DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE WITH WEB 2.0 TECHNOLOGIES IN AN EFL CONTEXT

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at

The University of Queensland in 2016

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Abstract

Intercultural English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) education requires a suitable theoretical framework for the teaching of intercultural competence (IC). On the one hand, existing conceptualizations of IC in the intercultural communication literature are not always helpful for language teachers; on the other, the language teaching literature addresses the inclusion of IC to a limited extent (Baker, 2015; Porto, 2013). By its interdisciplinary nature, intercultural EFL education requires a combination of compatible theoretical approaches, and existing theories of IC should be adapted and combined based on their complementarity. Accordingly, a study on IC in EFL contexts might need the integration of a developmental model (Bennett, 1993) and a component theory of IC (Byram, 1997); moreover, it should foreground language elements by referring to linguistic theories to understand the role of language in IC development.

In the light of this argument, the present project adapted both Byram (1997) and Bennett (1993) as theoretical frameworks and investigated IC development in reference to functional linguists' APPRAISAL (Martin & White, 2007) to gain insights into the affective dimension encoded in informants' language. Moreover, in response to the need of an authentic environment for teaching intercultural communication in a university-level EFL context in Vietnam, the project explored the extent to which a Web 2.0 mediated learning design could contribute to EFL learners' IC development.

Employing a design-based research methodology, this study involved creating a Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design for university-level EFL learners in Vietnam, testing and refining it. Specifically, based on the pedagogical context of the case study and existing principles of intercultural education, a Facebook-mediated IC learning design was created and integrated into the existing course, "Intercultural Communication". It entailed three iterative learning cycles of written chat between students and guests from other cultures about cultural issues of interest to them, students' written reflection on what they learned and discussion with peers, all of which were posted on Facebook. The researcher implemented this design over fifteen weeks and collected data from a nineteen student class. The data included the material posted on Facebook, follow-up interviews with focal students and student evaluations.

With regard to theorizing intercultural communication, the study shows that the students' IC development was a process of languaging to create changes in cognition, affect and skills. Specifically, they used their linguistic and multimodal resources to articulate, formulate, exchange and create knowledge in chats with the guests and with peers, and in

their written reflections. Via these processes they developed their skills of discovery and interaction, and of interpreting and relating cultural phenomena. Languaging was also a process of expressing feelings and negotiating stances. Additionally, the process of change involved balancing cognitions and shifting feelings associated with those cognitions. It was influenced by situational factors and personal traits. Accordingly, the students' trajectories of IC development shifted dynamically through different states of ethnocentrism to a state of relativizing values underlying cultural difference.

In pedagogical terms, the students' changes in knowledge, feelings and skills suggest that the proposed learning design contributed to their IC development. The constructivist pedagogy underlying the design and the mediation of Web 2.0 facilitated the students' reflective thinking. Specifically, Facebook-mediated chats with guests gave the students intercultural experiences, made previously invisible cultural differences more visible, and thus triggered the students' awareness of them. The students' changes in IC were attributed to their critical reflection which was scaffolded by teacher preparation, guidance and feedback, by peers cooperation, and by empowerment from the guests. However, the findings disclose several constraints of Web 2.0 and weaknesses of the learning design. The most salient are time management, and provision of feedback. Moreover, there might be a mismatch between Vietnamese students' educational expectations and values, and Western constructivist pedagogy involved in the learning design.

Theoretically, the study offers insights into less-investigated aspects of IC and proposes a useful conceptualization of IC in EFL contexts. First, it illuminates a range of affective states associated with different cognitive configurations that are overlooked in commonly-cited theories (e.g., Bennett, 1993; Byram, 1997). It also sheds light on the phenomena of languaging and of cognitive balancing in cognitive and affective adaptation which have been criticized as under-investigated. Second, it addresses the major weaknesses of existing IC conceptualizations, namely abstractness and lack of awareness of linguistic issues, by providing linguistic and non-linguistic evidence of IC development. Drawing on findings about the interaction of these dimensions, individual trajectories are uncovered, revealing how EFL learners construct IC via languaging. Accordingly, the study proposes a more comprehensive model of IC that can be integrated into an EFL curriculum. Moreover, the project generates pedagogical principles for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning designs.

Practically, the study demonstrates an example of how to create a Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design which can be flexibly adapted in similar contexts.

Declaration by author

This thesis is composed of my original work, and contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference has been made in the text. I have clearly stated the contribution by others to jointly-authored works that I have included in my thesis.

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Publications during candidature

No publications.

Publications included in this thesis

No publications included.

Contributions by others to the thesis

No contributions by others.

Statement of parts of the thesis submitted to qualify for the award of another degree

None.

Acknowledgements

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List of Abbreviations used in the thesis

C1   people's own culture

C2   the other's culture

DBR   Design Based Research

DMIS   Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

EFL   English as a Foreign Language

IC   Intercultural competence

L1   First language

L2   Second language

MOET   Ministry of Education and Training

Ref.   Reference

RS   Research question

St   Student

UQ   University of Queensland

vs   versus

Notes: In this thesis, all the quotes from the participants are kept precisely the same as their original postings on Facebook.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This thesis presents the researcher's critical reflection on her teaching experiences. As argued by scholars such as Jackson (2014b) who adopt reflexivity as an approach of inquiry, it is necessary that the researcher make explicit her background and motivation relevant to the current project.

The researcher is a Vietnamese lecturer who has been teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at a Vietnamese University for more than 25 years. Her interest in intercultural education evolved from her observations of Vietnamese students' use of EFL and particularly her experiences during postgraduate studies and exchange fellowships in Australia, the United States, Thailand and China. Her students' cultural gaffes and particularly observed conflicts among peers from different cultures strengthened her commitment to developing EFL learners' abilities to negotiate meanings and empathetic stances on cultural issues. For over ten years, she has been developing and continuously revising the course "Intercultural Communication" for the EFL program at her home institution. This PhD project is her most recent endeavour in those on-going revisions of the course with a view to enhancing the practice of intercultural EFL education at her home institution, and more importantly, to generating an understanding of principles of IC teaching and learning in EFL contexts. Her experiences as a guest speaker to a variety of communities during a fellowship in the United States motivated her to adopt the teaching technique of inviting guests from different cultures to the course, and ubiquitous social networking sites potentially facilitated this technique. Her dual role as teacher and researcher will be further discussed in Chapter 3 with regard to her creation of a learning design and its implementation, and in Chapter 5 concerning the influence of the learning design.

This introduction chapter presents the background and context of the project. The overview of intercultural education also foregrounds the problem of IC teaching and learning in EFL contexts. Next, the chapter presents the overall aim and the research questions of the study. Finally, it outlines the thesis structure.

1.2 Background and context of the study

Over the last three decades, there have been shifts of interest in language education in general and in EFL education in particular. First, the model of the intercultural speaker has

replaced that of the model of the native speaker as the desirable outcome of language and culture education. This is because the latter model was criticized as unrealistic and the concept of the native speaker is problematic (Byram, 1997, 2009; Kramsch, 1993, 2009; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). In line with the model of the intercultural speaker is the concept of intercultural competence (IC). It is commonly described as the ability to communicate and behave appropriately and effectively with people from other cultures, and it characterizes the intercultural speaker. Accordingly, IC has increasingly become an objective in language and culture education. This objective can be attained through learning in an authentic environment through which learners interact with representatives from other cultures and develop IC. Since the advent of Web 2.0 technologies which can potentially provide an authentic learning environment for IC, research has started to explore how online contact can contribute to IC development.

In educational contexts, IC tends to be atomized and operationalized into learnable components. In other words, IC is conceptualized as consisting of attitudes, knowledge and skills (Byram, 1997, 2009). This component view of IC is helpful not only in outlining the learning objectives but also in describing and evaluating the learner's achievements. IC is also conceptualized as developmental (J. M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004; M. J. Bennett, 1993; M. J. Bennett & Castiglioni, 2004) and contextual (Spitzberg, 2000, 2009, 2015; Witte, 2011). With reference to Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity, IC can be described as a process of shifting from an ethnocentric view of the world to a more ethnorelative configuration of cultural difference (M. J. Bennett, 1993). Spitzberg (2015) foregrounds the relational nature of IC, hypothesizing that it varies according to people's interlocutor. These conceptualizations of IC provide theoretical foundations for IC education.

However, as far as language education is concerned, IC is often treated in an essentialist manner. For example, IC tends to be conceptualized as a static state-of-being rather than a dynamic process involving different experiences in different contexts. Therefore, existing theories are not always able to capture the complexity and fluidity of IC and its development. In addition, since language is not always taken into account, models of IC are often criticized as being abstract and inadequately supported by empirical evidence (Baker, 2015). Although some recent studies in the field (e.g., Jackson, 2014b; Porto, 2013) have started to explore the experiential and reflective processes intercultural language learners undergo, a number of language teachers (e.g., Baker, 2015; Borghetti,

2011; Porto, 2013) believe that more research should be undertaken to better understand how IC develops in the learning process.

Research studies on intercultural language education both in face-to-face programs and online projects tend to involve a national culture associated with a language (e.g., Byram, Nichols & Stevens, 2001; O'Dowd, 2006a, 2006b; Woodin, 2001, 2013). Less research has been conducted in an EFL context where English is learned and used as a lingua franca for communication not only with native English-speakers from different cultures but also non-native English-speakers from a vast array of cultures (Baker, 2015; P. Ryan, 2012). Although recent studies shed some light on intercultural EFL education, more research is needed to provide comprehensive pedagogical guidelines for IC education in EFL contexts (Baker, 2015; Borghetti, 2011, 2013; Parmenter & Tomita, 2001; Porto, 2013).

Furthermore, while Web 2.0 technologies potentially offer varied authentic experiences to EFL learners that may assist in developing their IC, empirical studies that have explored this terrain are often about telecollaboration between two educational institutions. This implies that more ways of integration of these technologies in intercultural EFL education should be explored. This exploration could potentially shed more light on the process of acquiring IC through authentic learning experiences. Therefore, a combination of using Web 2.0 technologies, IC development and EFL learning offers a fertile field of enquiry for the current study.

The project used the EFL program in a Vietnamese university as a case study. With regard to this EFL context, learners study EFL to obtain knowledge and skills in using English to work with people from different cultures. IC education is part of the aim of this EFL program; however, it tends to be cognitively oriented in content courses such as Intercultural Communication. IC education also tends to be ignored in language classes due to a lack of pedagogical guidelines and an absence of an authentic learning environment for IC (Le, 2010). Consequently, it is critical to explore the extent to which a Web 2.0 mediated learning design can offer an authentic learning environment for EFL learners to develop IC and generate pedagogical guidelines for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning designs.

1.3 Aims and research questions

Given the gaps in the field, this project aimed to explore the extent to which a Web 2.0 mediated learning design could contribute to the development of IC and to the understanding of this development in a context of an EFL course in a Vietnamese

university. It involved creating a Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design for EFL learners, testing and refining it. Specifically, it

- modified a conceptualization of IC applicable in an EFL context and generated pedagogical guidelines for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning,
- explored the pedagogical context related to IC education in a Vietnamese university that offered a case study for this project,
- created and implemented a Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design for EFL learners in that university,
- explored the IC learning process,
- obtained further insights into EFL learners' trajectories of IC development, and refined pedagogical principles for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning designs.

The overarching research question and sub-questions that guided this inquiry are as follows:

To what extent can a Web 2.0 mediated learning design contribute to EFL learners' development of IC?

- Research question (RQ)1. How can IC be usefully conceptualized in an EFL context?
- RQ 2. How can a Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design help EFL learners develop IC as defined for this context?
- RQ 3. What are their trajectories of IC development in the learning process?
- RQ 4. What implications do the findings have for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning designs in an EFL context?

1.4 Structure of the thesis

The thesis is organized in six chapters as follows:

- Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter introduces the topic of the project. It describes the aims of the project, and discusses the background and context of the study. Finally, it outlines the organization of the dissertation.

- Chapter 2: Literature review

Chapter 2 lays a foundation for this study through a systematic review of research. It provides an understanding of key concepts that underpin this project and theoretical issues that motivate it. Specifically, this review gives an overview of conceptualizations of

intercultural competence (IC), pedagogical approaches to IC education, and practices of IC teaching and learning, including Web 2.0 mediated IC learning.

The chapter also describes an adaptation of theoretical frameworks of IC, and generates principles that are useful for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning designs.

- Chapter 3: Methodology

The methodology chapter discusses the use of design-based research in this project. It describes in detail the proposed IC learning design. Next, it explains the implementation of the learning design in two parallel classes and the process of data collection. Finally the chapter details and justifies the data analysis employed for the study with consideration for its reliability and validity.

- Chapter 4: The students' development of intercultural competence

This chapter presents the findings and discussion about the students' IC development. The findings are discussed to answer the research questions about conceptualization of IC and IC development (RQs 1 and 3). Firstly, the chapter reports how the class as a whole developed their knowledge, skills and attitudes in the three learning activities (chats with the guests, written reflection, peer discussion). Secondly, two focal students are spotlighted as contrasting examples of individual trajectories of IC development.

- Chapter 5: The influence of the learning design

This chapter presents the findings and discussion to answer RQs 2 and 4 regarding the Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design. Firstly it analyzes the influence of the teaching and learning activities (chats with the guests, written reflections, peer discussions). Next, it presents the role of Web 2.0 technologies, scaffolding factors in the learning process, and reiteration and revision of the learning cycles. Finally, the chapter suggests principles for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning designs and proposes a revised one for an EFL context.

- Chapter 6: Conclusions

This chapter concludes the study with further understandings of IC development in an EFL context and a refinement of principles for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning designs. Additionally, it presents the limitations of the study. It subsequently discusses the implications the findings have for IC education and research. Finally, the chapter suggests directions for future studies.

Chapter 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter has two main parts. In the first part, it investigates conceptualizations of intercultural competence and the relevant concept of the intercultural speaker. After an analysis of the gaps in these conceptualizations with regard to foreign language education, an adapted model of IC is proposed for an EFL context. In the second part, the chapter discusses the pedagogy and practices of IC learning. Finally, it reviews recent studies on Web 2.0 mediated IC learning and generates draft principles for Web 2.0 mediated learning designs.

2.2 The intercultural speaker

In recent years, there has been a tendency to move away from the model of the native speaker as the aim of language and culture education in both linguistic and cultural terms. The native speaker pictured as "a monolingual, monocultural entity who functions faultlessly both linguistically and culturally in his/her own context" (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013, p. 52) has become an out-dated goal for many educators in the field of language and culture education (e.g. Byram, 1997, 2009; Byram & Zarate, 1994; Kramsch, 1993, 1998, 2009; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013; Risager, 2007). There are several reasons for this shift.

The first is a pragmatic educational reason. Byram (1997) identifies the outcome of language and culture education using the model of the native speaker as an unrealistic aim since the circumstances in which native speakers and second/foreign language learners acquire a language are different. Sharing the same view, Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) further argue that judging the outcome of language and culture learning through the native speaker lens is not "legitimate" because it does not "capture the reality into which a language learner is being introduced" as a learner as well as a user of the language. These two authors clarify that a language learner "needs to be able to engage with, reconcile, and reflect on multiple languages and cultures. This is not required of the monolingual, monocultural native speaker" (p.53).

The second reason is that the model of the native speaker "would create the wrong kind of competence" (Byram, 1997, p. 11). Byram further argues:

> It would imply that a learner should be linguistically schizophrenic, abandoning one language in order to blend into another linguistic environment, becoming accepted as

a native speaker or by other native speakers. This linguistic schizophrenia also suggests separation from one's own culture and the acquisition of a native sociocultural competence, and a new sociocultural identity." (Byram, 1997, pp. 11-12)

This process is psychologically stressful and could be damaging. Kramsch (1998) also questions the existence of the real "native speaker". According to her, it would be problematic to define a native speaker due to migration. Moreover, people who speak their native language are diverse in terms of socio-cultural backgrounds, and this means their native language becomes diverse in use. Then what is the native speaker whose language and socio-cultural norms a language learner should aim at? The abstractness of "the native speaker" serves as a legitimate reason for a shift to a more specific realistic model as the outcome in language and culture education.

Due to the problematic model of the native speaker, Byram and Zarate (1994) have proposed that instead of striving to "approximate the native speaker", a language learner should be taught and learn to become an "intercultural speaker". Byram (1997) describes this intercultural speaker as "the more desirable outcome in language and culture education" (p.12) in the following:

> A learner with the ability to see and manage the relationships between themselves and their own cultural beliefs, behaviours and meanings, as expressed in a foreign language, and those of their interlocutors, expressed in the same language – or even a combination of languages – which may be the interlocutors' native language or not. (p.12)

He and his colleague further clarify the ability to manage the relationship as the ability to establish such a relationship, mediate and explain difference, accept difference and see commonality: "This intercultural speaker […] is able to establish a relationship between their own and the other cultures, to mediate and explain difference – and ultimately to accept that difference and see the common humanity beneath it" (Byram & Fleming, 1998, p. 8).

In reference to the lingua franca context, Byram and Fleming (1998) highlight the autonomy that language and culture education should prepare learners for: "The 'intercultural speaker' is someone who has knowledge of one or, preferably, more cultures and social identities and has a capacity to discover and relate to new people from other contexts for which they have not been prepared directly" (p.9).

While Byram and his colleagues approach the intercultural speaker from an anthropological perspective (Risager, 2007), with an emphasis on culture (beliefs, behaviours and meanings) as expressed in a language, Kramsch (1998) describes the intercultural speaker by focussing on language as influenced by culture:

> A "competent language user": not the ability to speak and write according to the rules of the academy and social etiquette of one social group, but the adaptability to select those forms of accuracy and those forms of appropriateness that are called for in a given social context of use. This form of competence is precisely the competence of *the intercultural speaker* [the researcher's emphasis], operating at the border between several languages or language varieties, manoeuvring his/her way through the troubled waters of cross-cultural misunderstandings. (p.27)

Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) foreground the contextualisation, dynamism and subsequently the multiple identity of the intercultural speaker:

> The intercultural speaker stands in a complex relationship with languages, cultures, and communities, as an insider or outsider and, to varying degrees, recognized as a member of many speech communities. Intercultural speakers live and communicate within complex frameworks of interpretation and use the rules of interpretation available to them in a knowing and reflective way in both the various interactions in which they are engaged and in the various linguistic and cultural contexts in which they occur. (p.53)

These characteristics imply the complexities resulting from the interaction of linguistic and cultural resources of intercultural speakers which can both facilitate and challenge communication.

In summary, since the model of the native speaker is not considered a realistic and logical goal for language learners to aim at, the model of the intercultural speaker has gradually been adopted as the desired outcome of language and culture education. Whether the emphasis is on language or culture, central to the concept of intercultural speakers is the ability to negotiate and mediate meaning in interaction. The next section elaborates on this ability of the intercultural speaker: intercultural competence.

2.3 Intercultural competence

2.3.1 Conceptualization of IC

IC is a controversial concept (Rathje, 2007); however, most scholars in the field agree that it is "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations

based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes" (Deardorff, 2009, p. 248). A brief review of conceptualizations among outstanding scholars suggests a consensus, though there might be different emphasis on or approaches to conceptualization. According to Kramsch (1993) intercultural competence is "the ability to negotiate meaning across cultural boundaries and to establish one's own identity as a user of another language" (p.27). She stresses the flexibility and dynamism of the intercultural speaker in terms of language use as "the competence of the intercultural speaker". So IC is "the adaptability to select those forms of accuracy and those forms of appropriateness that are called for in a given social context of use" (Kramsch, 1998, p. 27). Byram (1997) conceptualizes IC in a more specific and comprehensive way. According to him, this competence comprises affective, cognitive and behavioural components. Intercultural speakers combine these components to behave effectively and appropriately with people from other cultures. Similarly, Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) suggest that "intercultural competence is the appropriate and effective management of interaction between people, who, to some degree or another, represent different or divergent affective, cognitive or behavioural orientations to the world" (p. 7). Ting-Toomey and Chung (2012) also describe it as the ability to integrate "knowledge and an open-minded attitude" and '[put] them into adaptive and creative practice in everyday communication" (p.28). It appears that these conceptualizations agree on the IC components of knowledge, attitudes and skills, and intercultural speakers integrate these components to adapt in intercultural situations. Accordingly, they communicate and behave appropriately and effectively. This chapter examines these components as the multidimensional feature of IC. It then analyzes other characteristics, namely the developmental, contextual and idiosyncratic.

