercultural competence and responsible, global citizenship. However, the evaluation of the intercultural training may not have received all the attention it deserved. By conducting this research, it hopes to raise the awareness of the importance of intercultural training through introductory courses. Developing intercultural competence could increase students' employability and achieve the goals of organisation working with diverse individuals. But it is also beyond these utilitarian goals—it is about changing people's worldview and making the world more humane. Hopefully this research could inspire more meaningful intercultural interactions. Intercultural training could be supported and promoted not only by saying but more participating.

Appendices

Appendix A

Full outline of the Course Transcultural Communication

Module Name: Transcultural Communication

Module Number: EDU00043H

Module Leader/Co-ordinator: Ms. Victoria Jack

Credit Value: 20 credits

Credit Level: H

Academic year of delivery:

2018/19

Module occurrences: A (Autumn Term) B (Spring Term)

Teaching cycle:

Autumn and Spring Term 2018/19

Module Aims:

This module is intended for final year undergraduate students preparing for imminent employment. It is particularly intended for those students who need practical and theoretical guidance in envisaging their future working possibilities in a transcultural or global context. In this sense, the module intends to complement other modules in the students' programmes by allowing students to express concepts and practices in a transcultural environment. The module is also intended for Exchange and Visiting students, who have indicated that they would like to undertake work at level 6, with a strong practical component.

Module Learning Outcomes:

Successful students will

- have a comprehensive understanding of views of culture, will critically

analyse how cultures have been categorised

- be able to: analyse transcultural communication data relevant to Education

(e.g. recordings of transcultural conversation) using appropriate techniques;

- synthesise, with minimum guidance, from a range of relevant sources and data

in order to confidently construct criteria for the assessment of transcultural

competence; critically evaluate a range of inter/transcultural assessment systems;

● be able to: interact effectively within a multicultural team; manage their learning using a full range of resources, make confident use of constructed transcultural assessment criteria and tools; select and manage relevant information competently; work autonomously (manifested in self-direction, self-discipline, time management and self-critique); engage effectively in formal spoken and written interaction in a multilingual/multicultural environment;

● be able to: engage with other cultures; appreciate and evaluate critically their own culture; develop criteria to describe and assess intercultural communicative competence;

● be able to reflect critically on transcultural communication factors, and their own use of transcultural communication skills, in research and practice in **Education.**

Module Content:

This module aims to help students understand factors and issues in transcultural communication and how this differs from 'intercultural communication': students will be expected to critically analyse stereotyped or essentialist views of culture, whether national, religious or otherwise socio-historically constructed, and move towards an understanding of communication in a constantly fluctuating context where cultural identities are emergent. It is hoped and expected that participation in this module will bring about cultural and identity shifts, as well as changes in perceptions of culture and language.

Transcultural Communication Course Outline

Session 1

Intro

Identifying issues in transcultural communication, students participate in a goal focussed group communication task and then discuss the interaction and identify personal challenges, success in the task and contributing factors to success or failure of communication

There will be a discussion of issues and challenges in transcultural communication. Understanding definitions in the field: cross, inter and transcultural communication

Session 2

Culture

Discussing different definitions of culture and evaluating cultural models such as collectivist and individualist, power distance, high/low context cultures etc.

Establishing what an effective transcultural communicator is drawing on personal experiences.

Session 3

Identity

Developing awareness of identity, national and cultural identity and the effect of experience on developing and changing identities.

Identifying categories for the assessment of transcultural communication skills in participants: developing a working model of assessment criteria for use on the task.

Session 4

Language

Defining language and analysing the overlap between languages. Considering English as a lingua franca and investigating "the native speaker variety" and standard language forms

Analysing models of transcultural assessment tools

Session 5

Formative Transcultural Communication Task

Students participate in the formative transcultural communication task and reflect on it with the group members.

Phenomena from the formative task: students present "interesting" phenomena from the transcultural communication task and connect it to the literature

Session 6

Critical reflections on TC themes from weeks 1-4

Developing alternative views of analysing culture: Neo-racism, Cosmopolitanism, Cultural Stereotyping, Othering and Labelling

Finalising the assessment tool

Session 7

Summative Communication Task: Writing the tasks

Reading share: students present insights from their reading

Session 8

Summative Task

Phenomena from the Summative task with critical evaluation using criteria and literature

Session 9

Report Writing: gaining understanding of the structure of the report

Feedback, course evaluation and reflections

Assessment:

(Include the Term and Week when assessment takes place; and word length – this may appear on the OMC under 'additional assessment information')

Task	Length	% of module mark
Essay/coursework Analysis & reflection of group discussion	N/A	34
Essay/coursework Self evaluation & reflection	N/A	33
Oral presentation/seminar/exam **Group Discussion Task**	N/A	33

Special assessment rules:

None

Additional Assessment Information:

There will be one oral and two written summative tasks.

The oral task will involve students in a transcultural discussion; they will be assessed on their ability to engage sensitively with others and to contribute relevant ideas and knowledge.

One written task will require students to write a critical analysis of the assessed discussion they have participated in; they will be assessed on the richness and relevance of the background literature they have referred to and on the validity and robustness of the analytical tools they have used.

The other written task will require students to reflect critically on their own journey through the teaching weeks of the module, articulating any changes in their culturally-oriented self-perceptions. They will be assessed on their appreciation and awareness of their own culture, related to background reading, and on their level of awareness of the extent to which they have changed (in attitude and outlook), or could have changed.

Reassessment:

Task	Length	% of module mark
Essay/coursework Analysis, self-evaluation & reflection based on presentation	n/a	50
Oral presentation/seminar/exam Oral Presentation & follow-on discussion	n/a	50

Module feedback:

Because of the nature of the teaching, students will receive immediate feedback on their performance in formative assignments. There will be a four-week turnaround on written work after which students will receive a written report.