2.3.2 Characteristics of intercultural competence

2.3.2.1 Intercultural Competence as multidimensional: Byram's model of IC

According to Byram (1997, 2009), the concept of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) comprises communicative competence and intercultural competence (see Figure 2-1). In order to communicate competently a speaker needs not only the ability to construct and understand meaningful utterances (linguistic competence), but also the awareness to use and understand the utterances in different social contexts (sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence). Byram also suggests intercultural competence as additional to communicative competence. Figure 2-1 presents IC inter-related components: attitudes, knowledge, skills and cultural awareness.
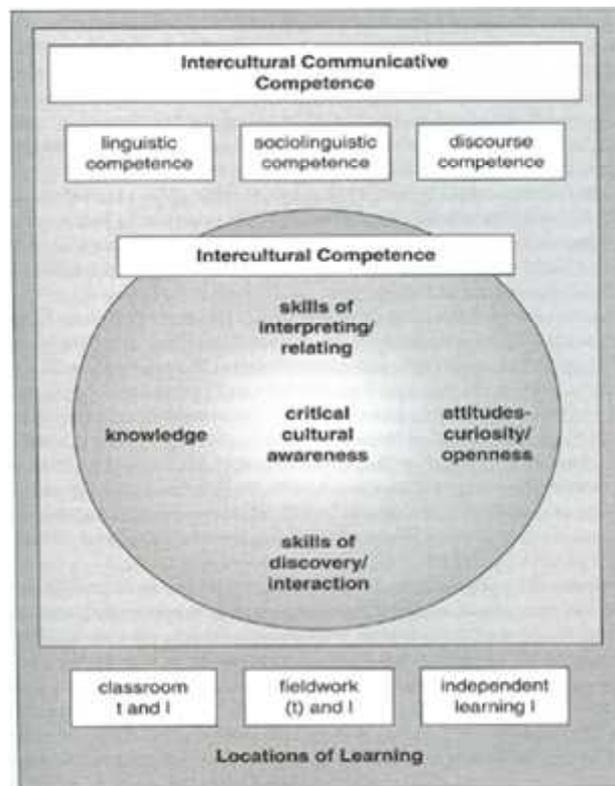
Figure 2-1. Byram's Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (Byram, 2009, p. 323).

For the purposes of teaching and learning IC, Byram (1997) describes IC as threshold attributes learners aim to obtain (see Table 2-1).

Table 2-1. Components of intercultural competence (Byram, 1997, pp. 57-64).

IC component	Description of component
Attitudes	Curiosity, openness, and readiness to suspend assumptions
Knowledge	Knowledge of artefacts and practices in one's own culture and in the target culture
Skills of interpreting and relating	Ability to interpret a document or an event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from learners' own culture
Skills of discovery and interaction	Ability to discover and learn new cultural knowledge and to communicate based on their knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of time and social factors
Critical cultural awareness	Ability to evaluate various aspects of one's own culture and the target culture in the light of explicit criteria

These IC attributes are presented in terms of learning objectives as follows:

Attitudes: There are five attitudinal attributes an intercultural speaker should possess.

   (a) Interest in everyday experiences of ordinary people in C2

   (b) Interest in other perspectives

   (c) Willingness to question one's assumptions about C1

   (d) Readiness to adapt and interact in an intercultural situation

   (e) Readiness to engage with verbal and non-verbal communication with
        representatives from C2

Knowledge: Intercultural speakers should master both declarative and procedural knowledge about C2 and C1. This knowledge includes a wide range of historical, geographical, social, religious and political facts and events (i.e. declarative knowledge). It also entails the influence of these factors on behaviours of people in C2 and the relationship between C1 and C2 with reference to these aspects. Underlying this knowledge is an understanding of how to apply it in intercultural interactions (i.e. procedural knowledge).

Skills of interpreting and relating: Intercultural speakers should possess three skills.

   (a) Ability to identify and explain ethnocentric perspectives

   (b) Ability to recognize misunderstandings and dysfunctions, and their causes

   (c) Ability to mediate cultural conflicts

Skills of discovery and interaction: Intercultural speakers should demonstrate ability to elicit and work out meanings via social contacts or reference sources. Specifically, they can use different questioning techniques and establish links between ideas and perceptions to generate new knowledge. They also use their knowledge, attitudes and skills to interact with people from C2, identify and mediate misunderstandings.

Critical cultural awareness: Intercultural speakers can use their knowledge, attitudes and skills to evaluate a phenomenon and mediate cultural conflicts based on shared criteria.

Discussion of the model

Strengths of Byram's model

Byram's model is widely referenced in the literature of intercultural education and seems to be the most frequently used theoretical framework for teaching and learning IC in the

classroom or training courses. A considerable number of recent studies on the development of IC in face-to-face classes or in computer-mediated classes discussed and analyzed their data in reference to Byram's model of IC (Belz, 2003, 2005, 2007; Duffy & Mayes, 2001; Lu & Corbett, 2012; Muller-Hartmann, 2006; O'Dowd, 2006a, 2006b; Sercu et al., 2005; Tarasheva & Davcheva, 2001; Woodin, 2001). As pointed out by O'Dowd (2006b), Byram's model has proven to be "a common point of reference in the literature on intercultural language learning" (p. 46) and usable in the language classroom (Belz, 2007; N. Davis, Cho, & Hagenson, 2005). The popularity of this model might be attributed to its explicitness and comprehensiveness. It explicitly specifies IC objectives learners should achieve by the end of their learning process. It is comprehensive as it specifically describes IC in attitudinal, cognitive and behavioural terms. While identifying IC learning objectives Byram's model also describes modes of assessment. Moreover, as stated by Lu and Corbett (2012), the flexibility of Byram's model allows for useful supplementation and revision when necessary.

Weaknesses of Byram's model

Nonetheless, there are several weaknesses in Byram's model. First, the interaction between components and their role in IC development are not addressed. Byram acknowledges a lack of relations between components:

> The model does not describe or subscribe relations among the subcompetences, neither within intercultural competence nor within the more complex model of intercultural communicative competence. It is not a psychological model of interaction of the subcompetences within or among individuals. Nor does it suggest a didactic ordering of which aspects of which competences should be taught prior to others. (Byram, 2009, p. 325)

As a result, he leaves the decision for teachers to make with regard to what component to begin with and how to teach IC. Rathje (2007) contends that Byram's model of IC is a list model where IC characteristics are only listed, but it does not specify how these characteristics are "structured" or developed. Byram also admits, "[the model] does not specify in every detail…how learners should develop [intercultural competence]…and there is no definition of levels or degrees of ability, knowledge, attitudes, of stages on the way to perfection" ((Byram, 2009, p. 325). Perhaps as a result of these weaknesses in the model, research projects that have used Byram's model as theoretical framework have tended to focus on a description of the learner's threshold achievements, inadequately attending to the process of IC development (e.g.,O'Dowd, 2006b).

In addition, Byram's model tends to be bi-cultural and culture-specific, particularly in articulating the cognitive objectives. It foregrounds the importance of culture-specific knowledge, ignoring the role of culture-general knowledge, whereas other scholars emphasize culture-general knowledge as vital in developing IC (M. J. Bennett, 1993; Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey, & Wiseman, 1991). Although Byram (2009) and those who apply his model (e.g., O'Dowd, 2006a; O'Dowd, 2006b) argue that knowledge and skills learners acquire in learning about or with a specific culture will help develop knowledge and skills for dealing with other cultures in the long run, it is necessary to explicitly include culture-general knowledge in the teaching and learning of IC (M. J. Bennett, 1993; Gudykunst et al., 1991). This type of knowledge includes "dimensions of cultural variability" and it helps learners conceptualize cultural differences and similarities, and explain them in communication (Gudykunst et al, 1991, p.274). In the context where English is used as a lingua franca for communication with people from different cultural backgrounds it is hard and perhaps unnecessary to focus on cumbersome culture-specific knowledge of a particular culture as specified in Byram's model. Instead, it is more desirable to approach the teaching and learning of IC from a culture-general perspective (Gudykunst et al., 1991; Sercu et al., 2005).

Moreover, culture in Byram is treated on a national basis; as a result, the model may not fit situations where the concept of culture is increasingly fluid (Baker, 2015; Belz, 2007; Guth & Helm, 2010). According to Baker, the nationally bounded concept of culture encourages a simplistic treatment of EFL which does not reflect the dynamic and fluid reality of language use. Cultures associated with EFL transcend national boundaries, and this gives rise to a phenomenon of translinguals using a complex mix of linguistic resources to negotiate meaning and stance in intercultural communication. Among IC frameworks that challenge the nation-based concept of culture and Byram's IC model are Kramsch's symbolic competence (2011), Canagarajah's performative competence (2013), and Baker's intercultural awareness (2015). Addressing the fluidity of culture, these alternative concepts allow for more flexible and dynamic making and negotiating of meaning and stance in intercultural situations.

Another weakness is the treatment of linguistic issues as separate from IC (Baker, 2015; Borghetti, 2013). Accordingly, with Byram's model it is impossible to see the connection between language and IC and how language helps develop IC. Thus, Borghetti criticizes the fact that it is difficult to integrate the model in a language curriculum. Baker (2015) and Borghetti (2013) develop their own models embedded in language curricula to raise

foreign language learners' awareness of cultural difference. Since they emphasize the developmental level of awareness, their models will be further discussed in reference to Bennett's developmental model in 2.3.2.2.

As a result of treating communicative competence and IC separately, Byram's model is abstract and not empirically supported (Baker, 2015; Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009). Baker stated that Byram's work and studies based on it provide no empirical evidence of the overall concept of intercultural communicative competence, and of components of IC. Moreover, without a linguistically-based explanation of IC development, Byram's framework ignores contextual factors and the relationships between interlocutors. In this way, his model obscures a core feature of IC: adaptability (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009).

In short, because of its explicitness and flexibility Byram's model has been widely used in intercultural studies. However, when employing the model, it is important to be aware of its weaknesses and revise it if necessary. For example, Sercu et al. (2005) added culture-general knowledge to the model when using it. It is desirable, on the one hand, to take into account multiple dimensions of IC in teaching and learning IC; on the other hand, it is important to attend to the developmental process and what happens to each dimension even when the learner has not achieved the threshold. Since this developmental perspective is also essential to teaching and learning IC, several developmental models have been proposed in the literature (Baker, 2015; M. J. Bennett, 1993; Sercu et al., 2005; Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005, 2012; Witte, 2011). One of the most-cited and recognized is Bennett's Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Liu, Volčič, & Gallois, 2015; Paige & Goode, 2009). This model is widely used as theoretical framework in intercultural studies because of its conceptualization of different stages of IC development. Bennett's model[1] is discussed in the next section as representing the developmental characteristic of IC.

2.3.2.2 Intercultural Competence as developmental: Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural sensitivity (DMIS)

The DMIS is about a process of intercultural experience. According to Bennett (1993), people tend to experience different stages of cultural sensitivity to cultural difference. Each stage shows a particular cognitive configuration of the world, and is also characterized by typical kinds of attitudes and behaviour. However, Bennett emphasizes that his description

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[1] The name Bennett when standing on its own refers to Milton J Bennett.

of attitudes and behaviour in each stage is indicative of an underlying cognitive state, and the DMIS is a model of cognitive development (Bennett, 1993).

He proposes six stages where people's sensitivity to cultural difference gradually increases. The more complex their experience of cultural difference becomes, the more interculturally competent they are. Although Bennett does mention cases when people regress to a previous stage or skip a developmental stage there is a linear assumption in the DMIS. Moreover, he believes that to progress steadily and not to regress to a previous stage a learner should successively undergo every stage of the model (Bennett, 1993). He and Janet M. Bennett visually illustrate the development of intercultural sensitivity in a continuum as seen in Figure 2-2.
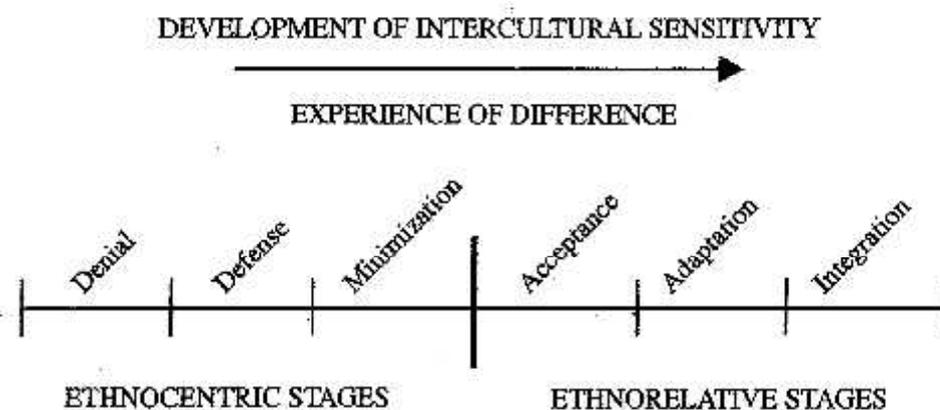
Figure 2-2. The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (J. M. Bennett & Bennett 2004, p. 153).

There are three ethnocentric stages where people's own culture is central to their perception of the world. In the denial stage, people perceive their own culture as the only real one and avoid contacting cultural others. In the defence stage, people consider their own culture the only good one and denigrate cultural differences. In the minimization stage, despite their recognition of some surface differences between their culture and the other's, people view their own culture as universal. In short, people in the ethnocentric stages avoid cultural difference in one of three ways: ignoring its existence, rejecting it or belittling its importance (Bennett, 1993; J. M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004).

There are three ethnorelative stages where people decentralize their own cultural frame of reference. In the acceptance stage, people accept the cultural other as another way of constructing the world. In the adaptation stage, people are able to shift their frame of reference between their culture and the other's. In the integration stage, people expand their identity to and shift unconsciously between different cultural worldviews. In sum,

people in the ethnorelative stages work towards cultural difference in three ways: accept it and its underlying values, understand it from both their own frame of reference and the other's, or integrate the two perspectives in their identity (Bennett, 1993; J. M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004).

Discussion of the model

Strengths of the model

Assumed in the DMIS is the theory of personal constructivism. This is to say that experience helps people create the meaning they attribute to a phenomenon. This assumption is consistent with the aim of experiential learning: learning aims to increase the complexity and relativism in the way the learner deals with the world (Kolb, 1984). It is also in line with Gudykunst's hypothesis about cognitive complexity: people become more interculturally competent when they acquire more cognitive complexity (Gudykunst, 2004, 2005). This constructivist assumption in the DMIS allows for exploration of how people construct and change their view of the world from a simplistic to a sophisticated one. Moreover, the detailed and explicit description of each stage helps concretely capture changes in the process of development. Perhaps, these are the reasons why Bennett's DMIS is widely used as a theoretical framework to describe how learners develop IC in the process of intercultural experience.

Weaknesses of the model

The major weakness of the DMIS is the way in which it overlooks linguistic issues. Baker (2015) disapproves of the lack of language awareness in the DMIS. He states, "It is hard to envisage how one could be interculturally sensitive or effective without some awareness of the role of language" (p.35). Perhaps because of this, Borghetti (2013) believes that the DMIS can inform intercultural foreign language education with regard to curriculum planning and teaching practice only to a limited extent. As mentioned in discussion of Byram's model, Bakers and Borghetti integrate development of cultural awareness (or intercultural awareness in Baker's terms) in language curricula. Instead of the six stages of the DMIS, Borghetti divides the developmental process into three phrases moving from comparison, through reflection to problem-solving, withholding the treatment of emotion-related issues until phase 2. Assumed in her model is that cultural awareness grows from simple to more complex. In comparison, Baker describes learners' development of intercultural awareness as shifting from the level of cultural generalization (phase 1) through identification of cultural relativity (phase 2) to awareness of and adaptation to emergent contextual factors (phase 3).

Borghetti also argues that the "postulation of acquisition phases has been excessively rigid" (p.257). Porto (2013) provides empirical evidence of fluid complex shift among different levels of perceiving cultural difference within a given period of time. Similarly, O'Dowd (2006b) offers examples of a learner who shifted between defence and acceptance in two successive contacts with her partner.

With regard to rigidity, the DMIS actually takes into account the dynamic process of IC development. Bennett (1993) writes about the ambiguity of linearity in the DMIS: "There is a linear assumption built into the model that beginning, intermediate, and end stages can be described and that development between and within each stage can also be described. It is not assumed that progression through the stages is one-way or permanent," (p.26-27). Bennett's model thus addresses this dynamic of IC development. However, it does not explain why there is such a dynamic nor take situational factors and personal traits into consideration. As a result of this ambiguity, those who have employed the DMIS have tended to interpret the model as a simple linear development or found it unable to account for the fluidity of development (e.g.,Garrett-Rucks, 2014). Therefore, it is important to be aware of this ambiguity while applying the DMIS so as to be open for exploration of contextual factors in understanding IC development.

Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino, and Kohler (2003) criticize the DMIS concerning its rigid linearity and lack of a linguistic dimension:

> The DMIS model is a very linear model, which implies that the development of intercultural sensitivity is a progressive, scalar phenomenon. However, it may not be the case that this form of development is in fact linear in the way the DMIS model suggests. [It is] a model of development which is presented at a very high level of abstraction and the linearity that they present ranges across very high level elements of intercultural competence developed over a quite extensive period of time. However, at a lower level of abstraction and over a shorter period of time, it appears unlikely that the development of intercultural competence is a linear, scalar phenomenon. Moreover, there is little overt linking between the interculturality and language in this model and the place of language and of language teaching in the model is not readily apparent. (pp.19-20)

Another weakness of the DMIS is its focus on cognitive configuration at the expense of affective and behavioural dimensions of IC as Bennett himself admits (Bennett & Castiglioni, 2004). Though Bennett sometimes mentions general affective states

associated with stages of cognitive development, the DMIS neither describes in detail nor systematically the relationship between affective and cognitive dimensions of IC.

In summary, Bennett's model foregrounds the developmental characteristics of IC. It describes people's cognitive change from simplistic to more sophisticated configurations with regard to cultural difference. In this way, they decentralize their own frame of reference and accept other perspectives of the world. The next section examines contextual/situational characteristics of IC. It gives a brief review of how context influences IC.

2.3.2.3 Intercultural Competence as contextual

Spitzberg and Cupach (1984) introduce the idea of context in the conceptualization of interpersonal competence. According to them, context entails such factors as situation, environment, culture, relationship, function. Spitzberg (2000, 2009, 2015) believes that IC is contextual and even ascribes the quality of competence to communication between two individuals in a specific context, not to the individual. He suggests: "Communication in an intercultural context, therefore, is competent when it accomplishes the objectives of an actor in a manner that is appropriate to the context" (p. 343). Spitzberg (2015) emphasizes the relational nature of IC:

> [C]ompetence in any encounter is contingent on all parties to the interaction. You can be highly motivated, knowledgeable, and skilled, and if the co-actors of another culture reject your legitimacy, there may be little chance of a competent interaction. […] The responsibility of adaptation is best shared if competence is a preferred mode of interaction.(p. 353)

Neuliep (2012) and Liu et al (2015) also describe the situational component of intercultural competence. Neuliep integrates context in his model of IC which is the potential integration of four interdependent components: "knowledge", "affective", "psychomotor features" and "situational features" (see Figure 2-3). Like Liu et al. (2015), Neuliep (2012) defines situational features as "the environmental context, previous contact, status differential and third-party interventions" (p. 430). People may feel anxious and hesitant to approach the unknown other in an environment with a "high information load" which is described as "varied, complex, large-scale, contrasting, dense, surprising, heterogeneous, crowded, asymmetrical, moving, random, and improbable" (Neuliep, 2013, p. 133). In contrast, they may feel less apprehensive and more confident to communicate with the different other in an environment with a "low information load" which is characterized as "simple, small-scale, sparse, uncrowded, homogeneous, symmetric, still, patterned, and probable"

(Neuliep, 2012, p.133). Previous contact may help build up competence thanks to an increase in cultural knowledge, comfort and confidence, and verbal and nonverbal skills. A change of social status when people move into another culture may affect the way they behave. The presence of a third party may considerably change the dynamics of the situation, and accordingly impact on people's competence (Neuliep, 2012). However, these descriptions of IC contextual characteristics are speculative rather than empirically-evidenced.
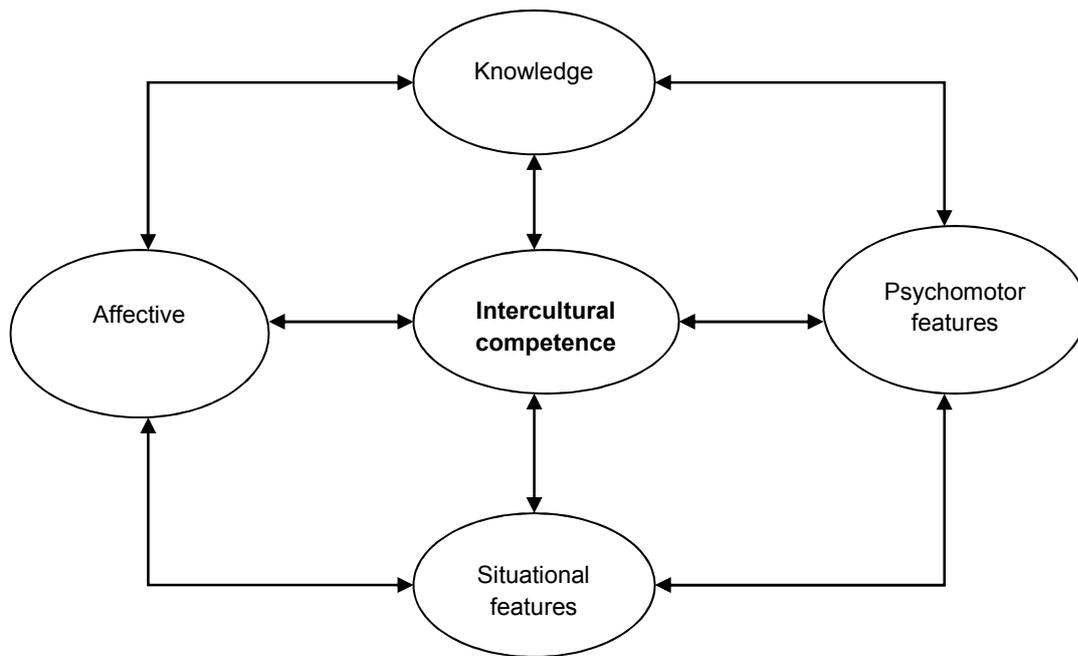
Figure 2-3. Neuliep's model of Intercultural Competence (Neuliep, 2012, p. 425).

Nevertheless, there is some evidence of the influence of situational factors on IC from empirical studies. For example, Garrett-Rucks (2014) shows that topics of discussion tended to influence the IC levels of learners. O'Dowd (2006b) provides evidence of fluctuation between different degrees of IC by one learner: German student Nina was reported to behave in an empathic way to her American discussion partner when talking about neutral topics such as the role of women or education, whereas she appeared to be ethnocentric and defensive or even ironic when they discussed the issue of the Iraq war or gun ownership. O'Dowd does not fully attend to the role of context and emotion in his discussion of his participants' development of IC, perhaps due to the theoretical model he uses. Nevertheless, he acknowledges that the topic of conversation had a considerable impact on the participants' feelings which in turn had a strong influence on their IC.

2.3.2.4 Intercultural competence as idiosyncratic

The idiosyncratic nature of IC development has been little investigated and empirically evidenced in the literature although personality has long been theorized as vital in cognitive and affective development. Studies on cognitive development suggest the impact of personality in acquisition of knowledge (Jung, 1923; Kolb, 1984). Jung argues that extroversion and introversion influence personal cognitive development. Kolb also postulates that learners' personalities and styles of learning influence the type of knowledge they generate in the process of learning (Kolb, 1984). According to Kolb, learners with an accommodative learning style tend to acquire accommodative knowledge (i.e. accommodating their cognitive frame to fit reality) more readily than those with an assimilative learning style (who tend to assimilate reality into their cognitive frame to construe the world). In other words, under the influence of their different learning styles, the former tend to de-stereotype more readily while the latter are more likely to reinforce their stereotypes. Likewise, Gudykunst (2004) argues that people with different cognitive types tend to perceive things differently. Specifically, "uncertainty oriented people integrate new and old ideas and change their belief system accordingly" while "certainty oriented people tend to distort their recall of events that happened in their interactions with strangers in ways that are consistent with their stereotypes of strangers' groups" (Gudykunst, 2004, p. 177).

Among the few studies addressing this aspect of IC, Holmes and O'Neill (2010) reveal that individuals' pasts played an important role in the way they chose to react in intercultural situations. The past together with other factors such as cognitive style or personality thus idiosyncratically shape the development of IC.

2.3.3 Summary

IC is described as multidimensional, progressive, contextual and idiosyncratic. However, theorising it tends to be one-sided; for example, Byram's model foregrounds IC components whereas Bennett's emphasizes cognitive development. These foci offer in-depth insights into the aspects in question. However, they are gained at the expense of an overall understanding of IC development. The following is a summary of recurring aspects of IC that have previously been identified in the literature as worthy of further exploration.

- The affective dimension, and discussion of its significance in teaching and learning IC.

- The interaction between cognitive and affective dimensions, and its implications for teaching and learning IC.

- The relationship between contextual/situational factors and IC components, and the implication of this relationship for IC teaching and learning.

- Empirical evidence for the exiting models.

- Linguistic issues, and the integration of existing models of IC in foreign language education with regard to curriculum planning and pedagogy.

Together, all these issues point to the necessity of adapting and where possible combining the different approaches to education and research in the area of IC.

2.4 Adaption of models for the present project

2.4.1 The compatibility of Byram's theory of teaching and learning IC and Bennett's DMIS

In this project, both Byram's theory of teaching and learning IC and Bennett's DMIS were used to guide the creation of the proposed learning design and its implementation. The two theories were also applied as general guidelines for the data coding and analysis. There were several reasons for the adaptation of these two theories in the present study. First, they are well-recognized in the field, based on the contribution they have made to the conceptualization of IC and to practical teaching and training in the area of IC. Second, despite their different focuses the two models approach the teaching or training of IC from a perspective which is also adopted in this project. Underlying the threshold IC objectives in Byram's theory is a process where students learn to develop their intercultural attitudes, and build knowledge and skills to reach the threshold. This process is more specifically tracked in Bennett's DMIS over different stages of development. This explicit categorization of developmental stages might help teachers estimate a student's zone of proximal development in the learning process in order to support him/her in an optimal way (Kramsch & Uryu, 2012). Finally, the strengths and weaknesses of the two theories can compensate for each other when they are used together because they are compatible in conceptualizing IC. For example, they both conceptualize IC as multidimensional and progressive. The specific IC threshold attributes regarding attitudinal, cognitive and behavioural dimensions in Byram's theory may help better understand characteristics of these dimensions in each stage of IC development. In the following paragraphs, the compatibility and complementation of the two theories are analyzed with reference to IC components.

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Both theories foreground the importance of knowledge in IC development. Bennett's emphasis on the importance of culture-general knowledge in the process of IC development provides the missing piece in Byram's theory. The specific distinction between declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge about a culture in Byram's theory makes it possible to see how the acquisition of these types of knowledge is associated with the development of intercultural skills at a particular stage of IC development in Bennett's model. In addition to knowledge, both models describe behaviour as demonstrating attitudes and knowledge. Detailed description of intercultural skills in Byram may complement the general account of the cognitive dimension in Bennett's DMIS. Ideas such as questioning techniques, establishing connections between knowledge/cognitions add vivid details to the description of cognitive development at a particular stage of IC development.

With regard to attitude, Byram (1997) apparently treats it as the affective state of inclination. Developing intercultural attitudes meant developing "interest" in other perspectives and "willingness" to decentre one's own perspective. Similarly, Bennett (1993) also postulates affect as an inter-related dimension of intercultural development in his DMIS. He believes that any cognitive change tends to result in affective transformation. It might be "a feeling of threat to the stability of one's worldview" (Bennett, 1993, p.26). Or it might be an "enjoyable" state of accepting new ways of understanding the world (p.47). Byram's perspective on inclination and Bennett's perception of security and satisfaction can add the understanding of the affective dimension of IC.

2.4.2 Perspectives complementary to the two theories

Because of the interdisciplinary nature of intercultural communication (J.M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004), it is sensible to refer to a variety of relevant disciplines to explore IC development. Thus, scholars in the field believe that it is necessary to combine compatible approaches to intercultural communication studies (e.g., Möllering & Levy, 2012). The three next paragraphs discuss the complementarity of the theories of cognitive consistency, the theory of anxiety and management, and the functional linguistic theory of APPRAISAL in the context of an understanding of IC development.

According to the theories of cognitive consistency (Festinger, 1959; Heider, 1946) and Piaget's theory of cognitive development (Wadsworth, 1989), people are motivated to gain equilibration of cognitions. A cognition is what an individual perceives as his/her personal attitudes, beliefs and behaviours with regard to another person or an object (Stainton Rogers, 2011). Heider (1946) postulates that a cognitive system consists of three

elements: the speaker, another person and an impersonal object. Heider believes that two types of relationships may exist between elements: sentimental relations referring to liking, evaluating and approving, and unit relations indicating belonging or similarity. To take examples from the data of the current study, the cognition "I am scared of Saudi culture" shows a negative sentimental relation between the speaker and an impersonal object, and the cognition "The guest belongs to Saudi culture" demonstrates a positive unit relation between another person and an impersonal object. According to Heider, balanced cognitive system is one in which three relations are positive or in which one is positive and the other two are negative. For example, an individual might have the following consistent cognitive system with one positive and two negative relations: I am scared of Saudi culture, the man belongs to Saudi culture, and I am not going to make friends with the Saudi man. Cognitive imbalance occurs when two relations are positive, and one negative. For instance, a female student may experience cognitive imbalance when she thinks that she likes the man, he belongs to Saudi culture, and she is scared of Saudi culture. The balance theory assumes that this student will try to restore balance among her cognitions by changing her cognitions (e.g., she does not like the man, or she becomes of Saudi culture) or making a null relation (i.e. the man and Saudi culture have no relationship/ he does not belongs to Saudi culture).

Festinger (1959) further elaborates on the ways in which humans deal with cognitive dissonance or inconsistency. They either change their cognitive frame, or for those who have a strong emotion about an issue, they develop additional cognitions that enable a different interpretation of the situation. Specifically, they are likely to ignore the situation/issue or make it consistent with their beliefs in a number of ways. For example: they devalue the information source, or they selectively notice information that is consistent with their beliefs, or they add more information that helps to interpret the situation differently from what it is (i.e. they distort it).

Similarly, Piaget (Wadsworth, 1989) believes that people adapt their cognitive system through assimilation or accommodation. They assimilate new information into their existing cognitive frame, or they accommodate their frame to fit a new situation. Hence dis-equilibration is the driving force for cognitive development; in accommodation people's cognitive system become more complex. In intercultural communication, Gudykunst (2004) hypothesizes that people with more cognitive complexity tend to become inter-culturally competent more easily.

Gudykunst also contributes to the understanding of the affective dimension and its interaction with the cognitive dimension. His theory of anxiety and uncertainty management (Gudykunst, 2004; Gudykunst & Kim, 1997) can help shed more light on the overlooked affective dimension in Byram (1997) and Bennett (1993). Gudykunst hypothesizes that anxiety comes together with uncertainty when people communicate with people from other cultures. However, once a contact occurs, it may help provide knowledge and reduce uncertainty. Thus, more contacts may help decrease anxiety. Gudykunst also argues "the more complex our cognitions are, the greater is our ability to manage our uncertainty and anxiety" (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997, p. 187). However, there are maximum and minimum threshold levels of anxiety/uncertainty beyond which it is difficult for intercultural communication to take place.

Gudykunst's theory is consistent with Bennett's speculation about fear and insecurity associated with the unknown and the difference. Gudykunst hypothesizes that anxiety is reduced and managed when people have more knowledge and understanding about the others. Similarly, according to Bennett, the more people are sensitive to cultural difference, the more comfort, interest and enjoyment they gain (Bennett, 1993, pp. 30-47). However, Gudykunst's hypothesis about threshold levels of anxiety/uncertainty might help explain why people with too much fear about the unknown are unlikely to become open and to learn about it, and those who are too satisfied with their knowledge about a phenomenon are unwilling to learn about it either.

Therefore, there is the potential that these cognitive theories may enrich understandings of cognitive shifts in the DMIS. However, it is necessary to provide empirical evidence of the interaction between cognition and affect and how they shift in the IC development. Such evidence might result from an examination of linguistic issues involved in IC development .

With regard to the relationship between language and IC, few studies have been conducted with exceptions being Belz (2003, 2005, 2007) and Porto (2013). However, they shed little light on how language is used to create changes in IC development. Belz investigated the use of types of questions, but she did not focus on how different types of questions were involved in the cognitive processes to create changes. She also employed the theory of APPRAISAL (Martin, 2000; Martin & White, 2007) (Martin's use of upper case characters) to explore students' feelings; however, the findings were limited in the extent to which they provided an understanding of systematic affective changes.

The following account explains how this theory is relevant to the study of the affective dimension because it can help unpack feelings encoded in language. According to

APPRAISAL, language (specifically English) has resources and functions to negotiate emotions, evaluations and stance on a being or a behaviour. Regarding attitudes, language has semantic resources for negotiation named ATTITUDE. There are three categories in ATTITUDE. They are AFFECT (semantic options for construing emotions), JUDGEMENT (semantic resources for ethic/moral evaluation of a character or behaviour), and APPRECIATION (semantic resources for aesthetic evaluation of a being or a natural phenomenon). Though people may use AFFECT to explicitly convey feelings, they can use JUDGEMENT or APPRECIATION to institutionalise an affective state.

AFFECT consists of a set of semantic options that offer ways of construing four types of affect on the negative/positive parameter which are dis/inclination, un/happiness, in/security and dis/satisfaction (see Figure 2-4). For example, a speaker may choose an option in AFFECT to construe his/her satisfaction in a corresponding grammatical frame: *I delighted in her*, or *She delighted me*, or *I was delighted by her*. With AFFECT he/she can also express happiness in the grammatical frame *I love American music*, or disinclination in the grammatical frame *I feel very scared*.
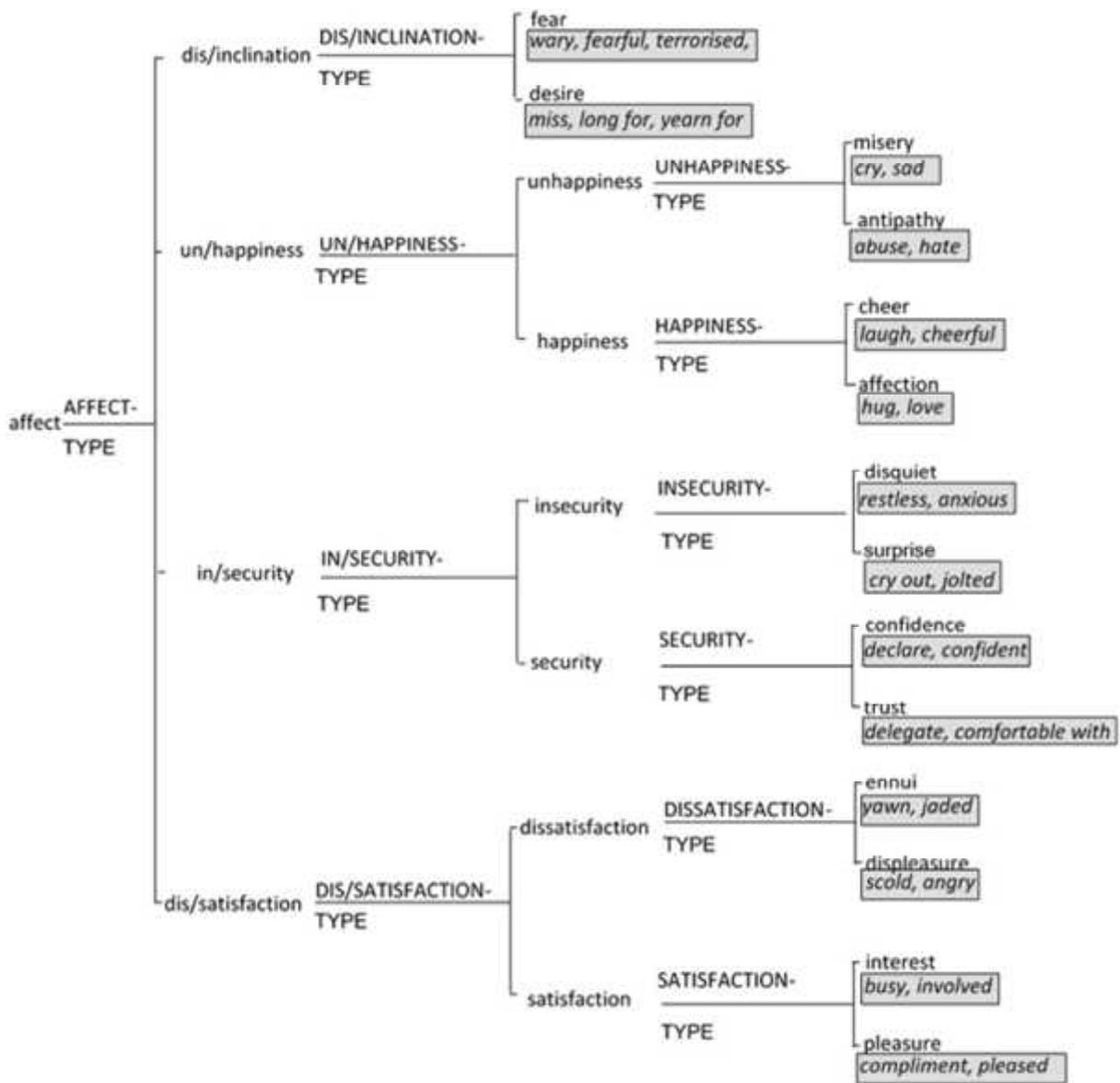
Figure 2-4. AFFECT and its lexical instantiations (Martin & White 2005, p.51).