Key texts:

Baker, W. (2015). *Culture and identity through English as a Lingua Franca: rethinking concepts and goals in intercultural communication*. (Developments in English as a Lingua Franca [DELF]; No. 8). Berlin, DE: De Gruyter Mouton.

Jackson, J (2014) *Introducing Language and Intercultural Communication*, London: Routledge

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Samovar, L., Porter, R. & Mc Daniel, E., (2006). *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*, Wadsworth: Cengage Learning

Samovar, L., Porter, R., Roy C. & Mc Daniel, E., (2017). *Communication between cultures,* 9th Ed, Cengage Learning

Appendix B

Example of Consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS IN ZHAOMING WANG'S
RESEARCH PROJECT

Instructions: Before participating the study, please first read carefully and sign this "informed consent" form. This form must be returned in order to for us to include your comments in our study. All information will be kept confidential and no names will be used.

Title of Research Project: Developing Intercultural Competence in UK Universities—the Effectiveness of the Course Transcultural Communication

1. You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Zhaoming Wang under the supervision of Dr. Peter Bull in the department of psychology. Your participation is strictly voluntary. Before agreeing to participate, you should know enough about it to make an informed decision. If you have any questions, please ask and be sure you are satisfied with the answers before participating.

2. The purpose of the study is to learn how intercultural training impacts the intercultural learning of the participants and others. We are contacting you to learn about your experience in UK.

3. Participation in this study involves the following:

Participants are invited to participate in a semi-structured interview at the end of the spring academic term. The interview will mainly ask about the general experience in UK and development of your intercultural competence and communication skills. It takes about 10-15 minutes long.

Participants will be asked about their willingness to share video clips.

4. There are no known risks associated with this research project other than possible discomfort with the following:

You will be asked questions about personal experiences as a student in UK.

You will be asked questions about personal feelings about the course transcultural communication.

5. Possible benefits from participation in this project are:

You will have an opportunity to reflect on your experiences.

You will contribute to knowledge about the impact of intercultural training programmes.

Your will help to improve the program for future participants.

6. Remember, participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, and you may withdraw at any time during the research project. In addition, you may choose not to answer any questions with which are you not comfortable. You will NOT be penalized in any way should you choose not to participate or to withdraw.

7. We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. As part of this effort, your identity will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study. The information in the study records will be kept strictly confidential. Individual data will be stored securely and will be made available only to persons conducting the study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study.

8. If you have questions or concerns at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher (email: zw873@york.ac.uk).

A. I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I hereby grant permission to use the information I provide as data in Zhaoming Wang's research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and without use of my name.

B. Participant's Signature   **Date:**

Email address:

C. I am willing to be contacted for an interview (of about 10 minutes) to discuss my experience further (audio-recorded):

      Yes   **No**

D. I am willing to let the researcher access assessment video for further data collection:

      Yes   **No**

Appendix C Interview Protocol for Chapter 3

Interview Questions on International Students' Difficulties in the UK

1. How long have you been in the UK? Which department you are in? Which year?

2. How do you find your staying so far?

Do you enjoy it? In which aspect? Could you give some examples?

Is there any difficulty you find during your staying? In which aspect? And examples? Or what is your major concern so far?

You mentioned there were some difficulties in…, do you have any idea that how you could overcome such difficulties?

3. Evaluate your current state, is it the same as what you expected before you coming to the UK? In which way it is same/different?

4. What your expectation now after you have stayed for a while and still have …time left before finishing your study?

5. Which aspect you would like to improve the most during your staying in the UK?

Appendix D Interview Protocol for Chapter 4

Part 1: Interview Questions on International Students' Difficulties in the UK

1. How long have you been in the UK? Which department you are in? Which year? Have you lived in any other country for a long time before?

2. How do you find your staying so far?

Do you enjoy it? In which aspect? Could you give some examples?

Is there any difficulty you find during your staying? In which aspect? And examples? Or what is your major concern so far?

You mentioned there were some difficulties in…, do you have any idea that how you could overcome such difficulties?

3. Evaluate your current state, is it the same as what you expected before you coming to the UK? In which way it is same/different?

4. Evaluate your interaction with international students and home students, is there any difference? Who do you think as easier to communication with?

Part 2. Interview Questions on Evaluating the Course Transcultural Communication

1. Why did you choose the course?

2. How do you find the course so far?

What did you learn from the course? Could you give some examples?

Do you end up using what you learnt outside the class?

3. How do you find the assessment of the course? How was your performance in the group discussion and others?

4. How do you evaluate the course? Is it what you expected at the time when you chose it?

5. Would you recommend the course to other students or your friends and why?

Appendix E Interview Protocol for Chapter 5.1

Part 1: Interview Questions for home students' Background

1. Could you introduce yourself please?

What do you study? Could you tell me your family background?

2. Have you been to any other country before for a long time?

If yes, for how long? How was your stay? Could you tell me your experience in details?

3. Do you speak any second language?

Part 2. Interview Questions on Evaluating the Course Transcultural

Communication

1. Why did you choose the course?

2. How do you find the course so far?

What did you learn from the course? Could you give some examples?

Do you end up using what you learnt outside the class?

3. How do you find the assessment of the course?

How was your performance in the group discussion? As native speaker, what was your

role in the group discussion? How do you evaluate other people's performance?

4. How do you evaluate the course? Is it what you expected at the time when you chose

it?

5. Would you recommend the course to other students or your friends and why?

Part 3: Interview Questions about Home-International Relationships

1. As native speaker, how do you think your interaction with international students?

How are international students' English? Is there any difficulty when you communicate
with them? If yes, could you give me some examples?

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