JUDGEMENT has semantic resources for evaluating a character or behaviour in terms of social esteem or social sanction (see Figure 2-5). The resources for judgement of esteem are classified into three sets of options for evaluating someone's normality, his/her capacity, and his/her tenacity. In positive and negative terms, these sets are further categorised into either admiration or criticism. For example, a speaker can access JUDGEMENT to express his/her admiration of someone's capacity of doing something: *I think he is so skilful*. Such admiration encodes an attendant positive feeling which belongs to "various uncommon sense communities of feeling" into which individuals get socialised (Martin, 2003). With regard to the resources for judgement of sanction, there are two sets of options for evaluating veracity and propriety. With respect to the positive/negative parameter, social sanction can be either praise or condemnation/disapproval. For example, JUDGEMENT offers the semantic choice to disapprove of a behaviour: *I*

consider it cruel to do such a thing. This disapproval implies a negative feeling with respect to the behaviour. In this context of an evaluation by itself, the feeling is not aroused through human senses, but is perhaps generated through a common understanding of what should and what should not be done according to social norms and conventions.
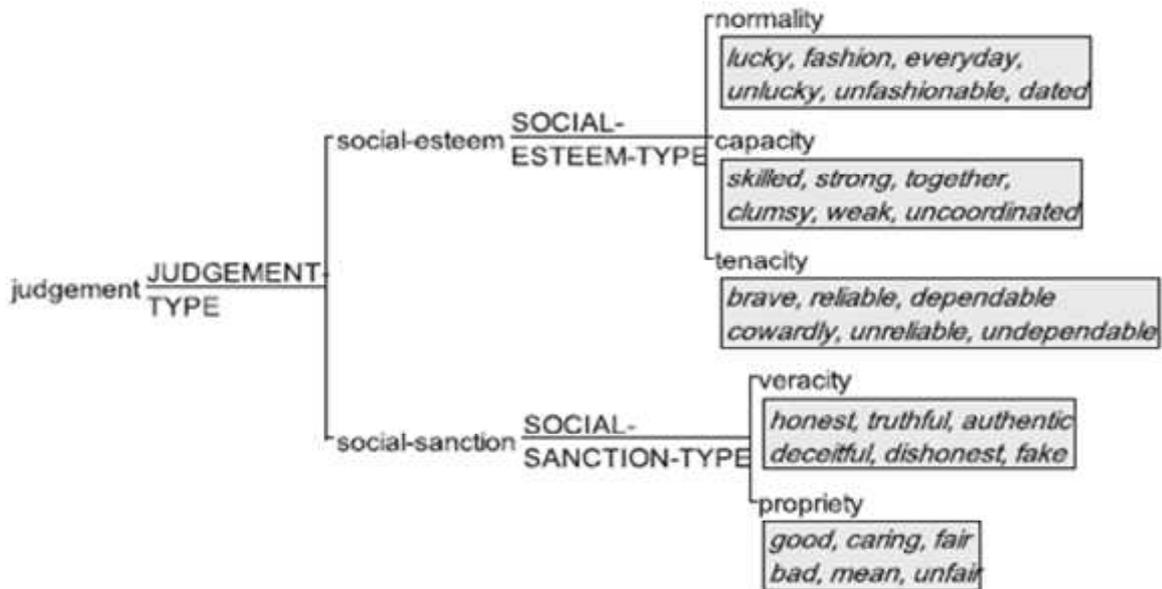
Figure 2-5. JUDGEMENT and its lexical instantiations (Martin & White 2005, p.53).

APPRECIATION offers a system of semantic choice for evaluating a being or natural phenomenon (see Figure 2-6). It is also organized on a negative and positive parameter, and classified into three sub-sets of resources for construing reaction, composition and valuation. Reaction refers to the degree to which the being or the phenomenon catches our attention and its affective influence on us. Composition is about perceptions of its balance and complexity. Valuation involves an assessment of its social significance. An example for reaction is: *It is fascinating*, for composition: *It is simple*, and for valuation: *it is innovative*.
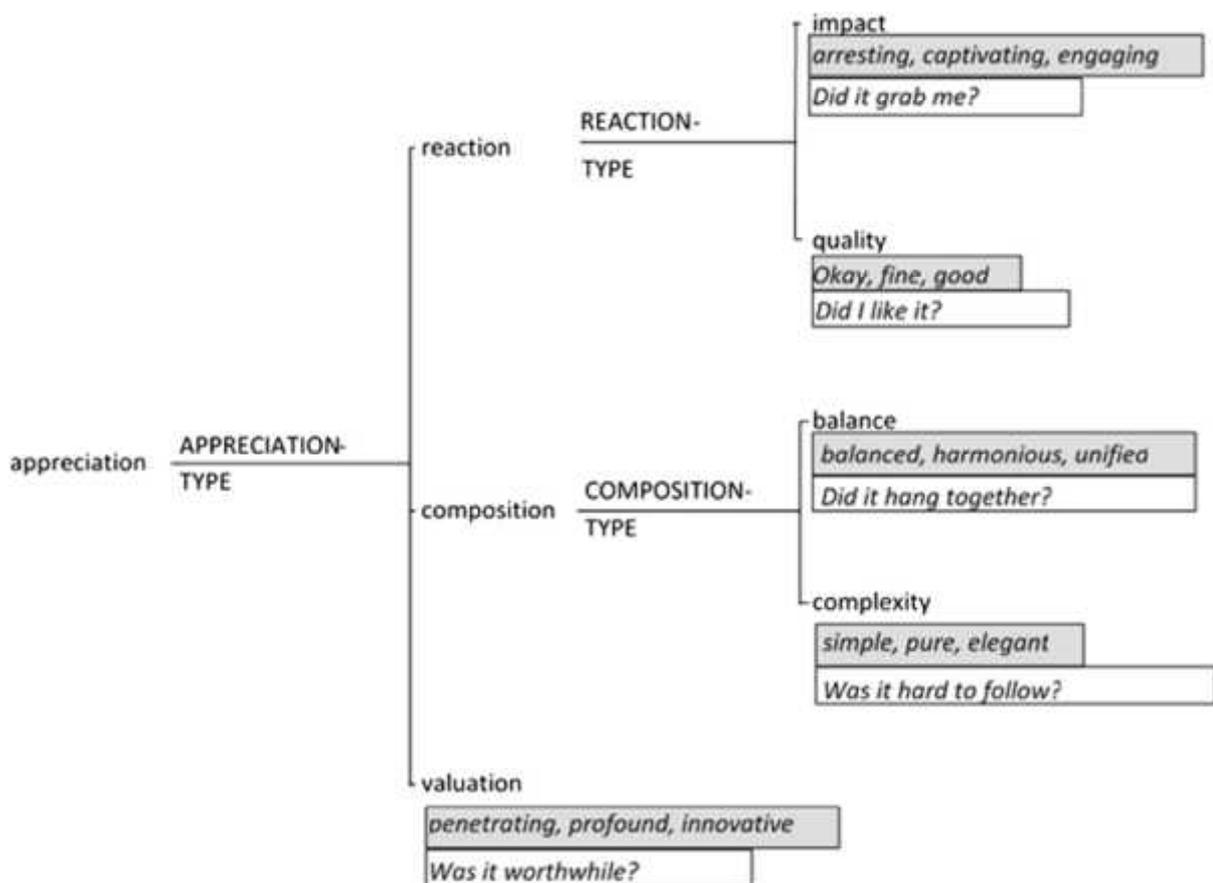
Figure 2-6. APPRECIATION and its lexical instantiations (Martin & White 2005, p.56).

This account suggests that APPRAISAL can potentially help explore different types of feelings and emotional changes encoded in the language used by learners. As discussed in 2.4.1, Byram focuses on teaching learners to acquire an interest in other cultures, and Bennett proposes a change from insecurity associated with ethnocentrism to feelings of security and satisfaction associated with ethnorelativism. However, there might be more affective states involved in the process of IC development. Moreover, in Bennett (1993) and Byram (1997), affective changes are not systematically documented and supported with empirical evidence. With its systemization of various types of feelings institutionalized in language, APPRAISAL can potentially be employed to examine linguistic evidence of the affective dimension and its changes in IC development.

2.4.3 Summary

To investigate IC development, the current project adapts models of IC component (Byram, 1997) and of IC development (Bennett, 1993). It also refers to cognitive theories and to functional linguists' theory of APPRAISAL to understand how learners use language to create cognitive and affective changes.

2.5 The teaching and learning of IC

2.5.1 The developmental constructivist approach to IC teaching and learning

Teaching and learning IC is perceived to be a process of developing the components/dimensions of IC. There is a common belief that IC is teachable and learnable, and it would be optimally taught and learned through a developmental constructivist approach. Witte (2011), for example, argues that due to the subjective, progressive nature of IC, a developmental-constructionist approach would be the most feasible for the teaching and learning of IC. He contends:

> The only viable access to the foreign cultural constructs and linguistics conceptualizations is facilitated by following a developmental-constructionist approach which recognizes that subjective intercultural competence evolves over time, thus putting emphasis on the structured and progressive nature of individual learner's increasing access to, and awareness of, the target culture and target language, and its effect on the subjective construals of self, other and world (including an increasing awareness of the internalized linguistic and sociocultural categories). (Witte, 2011, p. 91)

2.5.2 Five principles: Active process of teaching and learning IC

That "intercultural competence evolves over time" suggests that the teaching and learning of IC is the teaching of an active process. Kramsch (1993) explicitly advocates, "We should […] replace the presentation/prescription of cultural facts and behaviours by the teaching of a process that applies itself to understanding foreignness or 'otherness'" (p. 206). Byram (1997) shares this principle of IC teaching and learning when he explicitly explains the interactionist perspective in culture teaching and learning. According to him, teaching culture in language and culture education should not provide representations of other cultures, but instead it should prepare learners for a process of accessing and analyzing cultural practices and their meanings in real life interaction. Central to this process of teaching and learning are experience and reflection. In this process, experience is a precondition for IC learning; and "experience does not necessarily lead to learning […] unless it is related to the reflection and analysis" (Byram, 1997, p. 69). In other words, the teaching of IC is the teaching of a process in which learners actively experience and reflect on their learning. While these scholars stress the process of experience and reflection, Paige, Jorstad, Siaya, Klein, and Colby (2003) further foreground the multiple dimensions of this process in their definition of culture learning as:

the process of acquiring the culture-specific and culture-general knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for effective communication and interaction with individuals from other cultures. It is a dynamic, developmental, and ongoing process which engages the learner cognitively, behaviourally, and affectively. (p.177)

To establish this active process of IC teaching and learning, Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) identify five key principles: active construction, making connections, social interaction, reflection, and responsibility (p. 56). Though their focus is on language as mediated by cultures, these principles are in line with the perspectives of those who emphasize culture as expressed in a language (e.g., Byram, 1997, 2009; Byram and Zarate, 1994; Byram and Fleming, 1998; Kramsch, 1993, 2009). These five principles are discussed in connection to other scholars' perspectives as follows:

2.5.2.1 Active construction

According to Liddicoat and Scarino (2013), teachers need to construct environments to offer opportunities for learners to experience and build their understanding of self and others, and their intercultural identity. The learning environment should facilitate learners' purposeful and active engagement in meaning negotiation, and continuous reflection on learning. It should also allow for their learning and growth in affective, cognitive and behavioural terms. To actively construct an authentic culture learning environment, Levy (2007) suggests taking fundamental facets of culture into account when providing learners with opportunities to explore culture. According to him, culture should be treated as elemental for learners to see how deeply it is embedded in every human behaviour or artefact. Culture should also be treated as frequently contested because it is personal and relative. For example, culture is present in the way we express gratitude. A generalisation of saying "Thank you so much" to someone who helps you is contested not only across cultures but also within a culture. Because culture is elemental in this verbal behaviour, an Australian expects you to say it when he/she serves you, whereas a Vietnamese would seldom expect such a phrase in Vietnamese in the same situation because it is considered his/her duty. Such a "thank you" may sound odd or ironic to some Vietnamese. This example shows that culture is elemental, relative, personal and contested. Providing learners with opportunities to experience these facets of culture will facilitate the process of making connections which is another important principle for language and culture teaching and learning.

2.5.2.2 Making connections

Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) contend that learners experience and acquire language and culture in connection to their existing knowledge and skills related to those areas. Therefore, with regard to culture it is important that they be aware of their starting socio-cultural position when engaging with the unknown. They should establish a connection between their own position and that of others within their own culture and across other cultures in order to subsequently identify similarities and differences between the existing and the unknown. Kramsch (1993) emphasizes the establishment of "a sphere of interculturality" for learners' cultural experience and reflection (p.205). A sphere of interculturality can be described as a link between linguistic forms and social construct. It also means putting the learner's own culture into a relation with the other culture. Kramsch and Uryu (2012) also elaborate on the concept of third space as new "zones of proximal development". "They are zones of collaboration and learning or reorganized activities to accommodate different learning styles and to transform conflict and disharmony into fruitful dialogue" (p. 213). Similarly, Byram (1997) highlights the way learners explore and construct knowledge of relationships among different perceptions in their own culture and the other culture. Kramsch and Byram are among scholars who believe in a comparative approach to helping learners develop their awareness of the different other (e.g., Baker, 2015; Borghetti, 2013, Fantini, 1997). Fantini (1997) also stresses the importance of exploration of social factors, the other culture and intercultural factors in his process approach to culture teaching in a language class. He also discusses the relationship between artefacts, sociofacts and mentifacts in his sociocultural framework for culture and intercultural exploration (Fantini, 2008). Similarly, Seelye (1997) highlights the relationships between "who", "what", "where", "when" and "why" when he establishes socio-cultural objectives of teaching a foreign language for intercultural communication.

2.5.2.3 Social interaction

According to Liddicoat and Scarino (2013), interaction is both a means and a purpose of language and culture learning. By interacting, learners engage in an on-going dialogue in meaning negotiation with multiple others, and the aim of this understanding of meaning as varied in different perspectives of diverse others is to interact appropriately and effectively with these others. Social interaction involves making sense of what is presented by others, accommodating it, agreeing or disagreeing with it and understanding what is behind such agreement or disagreement. This principle is also highlighted as a condition to develop skills of discovery, interpretation and interaction in Byram's (1997) theory of teaching and

learning IC, and is empirically confirmed in projects on IC development (e.g. Belz, 2003; Belz, 2007; Furstenberg, Levet, English, & Maillet, 2001; O'Dowd, 2006a, 2006b).

2.5.2.4 Reflection

Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) maintain that reflection is fundamental to any interpretative process of learning. On reflection learners become aware of the way they feel, think and learn about culture and language, and the relationships between them and come to understand concepts such as diversity, identity, intercultural thoughts and feelings. As argued by Byram (1997), a cultural experience can result in IC learning only when it is accompanied with reflection. Similarly, Kramsch (1998) emphasizes the personal on-going reflection in the culture learning process:

> [T]he meaning of cross-cultural encounters is hardly or rarely realized at the time. Rather, it appears at various levels of understanding at a much later date, from personal reflection and repeated attempts to bring together for oneself the various pieces of the cultural puzzle, and compare its emerging picture with that of others. (p.232)

2.5.2.5 Responsibility

Since IC learning is personal and progressive, the learner's responsibility is foregrounded in this process (Dooly, 2010; Witte, 2011). Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) argue that the learner's success in learning is attributable to his/her attitudes, dispositions and values which evolve over time; in other words, it depends on the learner's responsibility. This responsibility manifests in the way the learner interacts with others within and across cultures. It is also evident in the way he/she strives to better understand self and others. According to these authors, responsibility is understood as an ethical commitment to responses to intercultural encounters in a constructive way. It requires learners to act with intercultural competence, i.e. in a way that shows fairness, justice and respect to others. Several examples from projects on intercultural teaching and learning provide evidence that disregarding this principle may result in failures or limited outcomes in IC learning (e.g., Belz, 2003; Ware & Kramsch, 2005).

2.5.2.6 Summary

In sum, for intercultural learning to take place, it is vital to observe the five principles outline above, namely construction, connection, interaction, reflection and responsibility. Put more specifically, it is vital to construct opportunities for learners to actively and responsibly construct their understanding of self, others and their intercultural stance

through a process of interaction and reflection. The next section will discuss a possible way to realize the principles in practice that is advocated by various practitioners.

2.5.3 IC learning in practice: key characteristics

The above principles can be realized and developed into practice in different ways. One common way of understanding the practice of intercultural teaching and learning is as recursive cycles of inter-related processes of learners' engagement in experiences in languages, cultures, and their relationship (e.g., Crozet & Liddicoat, 1999; Hanna & Toohey, 2010; Kramsch, 1993; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). Kramsch (2009) describes the learning cycle as a process of experiencing and reflecting in which learners should be "challenged to analyze and interpret, make connections and discover patterns in a cultural context and relate their findings to their own subject position" (p. 232). Hanna and Toohey (2010) propose the model of the intercultural spiral which comprises three recursive moves: scanning, rule-making and compliance, and challenging in the process of intercultural learning (p. 200). Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) summarise their model of intercultural learning including four processes. In this model, the four processes of noticing, comparing, reflecting and interacting are interrelated, and nonlinear in relationship.

In brief, current practices of intercultural teaching and learning are characterized by a cycle of experience and reflection in which learners are supported to notice, compare and analyze, make rules, take a stance, and interact. Since these processes of the learning cycle are nonlinear and recursive, each of them can be both experiential and reflective. For example, noticing can take place while the learner accesses or experiences an intercultural encounter, and it can also take place when he/she reflects on learning. To facilitate a description of the learning process in practice, the researcher categorizes noticing and comparing as experiential, and analyzing, making connections and taking a stance as reflecting.

2.5.3.1 Experience

In intercultural education, experiential learning involves developing an ability to notice. In experiencing an intercultural encounter, learners may notice things that challenge their taken-for-granted views and values. It is fundamental for language learners to notice cultural similarities and dissimilarities as manifested in language because in their real life use of language in intercultural contexts they will encounter this reflexivity between language and culture (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). Agar (1994) coins the term "languaculture" to refer to this reflexive relationship between language and culture.

Language, in all its varieties, in all the way it appears in everyday life, builds a world of meanings. When you run into different meanings, when you become aware of your own and work to build a bridge to the others, 'culture' is what you're up to. Language fills the spaces between us with sound; culture forges the human connection through them. Culture is in language, and language is loaded with culture … whenever you hear the word *language* or the word *culture*, you might wonder about the missing half … 'Languaculture' is a reminder, I hope, of the necessary connection between its two parts … (Agar, 1994, p. 28, 60).

When two languacultures come into contact, cultural similarities and differences as manifested in language emerge. Belz (2007) describes the encounter between two languacultures as a rich point. She clarifies: "Rich points are pieces of discourse that indicate that two languacultures or conceptual systems have come into contact". An example of rich points is bullfighting. Many people may conceptualize bullfighting as "a cruel sport where animals are toyed with, tortured and then slaughtered in the name of culture and tradition", but in other cultures bullfighting is conceptualized as a brave sporting fight between "man and beast" (O'Dowd, 2003, p. 128). Other examples of rich points are abortion (a woman's right of choice versus murder), hunting (a bonding time for a father and his child versus an act of killing), female clergy (gender equity versus breaking a divine law) (Belz, 2007). Thorne (2006) refers to rich points as "the opportunities to collaboratively forge a heightened awareness of self and other that is fueled by the contestations and confusions that arise during communication" (p.6). He further argues for the importance of helping learners notice rich points in intercultural learning: "Most of what matters in culture operates at subtle levels that are difficult to capture or even to recognize. These facets of culture are essentially elusive, abstract, and invisible. Our challenge was to make them visible, accessible, and understandable"(p.11).

In short, intercultural experiential learning involves developing an ability of noticing a rich point that offers opportunities for exploring cultural similarities and differences embedded in language. Subsequently, this rich point will become the input for other processes in the learning cycle; for example, for reflection which will be further discussed in the next section.

2.5.3.2 Reflection

As defined by constructivists such as Dewey (1933) and Merizow (1998), reflection or more specifically critical reflection is a process of challenging an existing frame of thinking, and implementing higher-level cognitive processes to construct knowledge and to create

cognitive change. Kramsch is among the first intercultural educators to specify the critical reflective analysis with regard to language and intercultural education. According to Kramsch (1993), critical reflection means challenging the taken-for-granted view and establishing connections to produce a new understanding and stance with respect to another culture. She further explains that once a sphere of interculturality is established, i.e. when learners identify their position in relation to that of the other and notice similarities and differences, they can reflect both on their own culture (C1) and the other culture (C2). She maintains that "The teaching [and learning] of culture is faced with a kaleidoscope of at least four different reflections of facts and events" (Kramsch, 1993, p. 207). That is to say: 1) a reflection on how learners perceive C1 from their own perspective, 2) a reflection on how learners perceive C2 from their own perspective, 3) a reflection on how the others perceives C2 from the other perspective, and 4) a reflection on how the others perceive C1 from the other perspective. She asserts:

> The only way to start building a more complete and less partial understanding of both C1 and C2 is to develop a third perspective, that would enable learners to take both an insider's and an outsider's view on C1 and C2. It is precisely that third place that cross-cultural education should seek to establish. (Kramsch, 1993, p.210)

In line with Liddicoat and Scarino's (2013) emphasis on the interactive or dialogic essence in experience and reflection, Kramsch claims that the reflexive process is a dialogue between the learner and the other, whether the other is present face-to-face with the learner or represented in an artefact. Kramsch further explains this process of learning and its outcome:

> This approach involves dialogue. Through dialogue and the search for each other's understanding, each person tries to see the world through the other's eyes without losing sight of himself or herself. The goal is not a balance of opposites, or a moderate pluralism of opinion but a paradoxical, irreducible confrontation that may change one in the process. (Kramsch, 1993, p. 231)

"To see the world through the other's eyes without losing sight of himself or herself", the learner will apparently need to carry out that dialogue at intrapersonal, interpersonal and intercultural levels (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). Language plays a vital important role in this dialogue to produce cognitive change (Merizow, 1998; Vygotsky, 1962). Deters and Swain foreground this role in terms of languaging in reflection:

> [Sociocultural Theory] views language as a tool of the mind, a tool that contributes to cognitive development and is constitutive of thought. Through *languaging*, defined as

the use of speaking and writing to mediate cognitively complex activities, an individual develops cognitively, and …affectively. The act of producing spoken or written language is thinking in progress and is key to learners' understanding of complex concepts. These understandings are reached through interacting with others, ourselves, and social and cultural artifacts. Through languaging - a crucial mediating psychological and cultural activity – learners articulate and transform their thinking into an artifactual form, and in doing so, make it available as a source of further reflection. (Deters & Swain, 2007, p. 822)

Similarly, Jackson (2012, 2014b) highlights the role of critical reflection in IC development. She further emphasizes the importance of explicit guidance in reflection so that learners can become aware of how culture influences them and the other. As a result, they can suspend their judgments of the other. Kramsch's four-step guidance for reflection discussed above can be adopted or translated into more specific questions to explicitly guide learners in reflection to develop IC (e.g., Porto, 2013).

2.5.3.3 Other characteristics of IC learning

So far the features of experience and reflection have been described as central to the process of intercultural learning. Moreover, for IC development to take place, it is argued that the learning process requires other characteristics such as interaction, multi-dimensionality, self-directedness, construction, iteration and development. With regard to interaction, the learning process involves learners' dialogues at intrapersonal, interpersonal and intercultural levels to make connections between their own cultural positions and those of their interlocutors (Kramsch, 1993, 2009; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). Multi-dimensionality refers to the opportunities learners experience and reflection on their feelings, thinking and behaviour in the learning process (Paige et al, 2003, Schulz, 2007; Witte, 2011). Self-directness foregrounds learners' responsibility in their efforts to understand their own selves, others and their intercultural stances (Kramsch, 1993, 2009; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013, Witte, 2011). In terms of construction, the learning process is built on learners' existing understanding and knowledge of self and others (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). Iteration means that the learning process allows for a repetition of experience and reflection, through which learners can observe, compare, analyze, make connections and take their own intercultural stance (Kramsch, 1993, 2009). With regard to development, the learning process acknowledges the non-linear nature of IC development; it allows for both progress and regress depending on different contexts of intercultural communication (e.g., O'Dowd, 2006b).

Yet, in practice, teaching and learning IC has been still criticized as focusing more on the cognitive dimension of IC than on the affective and behavioural dimensions (Paige, 2003; Schulz, 2007). Educators seemingly assume that the learner's mental change will eventually cause his or her change in attitude and behaviour (Bennett & Castiglioni, 2004; Witte, 2011). Witte (2011) also argues that because of the personal nature of IC development, teaching and learning should take into consideration learners' circumstances and contexts such as age, experience, motivation, learning environment. The above weaknesses in IC education might be attributed to the shortcomings of the existing theorizations of IC. For example, both the widely-employed models of IC (those of Bennett, 1993 and of Byram, 1997) are cognition-oriented.

2.5.4 Summary

Constructivist pedagogy is optimal for IC education. Teachers and learners should observe key principles of construction, connection, interaction, reflection, and responsibility. To be meaningful, IC learning should be carried out as a process of experience and reflection. This process is characterized by learners' dialogue at intrapersonal, interpersonal and intercultural levels and involves their affective, cognitive and behavioural change. It is also characterized by repetition. It requires learners' responsibility and investment to implement the dynamic complex process to construct their own understanding of self, others and their intercultural identity.

These constructivist pedagogical principles are useful for this study. Weaknesses in the practice of teaching and learning IC inform this PhD project about a need to combine approaches with a view to gaining a more comprehensive understanding of IC development.

2.6 Web-mediated teaching and learning of IC

The experiential principle foregrounds the need for an authentic learning environment. The Web, in particular Web 2.0 technology, offers potentials for facilitating meaningful learning.

2.6.1 Web technology affordances

According to Conole (2013), affordances of technology are its attributes in relation to constructivist pedagogy and pedagogical context. On the one hand, web technology offers positive affordances, namely collaboration, reflection, interaction, dialogue, organization, inquiry and authenticity; on the other hand, it possesses constraints such as time consumption, difficulty of use, costly production, assessment issues, lack of interactivity and difficult navigation (Conole, 2013). This pedagogically-analyzed list of positive

affordances and constraints of technologies can help guide teachers "focus on the actual use of a tool in a particular context rather than the tool per se" (Conole, 2013, p.90).

Drawing on Windschitl's distinction (1998) between information technologies and social technologies, Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) discuss technology affordances without which IC learning could be only realized with difficulty. Information technologies such as websites provide learners with access to a variety of cultural information, i.e. an indirect contact with another culture. This rich cultural information offers opportunities to treat invisible facets of culture which are vital to IC development: elemental, relative, personal, contested (Levy, 2007; Möllering & Levy, 2012). Since cultural information online is "nonetheless real-world instantiations of attitudes, values, and understanding with which anyone using the Internet needs to engage", it affords "opportunities for analysis and reflection", i.e. opportunities for a learning experience (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013, p. 108).

Social technologies or Web 2.0 technologies offer an authentic environment for IC learning. They can potentially bring learners into direct contact with people from other cultures. Dooly (2010) observes that "Web 2.0 doesn't dehumanise teaching" (p. 295), but it helps bring the real world into the classroom and expose the classroom to the real world. Magnan (2008) defines authenticity as the intersection between formal education and the real world. Thorne (2008) also contends that non-institutional learning online offers conditions of authenticity and plausibility for effective language and culture learning. Lamy and Goodfellow (2010) observe that there is a lot of interest in making use of social networking sites such as Facebook for the purposes of learning. According to Boy and Ellison (2007), social networking sites such as Facebook offer three major affordances: building public or semi-public profiles, recording other users who share a connection, and navigating one's connections and others' on the site. Yet, "social networking sites are organized around people rather than topics of interest, and are structured as personal networks, with the user at the centre of their own community" (p.215).

In addition, social technologies can also help foreground the learner's role in their learning process (Dooly, 2010). They can potentially "provide opportunities for learners to take ownership of the learning process and the output" (Dooly, 2010, p. 289). Moreover, Web 2.0 technologies can enhance the process of learning IC by enriching the learning process "in its cognitive, affective and physical dimensions" (Guerin, Cigognini, & Pettenati, 2010, p. 201).

2.6.2 Facebook as adapted web technology in education

Facebook is a social technology that connects people despite their geographic distance. Founded in 2004, it has been found to be one of the most used and visited sites for people all over the world. According to Education Foundation - The UK's Education Think Tank (2013), by May 2013 approximately 1.1 billion people in the world used Facebook. Liu et al. (2015) also comment on Facebook's mission of "keeping in touch and extending social networks across larger geographical spaces" (p.286). Its popularity and its mission of making the world more open and connected have attracted educators to explore how Facebook can be harnessed as a tool for learning in and out of classrooms. Several projects show that Facebook can enable language learners to interact with exchange partners from other countries (Eren, 2012; Mitchell, 2012; Education Foundation, 2013). Jeanneau et al. (2013) and Mitchell (2012) also find that learners could develop their understanding of other cultures via Facebook while C. Wang (2012) observes that Facebook could be used as a platform to develop intercultural relationships.

Facebook pages and Facebook groups have features that can potentially provide learners with a safe communicative environment. Facebook pages allow members to share links and other websites; however, the page administrator can choose who can upload a file. These pages also have collaborative features such as notes and comments which enable direct online interaction. Learners can also interact and share with others in Facebook groups. According to Phillips, Baird, and Fogg (2013), and de Gennaro (2015), a Facebook group offers a powerful way to work on a collaborative project since group members do not need to be each other's Facebook friends to interact in such a group. Moreover, Facebook groups can be created as closed. This means the content of group exchange is private to its members. In this way, the group members' privacy is protected.

Shutter (2015) suggests that new media platforms may facilitate intercultural communication and IC development. However, according to him, "social media (SNS) - including Facebook - have been unexamined in terms of their effects on acculturation and intercultural competence" (Shutter, 2015, p. 475).

2.6.3 Web technologies and IC learning in practice

Thanks to web technology affordances, various internet-based intercultural learning projects have proved to positively result in "perspective taking, critical thinking, sensitivity to cultural diversity, and social cognition". However, they have not always been successful (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013, p. 112). Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) further analyze this situation:

This disparity of results points to a key problem in the pedagogical use of social technologies for language teaching and learning. The problem is that exposure to interaction of itself does not necessarily equate with intercultural learning […]. To be able to contribute to learning, the interaction must first become available in some way for students to reflect on and interpret. It is therefore necessary to consider not only what technologies permit students to do, but also to consider how their experiences may contribute to learning. (p. 112)

Dooly (2010) also identifies the need to employ teaching and learning strategies in order to turn social networks into educational tools. This highlights the teacher's role in involving learners in meaningful learning activities rather than just consumption and social networking. Likewise, Furstenberg et al. (2001) maintain that a mere connection between students does not necessarily lead to learning and developing IC. This connection needs to be pedagogically structured and implemented.

2.6.4 Principles for Web-mediated IC learning

2.6.4.1 Pedagogical principles

It can be concluded that for social network-based projects on intercultural learning to contribute to IC development, the use of Web 2.0 technologies should be strongly grounded in pedagogical principles (Belz, 2003, 2007; Dooly, 2010; Muller-Hartmann, 2006, 2007; O'Dowd, 2003, 2006). More specifically, Web 2.0 technologies should be used to realize the principles of active construction, making connections, social interaction, reflection and responsibility (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). In other words, they should be used to construct an environment in which learners may observe, notice, compare, analyze, interact and reflect in a way that shows they are responsible for their learning and for their communication with others.

2.6.4.2 Technological principles

Apart from an emphasis on pedagogical principles for IC learning, the choice of technologies is important to the success of online intercultural learning. Web 2.0 mediated IC learning requires a logical choice of technologies for both asynchronous and synchronous interactions that can support development of different IC components (Belz, 2007; O'Dowd, 2006). Research also indicates that learners' "comfort level is directly linked to ease of access to resources and familiarity with the context and resources used in the learning process" (Andrusyszyn & Humbert, 2001; Davie et al., 2000). Technologies should cover different learning modalities and be familiar to students before they are

introduced to any learning with new technologies. The choice of a technology should take into account the local situation and the technology affordances and constraints. Dooly cites other studies findings that show that when forced to use a Web 2.0 technology or when they feel an encroachment on their privacy caused by the learning design, learners are not motivated in their learning process. Importantly, the success of online intercultural learning depends on how the use of chosen technologies is grounded in pedagogical principles so that it becomes an integral part of the whole curriculum. This involves a reasonable sequence of offline and online activities using suitable technologies for asynchronous and synchronous interactions (Belz, 2007, Dooly, 2010; Furstenberg et al., 2001; Levy, 2007; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). The sequence of learning activities will be discussed in detail in relation to the risks involved in web-mediated IC learning in the next sections.

2.6.4.3 Sequence of learning activities

IC learning inherently involves taking risks as learners are challenged with new ways to look at their own identity and challenges might lead to changes in identity (Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1993, Witte, 2011). Teaching and learning IC in a technology-mediated environment entails even more risks for both learners and teachers. Belz (2005) describes these risks:

> For learners, there is a risk of retreating within the self, reinforcing stereotypes and myths and even creating new, more negative stereotypes when confronted with the unknown […]. For teachers, there are considerable administrative, logistical, technological and pedagogical risks – the least of which is not the enormous personal risk that teachers in telecollaboration take upon themselves when young adults… blame them because they did not 'make' their partner participate or because they did not 'tell' their partner to behave in a way that was accepted to them. (p. 27)

Because of these risks, Levy (2007) suggests organizing in-class/off-line work prior to between-class/online work. Preparation and precaution before exposing learners to online contact is critical in any project (Belz, 2005; O'Dowd, 2006). In addition, in intercultural learning, asynchronous technologies are expected to precede synchronous technologies because direct contact potentially entails a high level of risk for both the learner and the teacher (Levy, 2007). Furstenberg et al. (2001) also suggest individual analysis before collective discussion with a view to facilitating the treatment of multi-faceted culture and the process of making connections. For example, students are asked to write individual reflection on an issue before they are put into group/class discussion. This sequence of

learning activities can help them see more easily how different individuals, even of the same culture, build up their understanding and view of a cultural phenomenon.

2.6.5 Summary

Web technologies can potentially contribute to IC learning if the choice and use of them is strongly grounded in constructivist pedagogical principles. The integration of technologies should be part of the whole curriculum, and there should be a logical sequence of offline and online activities using different synchronous and asynchronous technologies. The choice of technologies should also be based on the local context, including learners' access to and familiarity with technologies. This choice should be a combination of both asynchronous and synchronous technologies to facilitate the development of different dimensions of IC.

2.7 Conclusion

The review of literature shows that existing conceptualizations of IC have several weaknesses, particularly in understanding its affective dimension and the interaction between the affective and cognitive dimensions. In EFL contexts, these theorizations of IC prove not always to be useful since they inadequately treat the linguistic dimension. With regard to the teaching and learning of IC, it is widely believed that social constructivist pedagogy is optimal, and IC learning entails a process of social experience and reflection to negotiate intercultural stance. As a social connecting tool, Web 2.0 has proved to potentially contribute to intercultural education, with caution and care to maximize its affordances and minimize its constraints. Moreover, in intercultural EFL education, it is necessary to combine complementary conceptualizations of IC to develop it more comprehensively.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology of the current study. Firstly, it describes design-based research (DBR). Secondly, the chapter examines the connection between DBR and web-mediated IC learning. Next, it outlines the research design. This section reports the four DBR phases, the data collection procedure, and the data analysis involved in each phase. Finally, the reliability and validity of the study are discussed.

3.2 Design-based research

Design-based research can be defined in different ways. Barab and Squire (2004) foreground the multiple approaches, and the dual goal of theoretical contribution and of practical solution in their description of DBR:

> Design-based research is not so much an approach as it is a series of approaches, with the intent of producing new theories, artefacts, and practices that account for and potentially impact learning and teaching in naturalistic settings. (Barab & Squire, 2004, p. 2)

In comparison, F. Wang and Hannafin (2005) emphasize the dynamic inquiry process needed to reach the dual goal of DBR:

> Design-based research [is defined] as a systematic but flexible methodology aimed to improve educational practices through iterative analysis, design, development, and implementation, based on collaboration among researchers and practitioners in real-world settings, and leading to contextually-sensitive design principles and theories. (pp. 6-7)

Definitions of DBR imply three key principles for the design of a research study that Herrington et al describe as follows:

- a focus on complex problems in authentic contexts and an emphasis on participants' active engagement in the solution,
- an integration of contemporary design principles and technological affordances to develop solutions to the problems,
- a combination of methods for rigorous and reflective inquiry to reach a dual goal in research: on the one hand to test and enhance solutions; on the other hand to generate new design principles. (Herrington, McKenney, Reeves, & Oliver, 2007).

With these principles, DBR has been seen as an alternative research methodology in educational technology for several reasons (Amiel & Reeves, 2008; Hoadley, 2004; Hung, 2011, 2013; Levy, 2013; Palalas & Hoven, 2013; F. Wang & Hannafin, 2005). Firstly, DBR can help link educational research with local practice. Such a connection is consistent with the current call for an evaluation emphasis not only on the theoretical contribution but also on the practical value of a study, in particular in the field of instructional technology (Kelly, 2003; Reeves, Herrington, & Oliver, 2005; Design-Based Research Collective, 2003). In fact, DBR can illuminate how and why potentials in technology-enhanced learning might have been realized, whereas traditional research cannot easily do so (Herrington et al., 2007). Moreover, when combined with other approaches, DBR not only enables the development of more effective educational interventions but also supports learning in the research process (McKenney, Nieveen, & van den Akker, 2006).

Predictive Research

| Hypotheses Based upon Observations and/or Existing Theories | → | Experiments Designed to Test Hypotheses | → | Theory Refinement Based on Test Results | ⇒ | Application of Theory by Practitioners |

Specification of New Hypotheses

Design-Based Research

| Analysis of Practical Problems by Researchers and Practitioners in Collaboration | → | Development of Solutions Informed by Existing Design Principles and Technological Innovations | → | Iterative Cycles of Testing and Refinement of Solutions in Practice | → | Reflection to Produce "Design Principles" and Enhance Solution Implementation |

Refinement of Problems, Solutions, Methods, and Design Principles

Figure 3-1. Predictive and design-based research approaches in educational technology research (Reeves, 2006, p.59).

By contrasting predictive/traditional research and DBR, Reeves (2006) presents the three key principles of DBR in four phases (Figure 3-1). Phase 1 focuses on the collaboration between the researcher and participants in identifying the complex problems in authentic contexts. Phase 2 foregrounds the integration of contemporary design principles and technological affordances to develop solutions to the problems. Phase 3 tests and revises the solutions and phase 4 generates new design principles through reflection.

3.3 DBR and Web 2.0 mediated IC learning

DBR offers an alternative research methodology for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning. As described in 3.2, DBR can potentially help reach the dual goal of a project on Web 2.0 mediated IC learning. It can help solve local problems in IC education. Simultaneously, it can help generate or refine pedagogical theories for this emerging practice of learning which many scholars and researchers in the field are calling for (e.g., Levy, 2007, 2009; Litchfield et al., 2007; Herrington et al., 2007; Schenker, 2012; Hung, 2013). Despite its potential contributions to this urgent need, very few research studies in Web 2.0 mediated IC learning have employed a DBR approach. Adopting this approach, the current study hopes to achieve its aims of contributing to the theories of IC development (RQs 1 and 3) and providing a model of creating and implementing a Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design (RQs 2 and 4).

F. Wang and Hannafin (2005) elaborate on five DBR characteristics that have useful implications for the current study of Web 2.0 mediated IC learning (Table 3-1).

Table 3-1. Implications of a DBR approach for research into Web 2.0 mediated IC learning.

Characteristics of DBR (F. Wang and Hannafin, 2005)	Implications for research into Web 2.0 mediated IC learning
Grounded in theory and real-world context	- Theory: developmental constructivist theory for IC learning and sequence of learning tasks using synchronous and asynchronous Web 2.0 technologies. - Local context: participants as contributors to the learning design, e.g., their attitudes to and their preference for Web 2.0 technologies for IC learning.
Interactive, iterative and flexible	- The researcher and participants interact and collaborate in the creation and implementation of the learning design. - Web 2.0 mediated IC learning activities go through analysis, design, implementation, and redesign. - Modification can take place when and where necessary.
Integrative	- Mixed methods are used, e.g., transcripts of online exchange, reflective journals, interviews. - Web 2.0 mediated IC learning is integrated with the EFL curriculum under study.
Contextual	- The research and implementation contexts are considered when findings are evaluated. - Findings and changes are documented. - Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design principles are generated in the local context, and may be adapted in different contexts.
Pragmatic	- DBR aims to refine theories and practices for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning. - Theories are refined to improve practice.

In summary, DBR emphasizes the dual goal of theoretical contribution and local solution in research and foregrounds the integration of existing pedagogy in the use of emerging

technologies to solve complex educational problems. In this way, DBR offers a solution to the problems of lacking theoretical and practical guidelines in Web 2.0 mediated IC learning.

3.4 Research design

This section reports on the four phases of the current study, and the data collection procedure and the data analysis involved in each phase.

3.4.1 Four DBR phases

This study was conducted in an EFL program in a university in Vietnam where the researcher works. In this 4-year program, learners are prepared with language and culture knowledge, and skills to use English as a lingua franca to work with people from both native and non-native English-speaking countries.

The study design followed Reeves' four phases. Phase 1 constituted an analysis of the local context in relation to IC education and use of Web 2.0 technologies for learning. Phase 2 comprised the creation of a Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design, based on existing pedagogical principles and Web 2.0 affordances. Phase 3 involved the implementation of the learning design, testing and refining it. Phase 4 entailed the researcher's reflection to refine pedagogical principles and modify the learning design. This phase also included an analysis of trajectories of IC development.

Table 3-2 indicates the tasks completed in each phase of the project and the outcomes with reference to the research report. Afterwards, the data collection and data analysis in each phase are presented.

Table 3-2. Phases of the study mapped against typical elements of a research report (Adapted from Herrington et al., 2007).

Phases of DBR (Reeves, 2006)	Tasks	Components of thesis
PHASE 1: Analysis of context and possible problems	Document analysis Pre-questionnaire on learners' use of technology and data analysis Research questions Literature review	Statement of problems or Introduction or Background Research questions Literature review
PHASE 2: Creation of a Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design informed by existing design principles and technological innovations	Consideration of theoretical frameworks Development of draft pedagogical principles for a Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design Description of the proposed Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design	Theoretical frameworks: Adapted models of IC Draft design principles Methodology
PHASE 3: Iterative cycles of testing and refinement of the proposed Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design in practice	Recruiting participants	Methodology
	Implementation of learning design	
	Data collection	
	Data analysis	
	Revised learning design	Findings
PHASE 4: Reflection to produce "design principles" and further insights into IC development, and enhance practice	Design principles Conceptualization of IC	Discussions Implications

3.4.2 Phase 1

As mentioned earlier, this phase constituted an analysis of the local context in relation to IC education and the use of Web 2.0 for IC learning. In order to provide data for the analysis of the local context of IC education, documents were reviewed and a preliminary questionnaire was employed.

3.4.2.1 Data collection

Document review

Document review is described as a qualitative research method (Bailey, 1994; Lichtman, 2013) by which the researcher analyzes documents containing information about the setting under study. Documents can vary from minutes of meetings, logs, announcements to websites, formal policy statements, guidelines, or decrees. The greatest strength of this method is its unobtrusiveness, and it can help portray the history and context of a specific setting in an economical way.

This project reviewed the website of the university under study, its EFL curriculum and the syllabus of the course Intercultural Communication, and the policies and decisions issued publicly by the university and the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MOET). The review also referred to prior studies of (inter)cultural teaching and learning in the EFL program.

Questionnaire

Questionnaires can be used in educational research to collect data on attitudes, perceptions, and behaviour of learners (Nah, 2008). The study employed a preliminary questionnaire (see Appendix 1). With UQ ethical clearance, it was conducted in phase 1 to collect data about 1) hardware and technologies students accessed on and off campus, 2) their attitudes towards and their competency with technologies, 3) their perception and their experience of using Web 2.0 technologies to develop their IC, and 4) possible factors that might influence their use of Web 2.0 technologies to develop their IC. The data collected helped to inform the project methodology and the learning design.

Informants

Approximately 300 Vietnamese EFL learners enrolled at the university providing the case study for the project were randomly selected to participate in the pre questionnaire. This sample comprised more than half of the whole population for whom the proposed IC learning design was created.

3.4.2.2 Data analysis and findings

The documents revealed that IC was being taught in both language skill courses (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) and content-based courses (e.g., Introduction to Vietnamese Culture, Intercultural Communication). According to the researcher's previous study (Le, 2010), cultural and IC aspects were treated marginally in language skill courses under the constraints of a structure-and function-dominated curriculum, and because of a lack of theoretical guidelines. IC instruction in content-based courses also tended to focus on provision of knowledge due to an absence of an authentic learning environment and a deficiency of pedagogical guidelines. The syllabus of the course

Intercultural Communication showed that it basically aimed to provide cultural knowledge and intercultural concepts. In contrast, MOET's guidelines and the university's policy encouraged educational innovations with an emphasis on learner-centeredness and integration of technology.

Data from the pre-questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings show that most EFL learners in the study preferred taking courses using web technology, though they perceived themselves as not very competent with such technology. 57.7% of the informants preferred taking courses using a moderate level of web technology and 28.8 % preferred an extensive level. Among Web 2.0 technologies, the majority of them felt comfortable with and used Facebook several times a week (over 85%). Most of the informants rated Facebook as the top Web 2.0 technology that they believed could potentially support IC learning (70.9 %). The findings also disclosed that in addition to social networking, learners used these technologies for their culture learning and strongly believed that these technologies could afford them an authentic IC learning environment. Nevertheless, they tended to use web technologies passively, for example, searching for cultural information rather than actively, say, creating an exchange forum to learn.

3.4.3 Phase 2

3.4.3.1 Proposed Facebook-mediated IC learning design

Based on pedagogical guidelines for IC learning and prior studies on web-mediated intercultural learning, draft pedagogical principles were generated to guide the creation of a Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design (see 2.6.4). Moreover, the findings from phase 1 concerning the local context of intercultural EFL education and use of Web 2.0 technologies for IC learning informed the construction of this learning design. Specifically, IC learning was mediated by Facebook.

Figure 3-2 presents the proposed IC learning design adapted from Hakkarainen's (2009) pedagogical model for teaching and meaningful learning. In general terms, it outlines how the five pedagogical principles played a vital role in influencing teaching and learning activities so that learners could undergo multidimensional changes in IC. First, the teacher designed and organized meaningful learning activities. In-class/off-line preparatory activities came before online written chats with a guest (off-line → online). After students indirectly contacted the guest by reading his/her completed surveys, they directly chatted with him/her on Facebook (indirect → direct). After chatting, students were asked to write individual reflections before they discussed with peers, i.e. they collectively reflected on cultural issues of interest to them (individual → collective). Secondly, the teacher

supported and guided learners. Influenced by the pedagogical principles, the learning activities were experiential, reflective, interactive, multidimensional, self-directed, constructive, progressive and iterative. Specifically, learners experienced three iterative cycles of Facebook-mediated chatting about cultural topics of interest to them, writing guided critical reflections on their intercultural experiences and discussing with peers about what they had learned. (More details about all the teaching and learning activities, and their sequence are found in Appendix 3 and section 3.4.4.3.)
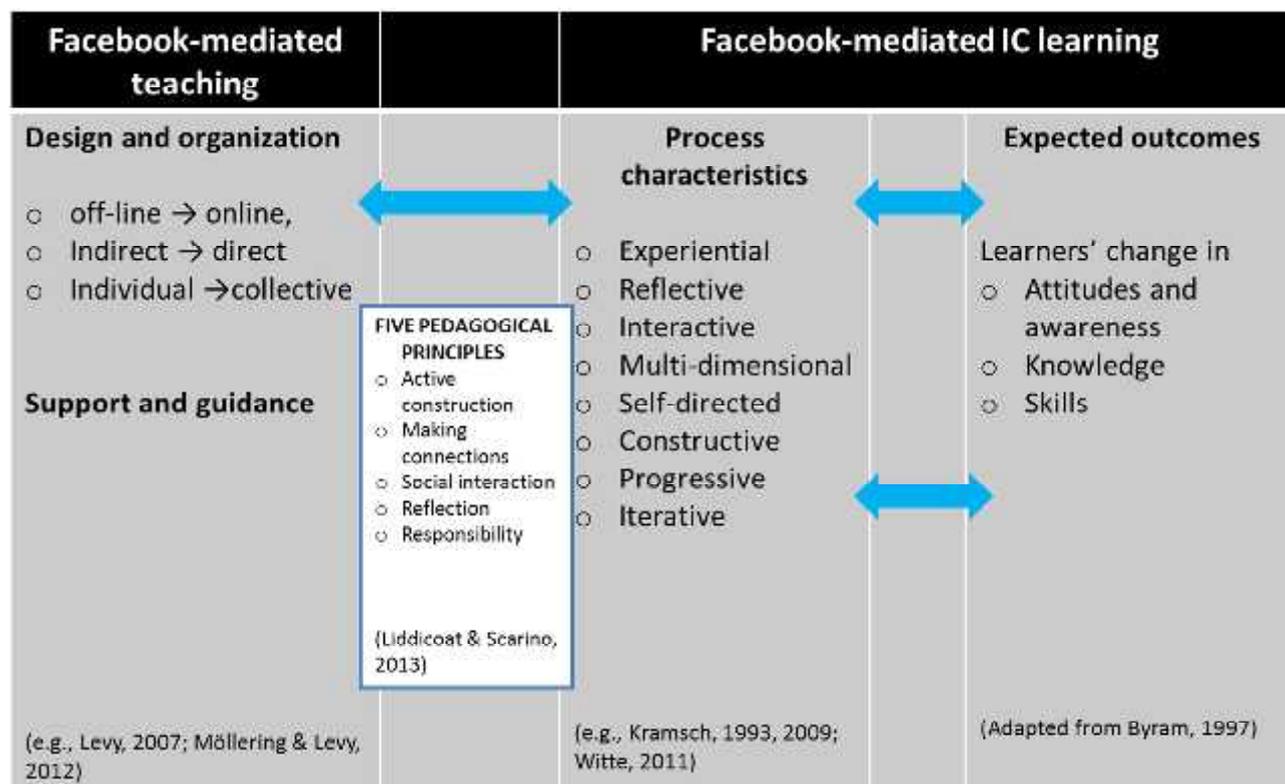
Figure 3-2. A proposed model of Web 2.0 mediated IC learning (adapted from Hakkarainen's model for teaching and meaningful learning, 2009, p. 213).

3.4.4 Phase 3

3.4.4.1 Research methods

Qualitative research

This phase adopted qualitative research methodologies. Qualitative approaches as described by Denzin and Lincohn (2000) below enabled an understanding of the students' Facebook-mediated IC learning and development from different perspectives.

> Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them […] qualitative researchers display a wide range of interconnected interpretive practices, hoping always to get a better fix on the subject matter at hand. It is

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understood however that each practice makes the world visible in a different way. Hence there is frequently a commitment to using more than one interpretive practice in any study. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, pp. 3-4)

Moreover, F. Ryan, Coughlan, and Cronin (2007) emphasize that qualitative research can help understand the affective dimension of human experience when they assert that qualitative research focuses on the individual who goes through the phenomenon in question and deals with experiences, feelings and attitudes. A qualitative approach, therefore, helped the researcher address the problem under investigation in a comprehensive way dealing with cognitive, behavioural and affective factors.

The researcher was involved in the IC teaching and learning process as a teacher, teaching and observing the students' intercultural behaviour, collecting their linguistic and non-linguistic products on Facebook to interpret and analyze multidimensional changes in their IC. In addition, she interviewed the students and used their reflective writings to understand their views on the changes. Therefore, IC development was explored not only from the researcher's but also from the participants' perspectives.

3.4.4.2 Participants

EFL students at the university were invited to participate in phase 3 on a voluntary basis. The recruitment of participants conformed to UQ's ethical requirements. After the researcher obtained the Rector's permission, she released the information about the project to students who were enrolling in the existing course Intercultural Communication. Accordingly, they understood about the integration of the Facebook-mediated learning design in the course, and they could choose to participate. They were subsequently informed about the aim of the project, their potential involvement and the technological requirements for participation, through the course syllabus and an information letter. These documents specified that participants could withdraw from the project at any time without any negative effects on their study. For example, even after two weeks, students were allowed to withdraw from the course and enrol in another. Alternatively, they might stay in the course and request that the researcher stop collecting and using their data. Additionally, measures such as explicit marking criteria and blind marking were taken to ensure that the course assessment did not influence the collected data (see further information provided in 3.4.4.4). As a result of the recruitment process, thirty eight students volunteered to participate in the project, enrolling in two classes.

In order to comply with the PhD timeframe, only one of the two classes was randomly selected as a case study for the project. This class had nineteen students, two males and

seventeen females, which is typical of gender imbalance in foreign language classes in Vietnam. They were around twenty years of age. A third of the students came from the city where the university was located; it was a city of tourism and cultural festival. With the exception of one student from Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam, other students came from small towns around Central Vietnam where they had little contact with foreigners. Their names in this thesis are pseudonyms.

According to the university's missions and duties, the students were trained for professions involving contact with foreigners; for example, they could potentially work as interpreters, officers in international departments or co-ordinators of non-governmental organizations. At the time of data collection, the participants were in the second half of their second year at university; this means they had been studying English for nearly nine years: seven years at school and two years at university. Each week, apart from content subjects generally taught in Vietnamese, these students attended five two-period classes of English language skills (One period was fifty-five minutes), and a two-period class of Intercultural Communication. They were supposed to be at an intermediate level of English; however, seventeen students wrote in their autobiography that they had never used English for communication with people from other cultures.

3.4.4.3 Implementation of the proposed learning design

As mentioned in the introduction chapter, teaching Intercultural Communication for more than ten years at the university under study, the researcher was aware of the practical weaknesses of the course and wished to improve it. For her to understand advantages and difficulties in implementing the design from an insider's perspective, she participated in the project as a teacher.

The existing course aimed to help EFL students acquire basic knowledge about theories of intercultural communication and develop intercultural competence. It was fifteen-week course taught in English for two periods per week. Students were expected to read and discuss topics about intercultural communication adopted from different authors. Additional learning activities such as watching movies, role-plays, and presentations were also used to help students understand theoretical concepts and practice language skills. However, students lacked real intercultural communication in English, and IC development was limited. To overcome this limitation, the Facebook-mediated IC learning design was integrated into the course with respect to its aims, learning activities and assessment (Appendix 2).

The Facebook-mediated learning activities offered the students opportunities for intercultural experience and reflection. Facebook-mediated chats with the guests then provided the students with empirical evidence of concepts and theoretical issues in intercultural communication. The chatting activity aimed to provide opportunities to exchange cultural information with foreigners. Therefore, the guests' role was to answer the students' questions about their culture and ask the latter questions in return. As in real life communication for information, the guests were not expected to correct the students' linguistic errors. In addition, both the students and the guests chose conversational topics of interest to them. The aim of inviting a guest from C2 was to show to the students that he/she was only a personalization of C2 and did not necessarily represent that culture. The students could ask him/her questions, observe, compare and analyze to construct an understanding of the personal characteristics of C2, and avoid stereotypes. Written reflection and peer discussion helped the students critically analyze their own experiences and better understand the theories learned in the course.

Regarding the sequence of learning activities, for the first four weeks preparation took place. As described in the learning design, before chatting with the guests on Facebook, the students were psychologically and linguistically prepared. For example, they accessed the guests' completed cultural surveys. In this way, the students became familiarized with the guests before chatting with them, and it was hoped that this familiarization would reduce their anxiety. The survey information also raised the students' awareness of the personal characteristics of culture because it was important for them to understand that an individual guest might not entirely represent the culture he/she came from. Subsequently, the students worked in groups of three to prepare questions to ask the guests. In addition, during these four preparatory weeks, they learned basic concepts about intercultural communication. This culture-general knowledge could help them conceptualize and explain differences and similarities they noticed in the chats.

From week 5 to week 14, they experienced successive learning cycles with the three guests. More details about the integration of the learning design into the existing course Intercultural Communication are found in Appendix 3. It describes a sequence of in-class and online teaching and learning activities over fifteen weeks. In addition, the following section 3.4.4.4 elaborates on the learning activities and outcomes, how these outcomes served as data collected for the project, and what measures were taken to enhance the data validity.

3.4.4.4 Data collection

From the beginning of the course, data were continuously collected and analyzed. On-going analysis of data helped the researcher check and clarify obscure information with the students. Based on this preliminary analysis the researcher modified the learning design after each learning cycle with a guest. Table 3-3 demonstrates the data sources and language used.

Table 3-3. Data source and language.

Stages in the learning design	Data	Language
Pre-learning	Students' course expectations Student auto-biographies Cultural surveys	English/Vietnamese
Indirect contact with C2	Reflections 0 Peer discussions	English
Learning with Guest 1	Chats with Guest 1 Written reflections 1 Peer discussions 1	English
Learning with Guest 2	Chats with Guest 2 Written reflections 2 Peer discussions 2	English
Learning with Guest 3	Chats with Guest 3 Written reflections 3 Peer discussions 3	English
Post-learning	Final reflections Student course feedbacks Student interviews	English Vietnamese Vietnamese

Data were in the form of the chats with the guests on Facebook, the students' discussions with peers and their written reflections, all of which were uploaded on Facebook. In addition, data included student interviews conducted at the end of the course and audio-recorded, and paper surveys gathering the students' end-of-course feedback. Students' written reflections, chats and discussions were all in English, and the interviews and the end-of-course feedback were in Vietnamese.

Data were collected from the first day of implementing the learning design. On the first day of class, students were asked to write their expectations of the course in English in at least 200 words. Students were advised that this work would not be marked, but it was necessary for their later reflection on their learning process. On the one hand, this piece of writing helped the teacher know about their motivations and expectations of the course so

that she could modify her teaching to suit the student needs and advise them of any misconception regarding the course. On the other hand, student expectations could inform the teacher as a researcher of the starting point in each student's IC with regard to their attitudes to other cultures, cultural and intercultural knowledge and intercultural skills.

Students were also required to compose their autobiography of at least 500 words. As in the case with the student expectations, this piece of writing was not marked, but it was a prerequisite for later discussion activities in class. Although students were allowed to write their autobiography either in English or in Vietnamese for them to express themselves as freely as they wished to, the majority of students chose to write it in English, and only one student chose to write it in Vietnamese. In terms of teaching, student autobiographies were used as cultural artifacts for students to analyze and find out how their culture influenced their thinking and way of presenting ideas, which is a topic of discussion in this course. In terms of research, the student autobiography provided the teacher as a researcher with some demographic data about the participants' backgrounds and initial IC.

In addition, students were asked to write about their pre-suppositions about American and Saudi cultures (Reflection 0), and to complete a survey on cultural differences which was adapted from Furstenberg et al. (2001). This survey was not marked, and it was used for discussion activities. The survey aimed to help students see how culture influenced their belief, thinking and behaviour. It also aimed to help students perceive variation in culture. They could work out how culture was contested, relative and personal. With respect to data collection, the students' completed surveys and their pre-suppositions helped give further information on their initial IC such as their attitudes to another culture.

After completing the survey students were asked to compare their completed surveys with their classmates'. They also explained any similarities and differences they had noticed. Their discussion on the similarities in their responses to the survey questions aimed to help them see how culture influenced their beliefs, thinking and behaviour in given situations. The discussion on any noticed differences aimed to raise their awareness of variation within a culture. Culture is in fact relative and personal. The data collected from these discussions helped inform the researcher about each student's IC such as her/his skills of interpreting a behaviour in her/his own culture, identifying variation within her/his culture. In addition, students compared their completed surveys with those completed by the guests they were going to chat with on Facebook. This comparison aimed to help them see how culture influences the way people from other cultures believe, think and behave in the same situations given in the survey completed by Vietnamese students. The data

collected from these discussions helped inform the researcher about each student's IC such as her/his skills of interpreting a behaviour in another culture and identifying variation within this culture.

Teams of three students were connected in turn with a guest on Facebook. Usually, each team appointed one student to chat with the guest; but the others might also want to participate in the conversation. Guest 1 was a man from Saudi Arabia and Guests 2 and 3 were women from the United States. After the guest introduced herself/himself, students said hello, introduced themselves and their team, and asked the guest questions about cultural aspects of interest to them. This online activity aimed to expose students to representatives from other cultures. It also aimed to get students to practice their English language, to learn to ask questions to understand an event or a behaviour in C2, relate it to Vietnamese culture and talk about it with the representatives. All conversations were marked by the teacher according to the criteria released to students at the beginning of the course. The data collected from these conversations helped inform the researcher about the students' IC. They might reveal:

- the students' changing attitudes towards people from C2,

- their emerging skills of interpreting an event or a behaviour in C2 and relating it to C1,

- their growing skills of discovering and learning new cultural knowledge,

- their accumulation of new knowledge about C2 and C1,

- their emerging ability to communicate based on their knowledge, attitudes and skills.

Each student needed to read each guest's chats with different students from other teams. They were asked to write a reflection on cultural aspects learned with the guest. Basically in their reflection they answered the following questions:

1) What do you feel and think about the guest?

2) Observe all the chats, and notice any event or behaviour in C2 that can potentially cause cultural misunderstanding or conflict.

3) Explain what you observed and noticed in reference to intercultural concepts you have learned in class.

4) Does what you observed and noticed reinforce or lead you to reject your previous assumptions about C2?

5) Relate what you observed about C2 to Vietnamese culture and draw out your own conclusions about communicating with people from C2.

This reflexivity aimed to help students learn to observe and notice. They then learned to explain the cultural values underlying what they had observed, and built their new knowledge about C2 based on their previous assumptions about it. They also learned to relate what they had observed in C2 to Vietnamese culture and to take their own stance in intercultural communication. Their written reflections were marked by the teacher against the marking criteria as specified in the course description. The data collected from written reflections were used as evidence of how students experienced the learning process and described their trajectories of IC development.

Once the students uploaded their reflections on Facebook, students in teams of three read one another's reflections and commented on one another's views about cultural aspects of interest to them. They were asked to express their agreement on at least one point in their classmate's reflection, and further discuss it by giving more information from other sources that they could access. They were also required to challenge their classmate's view with contrasting evidence that they could find from the guest's conversations and other sources. The aim of these discussions was to help students further reflect on their learning at a collective level. Sometimes the teacher might intervene in their discussion. All the discussions were marked against the marking criteria explicitly specified to the students. The data collected from these discussions were used to analyze further the student's learning processes and their trajectories of IC development.

This cycle of learning with a guest, in which students were exposed to a representative from another culture for social interaction, individually reflected on their learning, and discussed their learning with peers, was iterated three times in the students' IC learning process. After a learning iteration was completed, the researcher initially analyzed the collected data, wrote a reflection and modified the learning design, preparing for the implementation of the next iteration with another guest. At the end of the third cycle, students were asked to write their final wrap-up reflection on the whole learning process throughout the semester. They were guided in their writing by a template. Since this final reflection was the assignment accounting for 40% of the course assessment, according to the university rules it was blind-marked against the marking criteria by two other teachers. The data collected from the three iterations and the student final reflection were used to reveal the student's trajectories of IC development.

At the end of the course, seven students (two males and five females) were selected for interviews. The selection was based on gender and regional background to ensure representation of both genders and different regional backgrounds. Additionally, interviewees varied in terms of English language competence and motivation in learning. Some of them were proficient, and others had problems in expressing themselves in English. Some were highly motivated in learning, attending all face-to-face classes and completing all learning requirements and activities; others were less motivated, sometimes skipping classes and failing to perform one or two required learning activities.

The aim of the student interview was for the researcher to further collect information on the student evaluation of the learning design. It also aimed to clarify certain details in the data which were either obscure or ungrammatically expressed in English. It was based on the following four questions:

1) In your opinion, what have you personally gained in this course with regard to your attitudes to other cultures, your cultural and intercultural knowledge, and your intercultural skills?

2) What learning activities helped you gain it/them?

3) What learning activities do you think we should promote? What should we modify? What should we remove?

4) In the chats with the three guests, who did you feel like most and who did you feel most comfortable to communicate with? Why?

Five interviews were conducted in a vacant classroom at the end of the semester after the students had finished all their exams and assignments, and two interviews were carried out in a quiet bookshop and coffee house. The researcher recruited the interviewees either in person or via email or the Facebook message tool. They were clearly informed of the aim of the interview and made well aware that this interview had nothing to do with the course assessment. All the invited students agreed to participate in the interviews. For each interview, the researcher started with greetings and a small talk in one or two speaking turns about the student's life and quickly moved to the interview by letting them know about the aim of the interview and then asking the first question. All the interviews were conducted in Vietnamese, and they were audio-recorded. In addition to the four guiding questions above, in the process of interview the researcher also asked each interviewee probing questions for further information. At the end of the interview, she also

asked interviewees to clarify certain ambiguous or obscure points in their reflections, conversations with guests or discussions with classmates.

Apart from the data collected directly by the researcher, she could also access the student end-of-course evaluation which was conducted independently by the Training department. This feedback form was in Vietnamese, and it consisted of twenty close-ended questions and two open-ended questions. The twenty close-ended questions were categorized into seven sections: the course content; the teaching method; the use of teaching aids; the teacher's responsibility and enthusiasm; the teacher's ability in organizing, advising and guiding the student learning and researching activities; the course assessment, and the teacher-student relationship. Students were asked to rate their agreement on a scale from 1(least satisfactory) to 4 (most satisfactory). For the open-ended questions, students were asked to comment on the teaching and learning activity they like most in the course. They were also invited to give the teacher any suggestions on teaching the course.

In summary, the study used a combination of data collection methods to trace the students' trajectories of IC development. This mixed method is in light with Möllering and Levy's view on the on-going collection of data: "Research designs need to be formulated so as to be able to record learner reflections, both of the learners' C1 and C2. This requires the use of data collection tools that will successfully generate detailed, on-going ICC data over a period of time" (Möllering & Levy, 2012, p. 246).

3.4.4.5 Data analysis

Data were both deductively and inductively coded. Deductively, Lewins and Silver (2007) define: "Qualitative coding is the process by which segments of data are identified as relating, or being examples of, a more general idea, instance, theme or category" (p. 81). Thus, data were coded on the concepts of IC. This means that data were coded and categorized for components of IC and stages of its development. For example, transcripts of chats, discussions and written reflections were coded for "procedural knowledge", "identifying similarity". Inductively, three Cs of data analysis (Coding, Categorization, and Conceptualization) were conducted with a six-step process suggested by Litchman (2013): initial coding, revisiting initial coding, initial list of categories/central ideas, modification of initial categories, revisiting categories and subcategories, moving to concepts (p. 265). In this way, data were analyzed for emergent patterns to refine both the framework of IC and the design principles. This means apart from the existing categories, the researcher delved into the data for new categories. As a result, categories of affective states such as

approval, satisfaction, dissatisfaction, anxiety; and categories of semiotic resources and languaging/translanguaging emerged.

When data analysis was implemented continuously along with the data collection, it was checked with the researcher's colleague and the students. Data analysis entailed a constant comparison of the emergence of IC components in different learning activities of the three learning cycles. The researcher used NVivo (Bazeley, 2007) to organize coding and make comparisons. Figure 3-3 shows the constant comparison of different sources of data. This analysis allowed the researcher to map individual students' cognitive, affective and language changes based on the data collected before, during and after each of the three cycles of learning with a guest. Accordingly, she was able to chart their trajectories of IC development.
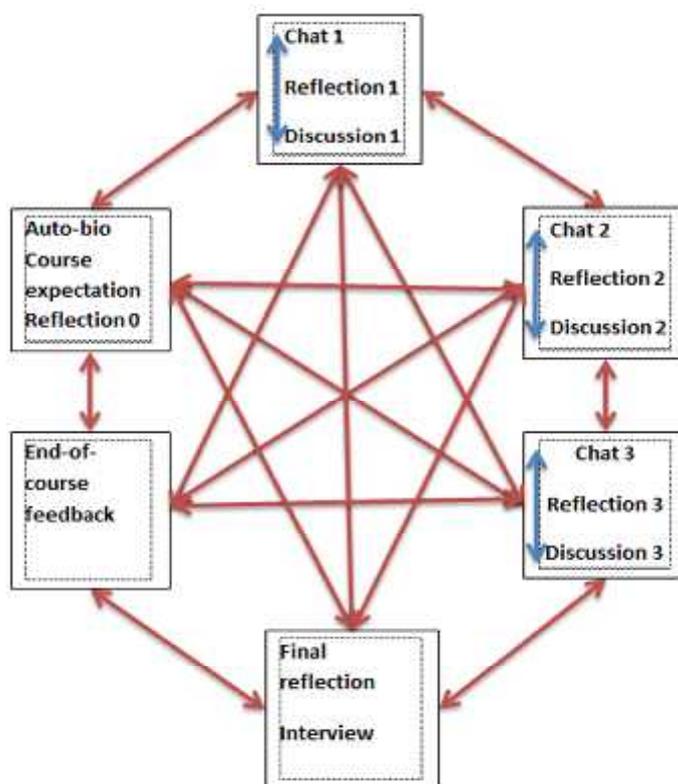
Figure 3-3. Constant comparison of data.

3.4.5 Phase 4

This phase entailed the researcher's reflection on the implementation of the learning design to generate pedagogical principles for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning designs and to obtain further insights into EFL learners' IC development. As a result of testing and reflecting, pedagogical guidelines for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning were refined, and a

revised set of practical IC learning activities via Web 2.0 technologies was suggested for intercultural EFL education contexts.

3.5 Reliability and validity

Reliability refers to the extent to which a study can be replicated, and validity concerns the extent to which a study evaluates what it claims to evaluate (Nunan, 1992). According to McKenney, Nieveen and van den Akker (2006), putting in place an explicit conceptual framework, triangulation, inductive and deductive analysis, full description, and member check helps enhance reliability and validity of a study. These were all implemented in the present study.

3.5.1 Explicit conceptual framework

McKenney, Nieveen and van den Akker (2006) argue that the provision of an explicit conceptual framework will facilitate other researchers' data analysis and analytic replication. This project was grounded in the existing conceptual frameworks of IC (Bennett, 1993, 2004; Byram, 1997, 2009) and the pedagogical theories of IC learning (Byram, 1997; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013).

3.5.2 Triangulation

Triangulation meant that a variety of data sources and data collection could counter-balance the weaknesses of a single one. As a result, it helped increase the reliability and internal validity of findings (Merriam, 1988; Miles and Huberrman, 1994; Patter, 1990, cited in McKenney, Nieveen and van den Akker, 2006; Design-Based Research Collective, 2003). Therefore, the trustworthiness of this study is attributed to the following factors. First, a variety of data collection methods were used, including questionnaire (end-of-course feedback), transcripts of online exchanges, participants' written reflections and interviews. Second, as Möllering and Levy (2012) and Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) suggest a combination of frameworks in IC research, the findings were also discussed in reference to different relevant theories to enrich the interpretation of data.

3.5.3 Inductive and deductive data analysis

A combination of inductive and deductive data analysis, especially conducted with peer-checking can help enhance the reliability and validity of a DBR study (McKenney, Nieveen & van den Akker, 2006). On the one hand, data were coded according to the existing theoretical framework; on the other hand, they were also explored for emergent patterns. In this project, data were analyzed with reference to contemporary conceptualizations of IC and IC learning, which were synthesized in the proposed conceptualization of IC in EFL

contexts and draft design principles. At the same time they were delved into for emergent patterns concerning affective, cognitive and behavioural features of IC at different points of time and in different contexts.

3.5.4 Full description

A detailed description of the context, design decisions and research findings is presented to help the reader/other researchers understand what actually happened in each research stage. Such a full description can also facilitate replication and evaluation of the study's reliability (McKenney, Nieveen & van den Akker, 2006; Wang & Hannafin, 2005).

3.5.5 Member check

Measures involved participants in enhancement of the reliability and validity of the project. Interviews were conducted about the students' chats transcripts and written reflections to ensure the researcher's accurate interpretation of the data. Checking data interpretation was continuously implemented with the participants for corrections if necessary during the process of data collection and data analysis. This was facilitated by Facebook since many of the students became the researcher's Facebook friends.

In addition to the above measures, the pre-questionnaire and interviews were conducted in Vietnamese to ensure the precision of information given by the informants. The questionnaire was piloted for the wording and expression to ensure the validity of the study.

3.6 Summary of chapter 3

This chapter has presented the DBR approach to educational studies and the rationale for application of this methodology in the current study of Web 2.0 mediated IC learning in EFL contexts. It outlines the four phases of the project and elaborates on the research methods, data collection, and data analysis involved in each phase. Most importantly, the multiple approaches embedded in DBR aimed to enable this project to achieve its dual aims of reconceptualizing IC and refining pedagogical principles for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning designs.

Chapter 4

THE STUDENTS' DEVELOPMENT OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and discussion about the students' IC development with a view to answering RQ 1 (How can IC be usefully conceptualized in an EFL context?) and RQ 3 (What are the trajectories of IC development in the learning process?). First, section 4.2 includes an analysis of emergent sub-categories related to IC components across the three learning activities (chats with the guests, written reflections, peer discussions). Subsequently it analyzes and discusses how all the students implemented their cognitive and affective processes. This analysis accordingly uncovers how the class as a whole developed IC. Section 4.3 spotlights two focal students as contrasting examples of individual trajectories of IC development. Section 4.4 summarizes the findings from both sections and suggests a visual representation of IC in intercultural EFL contexts.

4.2 A report on the whole class

This section reports findings about development with respect to three dimensions of IC - knowledge, skills and attitudes - that emerged from the data analysis. It also discusses the findings in reference to theoretical frameworks and other studies. Subsection 4.2.1 examines the students' acquisition of different types of knowledge through chats with the guests, written reflections and discussions with peers. Subsection 4.2.2 presents the emergence of the students' IC skills, and the relationship between this development and their acquisition of knowledge. Finally, subsection 4.2.3 examines the students' affective and attitudinal changes in the process of learning.

4.2.1 The students' cognitive development

The study shows that the students used linguistic and non-linguistic resources to construct cognitive changes in the chats, in written reflections and in peer discussions. First, this section analyzes the students' cognitive processes as displayed in the chats, starting with an examination of types of knowledge in which the students were interested, and how they asked the guests questions to gain that knowledge.

4.2.1.1 Cognitive development in chats

Table 4-1. Types of knowledge and types of questions the students asked.

Types of knowledge	Declarative knowledge					Procedural knowledge	
	Fact					Behaviour	
Types of questions	What Question	Request for factual information	Yes/No Question		What difference	How/Why Question	Request for opinions
Guest 1	2	3	4		0	2	2
Guest 2	0	0		5	1	7	7
Guest 3	5	4	9	2	0	2	7

A comparison of the types of questions asked and the knowledge requested across the chats with Guests 1, 2 and 3 shows that the students seemed to shift their interest in different types of knowledge. Accordingly they changed the types of questions used (see Table 4-1). In conversations with Guest 1, they tended to be more interested in declarative than procedural knowledge, and with regard to declarative knowledge, they were more curious about facts than behaviour. Nine out of fourteen questions enquired about factual knowledge whereas only four sought information about behaviour. Question types used to ask for declarative knowledge were Yes/No and What-questions, whereas How/Why-questions were posed for procedural knowledge. The students often requested factual information about Saudi culture and Guest 1's opinion about Vietnamese culture.

In the case of Guest 2, the students' interests changed. All twenty questions requested behavioural knowledge, and more questions focused on procedural knowledge. Accordingly there were more How/Why-questions and requests for opinion. Interestingly, with regard to the conversations with Guest 3 there was a mix of enquiries about both factual and behavioural knowledge. Of twenty nine questions asked, eighteen were about factual knowledge while eleven sought explanations or requested opinions on behaviour. There was also a variety of question types including Yes/No, What, How/Why-questions and requests for opinions.

The following examples from the chats illustrate the types of questions and the types of knowledge asked for.

Declarative knowledge and types of questions

What-questions, either direct or indirect, tended to focus on facts. This tendency can be illustrated by a student's curiosity about traditional clothes in the United States because of his taken-for-granted fact that "In vietnam culture, everybody is usually wear Ao Dai traditional because it's clothes traditional"[2]. He asked Guest 3, "And what about you? What is the clothes traditional?"

Requests for factual knowledge tended to be in the form of "Could you…?". The way the students described their interest in a topic before delivering their requests suggests that their focus was on factual knowledge. For example, a student who "knows" that "Saudi Arabia is a famous country with […] Mecca and Medina", asked: "Could you tell me more about sacred places, please?" Or Nhu, who was a volunteer for a festival in her city, requested, "Could you tell me about famous fetival in your country?" Or another student was interested in the types of food and drink Saudi men have at parties since she knew that pork and alcoholic drinks are not allowed in Saudi Arabia. She requested this information: "Could you tell me what food do Muslims gentlemen eat and drink in the party?"

Yes/No-questions tended to seek confirmation of a belief or perception about an issue the students had mentioned prior to their question. Depending on the students' interest that led to the question, Yes/No-questions could be about factual knowledge or behavioural knowledge. For example, one student briefly mentioned Vietnamese food to Guest 1 and asked, "Cuisine isn't only the food but it also represents the culture and traditions of each country, nation. Mr. [Guest 1], Do you think like me? Do you like the cuisine in my country?" Or after a long chat with Guest 3 and having learned that she was very interested in Vietnamese culture, Hương asked: "Do you want to visit Vietnam someday?" apparently expecting a "Yes" from the guest. In addition, with Yes/No-questions students also sought a guest's confirmation of their understanding of a C2 behaviour. For instance, Tuấn asked Guest 2 a Yes/No-question after describing an American behaviour:

> i have this question in my mind, as far as i know about the american, they seem to work very hard to earn as many money as they can just to spend it all without saving any for their future. is that right? (Tuấn-Guest 2's conversation, 14 May 2014)

What-difference-questions were in the form of What-questions; however, this type of question was often posed to elicit behavioural knowledge. For example, the way in which a

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[2] The students' quotes are kept precisely the same as the original posted on Facebook.

student introduced her enquiry about "the characteristic of American family" suggested that she was more curious about behavioural knowledge:

> Most of Vietnam families have a characteristic as a husband only go to work to earn money, and a wife is not only going to work but also doing house work. So, Can you tell me about the characteristic of America family? What's the difference and the similar between Vietnam family and America family? (Nhi-Guest 2's conversation, 15 May 2014)

The above types of questions often sought a confirmation or description of a fact or behaviour rather than an explanation, meaning that the students used these questions to gain declarative knowledge rather than procedural knowledge.

Procedural knowledge and types of questions

As seen in Table 4-1, the students often asked for procedural knowledge with How/why-questions and requests for opinions/explanations (e.g., Can/Could you tell me…? What do you think…?). How/Why-questions were likely to seek explanations for a particular behaviour or a belief. These questions often involved a negotiation of the meaning or the connotation of a vocabulary item. For instance, Tuấn was curious about Guest 2's association of money with green:

> here is the question i want to ask: in your survey, particularly in your word association section, you related the word money to green? i've been wondering how are these word related to each other (except for the colour, of course, your bill is green) there is any other meaning?

Or a female student asked about Guest 2's perception of "mother":

> … in your survey I see that in your word associations, you related the word responsibility to mother? Why don't both mother and father? can you explain that?

Requests for opinions were in the form of "Can/Could you…?" or in the form of How/What-questions (How do you feel…? What do you think…?). An illustration comes from the conversation between Trang and Guest 2:

> I think US's culture respects pets and treats equally with them. Could you tell me your opinion about that? And according to you, eating dog's meat is the difference of culture each countries or be heartless?

In this example, Trang negotiated the meaning of "eating dog's meat" with Guest 2. To her, it meant "heartless" and she wanted to learn what it meant to the guest.

Or Hiền asked for Guest 1's opinion about human rights in Saudi Arabia:

> [...] Saudi Arabia has no the Constitution. So I do not think in your country exists the justice and the freedom. Could you tell me about your opinion about this issue? Have you ever felt unhappy about this?

Apparently, she was expressing the meaning (unjust and unhappy) she attached to "no constitution" and negotiating it with the guest.

Another female student requested Guest 2's opinion about the values of independence and self-reliance. The way in which she asked the question revealed what these words meant to her and she also sought to learn their meaning from the guest's perspective.

> I know independence is a trait of Americans. For example, the majority of American students choose classes, discipline themselves, they will pay a portion or all of the tuition. But for most students Vietnam, they have to depend on their family. Can you tell me more about independence in your country? And what do you think about differences in the above example?

In summary, in the chats the students were interested in different types of knowledge and asked different types of question to gain that knowledge. They often focused on declarative knowledge about a fact or a behaviour using Yes/No, What-questions or requests for factual information while they chatted with Guest 1. In comparison, they shifted to an interest in procedural knowledge in the chats with Guests 2 and 3, seeking an explanation for a particular behaviour or phenomenon with How/Why-questions or requests for opinions.

Linguistic resources in expressing and negotiating meaning and knowledge

The questions and their contexts suggest that the students used EFL in a special way to negotiate meaning and knowledge. They mixed it with Vietnamese not only at discourse, syntactic but also semantic levels to produce a Vietnamese English. For example, Trâm wanted Guest 3 to comment on the Vietnamese traditional dress:

> I am a Kinh person Traditional custom of Kinh person is Ao Dai. I post for you a picture about my friends wear Aodai. How do you feel about Vietnam woman wear Aodai?

In her comments and question she mixed Vietnamese and EFL in various ways. The English question "How do you feel about Vietnam woman wear Aodai?" was partly structured according to rules of Vietnamese syntax and grammar (Cô cảm thấy thế nào về phụ nữ Việt Nam mặc áo dài?) She also switched from English to Vietnamese when mentioning the *áo dài*. A native English speaker might put the question with the verb

"think" rather than "feel". This Vietnamese way of asking might seek to negotiate and learn about the affective meaning of the *áo dài*. As seen in the section below, an examination of non-linguistic factors could further unpack this negotiation of meaning and knowledge.

Non-linguistic resources in expressing and negotiating meaning and knowledge

In addition to using EFL to express their view about a cultural issue and to enquire of the guests about it, the students also employed various non-linguistic resources to express the meaning they attached to a word, a symbol, an object or a cultural phenomenon. There were links, images, YouTube videos, emoticons and the Like symbol. Figure 4-1 reveals Trâm used images, the Like symbol and emoticons in her negotiation of meaning and knowledge. The photograph of her friends in the *áo dài* might help her convey not only the factual but also the emotive meaning of the *áo dài*. She must have been very proud both to wear it herself and to show the picture of her friends to the guest, and wanted to share this meaning. She also wanted to learn about the meaning the guest might give to the *áo dài*. Trâm's use of an emoticon and her verbal response to the guest's comment showed her satisfaction with this negotiation. Her combination of linguistic and multimodal resources seemed to be very efficient in negotiation of meaning and knowledge. To the girl, the *áo dài* meant beauty and pride. Now she learned that the *áo dài* meant being modern and stylish (perhaps in the sense of "it fits the body a little tighter") to an American woman.

Figure 4-1. Multimodal resources for expressing and negotiating meaning and knowledge: an example of the áo dài.

Summary of the students' cognitive development in the chats

The students used their linguistic and non-linguistic resources to position themselves expressing their interest and the meaning they gave to the observed phenomena. They subsequently negotiated meaning and knowledge about those observations by asking the guests questions. In terms of knowledge, the students often took interest in factual knowledge about C2 while they learned with Guest 1. In the chats with Guest 2 they focussed more on behavioural knowledge, and particularly on procedural knowledge (i.e. how or why a behaviour took place). They mixed both factual and behavioural knowledge in the process of learning with Guest 3. While Yes/No, What-questions and requests for a fact were enquiries about declarative knowledge, How/Why-questions and requests for opinion sought procedural knowledge. With regard to language, it is difficult to clearly explain the students' EFL development; however, they seemed to develop their language for questioning (given an increase in the number of questions for deeper knowledge). In addition to evidence of knowledge acquisition found in the chats, there were traces of

cognitive development in the students' written reflections which will be analyzed in the next section.

4.2.1.2 Cognitive development in written reflections

Shaping and organizing deep mental processes through language

In their written reflections the students shaped and organized their cognitive processes through language to gain new understandings. They reported on knowledge about the guests and knowledge about their culture gained in the chats, and generated a new understanding about C2.

With regard to knowledge about the guest, the data below illustrate how a student continued to organize her mental processes:

> Through conversation with the guest on the forum, I have been known about the Saudi Arabia and a part of the guest. I think he is a good man who has the enthusiasm and hospitality. He was willing to share and answer our questions. […] He is a upright and truthful person. He recognized and said about the limitations and weaknesses are existing in his country […] I admire and respect the enthusiastic help from him. (Hiền. Reflection 1)

In this example, Hiền established links between what she had learned through the contact with the guest to generate new knowledge about him. She perceived: "He was willing to share and answer our questions", so she came to an understanding: "he was enthusiastic and hospitable". He admitted limitations and weaknesses of his country, so he must be an honest person. Thus she came to classify him as a "good person".

Table 4-2. Types of knowledge the students reported in their written reflections.

Types of knowledge	Culture-specific			Culture-general
	Declarative		Procedural	
	Fact		Behaviour	
Reflection 1	24 references / 19 students	3 ref./3 sts	1 ref./1 st.	0 ref.
Reflection 2	2 ref./ 2 sts	27 ref./17 sts	16 ref./11 sts	7 ref.
Reflection 3	13 ref./ 7 sts	31ref./18 sts	13 ref./11 sts	7 ref.

With respect to knowledge about C2, Table 4-2 shows the number of references coded as different types of knowledge and the number of students who reported the knowledge in their written reflections. It suggests that the students gained different types of knowledge in reflections 1, 2 and 3. They gained more declarative knowledge in reflection 1, whereas they learned more procedural knowledge in reflections 2 and 3. This tendency to obtain different types of knowledge about C2 was consistent with the shift of interest from declarative knowledge in the chats with Guest 1 to procedural knowledge in the chats with Guests 2 and 3.

With regard to Saudi culture, although Guest 1 provided both factual knowledge and behavioural knowledge in his chats, in reflection 1 all students reported factual knowledge they had gained. For example, one student reported on facts about the Saudi economy:

> Saudi Arabia is a country famous for oil and it has largest oil reserves. So their economy bases on more in oil exports, from that their people get a high standard of living. This country is the 19th highest GDP in the world. So I guess the standard of living of he will be higher than the other.

Or another student described the country's economic and political role in the world:

> Saudi Arabia is known as a country with the biggest oil reserves in the world so that the country's economy based mainly on oil exports. Moreover, there is the conflict in the Middle East while Arab plays an important role in U.S peaceful policy.

Three out of nineteen students reported on some Islamic behaviours which were different from Vietnamese ways of life (i.e. behavioural knowledge), and only one of these three students attempted to understand the underlying values of such behaviours (i.e. procedural knowledge):

> Through the above information, I noticed that Saudi Arabia is a country respecting peace, and divine worship. They always keep themselves good direction (Muslims do not drink to keep yourself always peaceful) and clean (do not eat pork because they believe pigs are dirty animals). In addition, Muslims have a habit of doing charity work (alms). Therefore, I really respect Muslims.
> The guest expresses his beloved country is clear and true. Muslim countries have many limitations on human rights. He said: "Like many middle eastern countries have limits freedom of speech in Saudi Arabia. Has it has no constitution and monarchy system as you Mentioned. There is no freedom of assembly and Protest". Actually, I

had not previously agreed with this problem. But when in contact with his answer, I realized that each country has its own wishes. They hope that with the laws of Islam that will help them have a life of peace and not of war. (Nhi. Reflection 1)

It seems that in the above example Nhi was trying to connect what she had observed about Saudi behavioural culture via the guest's words with her different chunks of new knowledge to understand the Saudi way of life. She also came to learn that a real Saudi with whom she chatted loved his country deeply though he was aware of its shortcomings. Nhi seemed to connect this emerged knowledge with her previous assumptions about Saudi culture and her own culture to "realize that each country has its own wishes". By connecting different pieces of knowledge in terms of how or why they co-existed (Nhi just connected them with brackets in written English) she was able to build a new understanding of Saudi culture.

In reflection 2 about American culture (based on chats with Guest 2), the students focussed more on behavioural than on factual knowledge. Only two students wrote about facts. All seventeen students who uploaded reflection 2 reported on behavioural knowledge with 27 references coded (see Table 4-2). Eleven of these students showed procedural knowledge with 16 references coded. Seven references were coded as culture-general knowledge as defined by Gudykunst et al (1991) (see chapter 3, p.13). An examination of the context of the references coded as procedural knowledge suggests that the students linked different cognitions and pieces of knowledge to construct a new understanding of the behaviour in which they were interested. Such mental processes might also help generate culture-general knowledge, i.e. an understanding of "dimensions of cultural variability" (Gudykunst et al, 1991), or they might trigger the use of culture-general concepts to analyze and explain an observed phenomenon. The following is an example of Khánh organizing her cognitions to understand why the elderly in the United States often live in nursing homes rather than with their families.

In the communications with Mis [Guest 2], I notice that American's behaviour made me surprised. She said that " My husband tries to take care of his father who is 84 but it is difficult since he is very independent since my mother in law dies a few years ago. Our culture does not take care of the elderly when they are sick, they go to a elderly retirement home for full care. The government pays for this." As far as I know, in America, the aging population will increase demand for care services for the elderly. If as in the East, traditionally, parents with older age and poor health will be cared by their children at home. In America, but the elderly would be lived in nursing

homes or other the elderly care facilities. The reason for this is because in American way of life. The children has lived independently with their parents after adulthood (age 18). So the elderly have to fend for themselves rather than expect to care from their children. Furthermore, during the lifetime employment, they have to pay taxes so high. Therefore, as they age, they are covered by the State while living in nursing homes and medical facilities. In my opinion, their behaviours and thinking reflect the American value of independence of an individualist. In this culture old people are expected to be independent in American society. (Khánh. Reflection 2)

This example shows that Khánh organized her cognitions and the different pieces of knowledge she had gained in the chats with Guest 2 and established causal links between them to come to understand how the American value of individualism influenced American ways of life. The way she used words such as "the reason for this", "because", "so", "therefore" suggest that she connected her cognitions in causal terms to construct a higher-level piece of knowledge about a behaviour in the United States. She also established cognitive connections in terms of addition and contrast. Similarly to the case of Nhi's reflection 1, Khánh did not simply repeat what she perceived in the guest's talk about her eighty-four-year-old father-in-law's self-reliance. Instead Khánh connected her new perception with her existing cognition and other knowledge from elsewhere to generate a new understanding. Such new knowledge was procedural and relational because while writing her reflection she came to interpret the phenomenon that the elderly in the United State prize living independently in historical, social and cultural terms. To her now, self-reliance was a valued process cultivated from an American's childhood through adulthood from the age of eighteen to senior life. In this process each individual and US society as a whole valued self-reliance by letting young people live independently, by contributing to the creation of facilities for the self-reliant lives of senior citizens (paying high taxes), and by the government's and society's support (provision of facilities for the elderly through their previously-paid taxes). Such procedural knowledge explained how and why the elderly valued their independent life, and it was related to a set of historical, socio-cultural factors.

In her conclusion about this behaviour, Khánh wrote: "their behaviours and thinking reflect the American value of independence of an individualist". She almost came to the point of categorizing everything that she knew about this phenomenon as "individualism". However, it seems she did not fully get to this point because she failed to explicitly relate this phenomenon to a comparable Vietnamese phenomenon with rooted historical, socio-

cultural factors that could be conceptualized as "collectivism". Khánh's failure to generate the two relevant categories for cultural differences can be compared to a more successful case when Hiền used the two categories of individualist low-power-distance culture and collectivist high-power-distance culture to explain what she noticed about the United States via the guest's talk and in her own country. The following excerpt from Hiền's reflection 2 came after she reflected on the elderly living independently and the casual behaviours of teachers and professors in the United Stated that Guest 2 had talked about.

> Vietnam culture and American culture are very different in many areas . Vietnam culture promote the tolerance and compromise . can be affected by features by the community, so vietnamese always feel that they should have the responsibility to others. Vietnamese interested in to maintaining relationships with all members of the collective community . and especially in the family . children often live with their parents until marriage and they even live together until old age. their concern and care for each other . unlike in the United States . in Vietnam , children in the family or students in the classroom are taught to obey their parents , teachers and elders . vocative polite to adults . they don not call the parents , teachers by their names . they are dependent on family and other people , so they dont have highly independent and competitive in life.

> These way of life reflect different values of an American individualist low-power-distance culture and Vietnamese collectivist high-power-distance culture. (Hiền . Reflection 2)

In reflection 3, the students combined both factual knowledge and behavioural knowledge. Seven students reported on factual knowledge with 13 references coded, and all eighteen students reflected on behavioural knowledge with 31 references coded (see Table 4-2). Eleven of these students showed a gain in procedural knowledge with 13 references coded. Three students wrote about culture-general knowledge with 7 references coded. An investigation of the context of these references also shows the students' organizing their mental processes to produce higher-level knowledge.

For instance, Nhi organized her cognitions about American culture and about Guest 3 to explain how she came to identify her previous understanding of American individualism as a misconception. She had mistaken "individualism" for indifference and selfishness. The guest's friendliness and kind-heartedness, her interests and the information she had shared shifted Nhi's cognitive frame.

Through the conversation with Mrs.[Guest 3], I feel that she is a friendly and warm woman. She really love art about music, architecture, etc. In particular, she really keen on folk art of Vietnam. We shared a lot of things together about it. I realize that although Americans are busy, they still interest in art, and find out the art of another countries. In addition, Mrs. [Guest 3] has a beautiful heart when she interest in some social issue such as homosexuality, the old, volunteer. So I think that Americans are not as highly individualistic and ignoring the interests of the community. They always concerned about these issues above a kind way. […] My point is quite changed when directly exposed to American culture through the guests. Compared with the past, I used to think Americans value individualism so Americans are not interested in the benefits around. They only pay attention to those areas that benefit themselves. At present, I realize Americans are very interested in social issues. For example, are willing to volunteer, fighting for gay marriage, etc. In addition, our guest is also interested in how the elderly are treated in Vietnam. This proves that they are very interested in the social benefits. (Nhi. Reflection 3)

It can be noted from the above examples that the students constructed new understanding of C2 through using language to connect cognitions and pieces of knowledge, performing cognitive processes. These operations included addition, comparison, contrast, cause and effect. Their use of EFL was similar to that discussed in section 4.2.1.1 in that they often mixed Vietnamese with their EFL. Take for example Khánh's sentence "If as in the East, traditionally, parents with older age and poor health will be cared by their children at home", "If as in the East" is a literal translation of the Vietnamese *Nếu như ở phương Đông*. In addition, they also employed non-linguistic resources in building new knowledge. For example, Khánh switched to a Vietnamese link about the downsides of nursing homes in the USA to comment on this issue: "You can view this website to know more the status of some nursing home today:http://chimviet.free.fr/.../trinhttn72_vienduonglao.htm."

Summary of the students' cognitive development in written reflections

The students generated new knowledge via using linguistic and non-linguistic resources to conduct cognitive processes. With regard to knowledge, there was variation in the emergence of different types of knowledge in reflections 1, 2 and 3. This variation was in accordance with the shift of interest in types of knowledge as shown in the way the students posed questions to Guests 1, 2 and 3. As a result of cognitive processes, they gained more procedural knowledge and particularly culture-general knowledge that they had not obtained in the chats with the guests. With respect to language, they

developed/internalized more vocabulary for categorizing cultural difference and similarity (e.g., individualism, collectivism). They also seemed to build up structures for connecting ideas.

Evaluating and taking a stance through language

In addition to the ways in which they established cognitive connections via linguistic and non-linguistic resources as described above, the students used their language to evaluate what they learned and took a stance conveying an emotional response to it. The students' emotional response and evaluation will be discussed in detail in section 4.2.3 about attitudes. To pave the way for an analysis of the emergence of knowledge in peer discussions, there follows a brief description of how the students used language for evaluation in their reflection because in discussion they often commented on this evaluation. For example, when they reported on facts about Saudi Arabia, the appraisal tended to be negative. Thúy judged that Saudis were hostile to non-Muslims, and solved problems by war.

> I think the Muslim often don't like the others, who have different beliefs with them. […] The most usually news I know about Saudi Arabia is about oil and about their military. They bordered by Iraq to the North, and as you know Iraq is a country where have war with U.S. The America look at the oil reserves of Iraq and Saudi Arabia has it too. Military is the field which is provided most money from government. The people of this country are very violent, because of their Muslim. (Mai. Reflection1)

However, when knowledge about the guest, as opposed to the culture alone, entered into the evaluation, the appraisal was not necessarily negative. Although Thúy considered Saudi Arabia a country with many difficulties, she appreciated the guest's pride in his culture:

> I also noticed that although the Arab country is a so harsh climate country with mostly desert, dry and hot all the time and they faced many difficult problems in life, especially food, it seems that the guest has huge national pride about family, religion, the human right as well as peace. (Thúy. Reflection1)

Or Trang appreciated the natural beauty of the country, its friendly people and fascinating culture:

> Arabia is a great country in which has many good landscapes, a lot of friendly people like [Guest 1] and an interesting culture. (Trang.Reflection1)

This type of evaluation conveyed in language triggered a response in peer discussions. The students responded to each other's evaluations of a cultural behaviour or product, expressing feelings, taking a stance and negotiating their interpersonal relationship. In the process of responding to each other's evaluations, new knowledge also emerged. The following sections present the emergence of knowledge in peer discussions.

4.2.1.3 Cognitive development in peer discussions

Disagreement, questioning and cognitive development

In discussions, the students responded to the comments on C2 their peers had expressed in written reflections. On the one hand, they might agree on a fact, an observable superficial phenomenon or an evaluation that involved mental and emotional processes. On the other hand, it was often the case that they argued against each other's evaluation of a behaviour or a subject. In other words, they often shared both declarative knowledge (of facts and behaviour) and mentally-processed, affectively-involved evaluation, but procedural and culture-general knowledge tended to emerge in the context of a disagreement in which the students questioned the validity of a judgement or requested further explanation. The following statistical description and two verbal illustrations of cognitive changes in peer discussions show evidence of these findings.

Table 4-3. Types of knowledge in peer discussions.

Types of knowledge	Culture-specific			Culture-general
	Declarative		Procedural	
	Factual	Behavioural		
Discussion 1	17 ref.	20 ref.	5 ref.	0 ref.
Discussion 2	0 ref.	15 ref.	5 ref.	2 ref.
Discussion 3	1 ref.	22 ref.	14 ref.	4 ref.

Table 4-3 shows the number of references coded as different types of knowledge in discussions 1, 2 and 3. In discussion 1, like in the chats with Guest 1, the students paid more attention to declarative than to procedural knowledge. Nevertheless, more procedural knowledge emerged in discussion 1 than in reflection 1 (see Table 4-2). In discussions 2 and 3, more procedural knowledge appeared than in discussion 1. In

particular, culture-general knowledge developed in discussions 2 and 3. This comparison suggests that the students continued to generate further knowledge in peer discussions.

Below is an example of the emergence of procedural and culture-general knowledge. Hạnh, Nguyên and Nga read each other's written reflections and commented on each other's views. In her reflection 1, Hạnh expressed her appreciation of Guest 1's exchange of information and his Saudi culture:

> [t]he guest helps me to know about food, drinks in Islam, the customs and festivals take place in Saudi Arabia. This is really interesting and useful. I think every country with a different cultural values , the values that create a distinct identity in the world. (Hạnh. Reflection1)

Nga and Nguyên seemed dissatisfied with Hạnh's evaluation of Saudi culture as "really interesting" and with "different cultural values […] that create distinct identity […]". It was this dissatisfaction and disagreement that triggered Nguyên's provision of her own explanation for Saudi women's dressing with reference to "the practicalities of life in a desert country". More importantly, it afforded Hạnh a chance to clarify her evaluation and stance, talking about Saudi values and how they influence Saudi everyday life, i.e. to display procedural knowledge.

> Nga: But I have a view disagree with you. When you say every country with a different cultural values , the values that create a distinct identity in the world. It is just your words, you don't explain it more clearly and detail. i hope your feedback as soon as posible.
>
> May 7 at 1:01am · Like
>
> Nguyên: Hi Hạnh, Nga! I also have an information about their costume. I would like to comment more on here When it comes to Arab costume, you know that it is their traditional costumes with outstanding characteristics is widely and loosely but covering body, reflect the practicalities of life in a desert country. Hoping this information will helps you to know more about its.
>
> May 7 at 1:13am · Edited · Like
>
> Nguyên: Futhermore, I also agree with Nga about the points which you disgree with Hạnh. Can you say clearly about cultural at Arab Saudi, Hạnh? This is a nation with many rules and diversity values, religion in a Muslim country.
>
> May 7 at 1:18am · Like

Hạnh: As i know the Saudi Arabia values are principally generosity, selflessness, hospitality, respect for relatives, willingness, chastity. So is possible say that these values are in direct relation with the Saudi Arabian beliefs, because the values that the Saudi Arabian people have are result of apply their beliefs, the Islamic Laws. Saudi Arabian women are required, according to Islamic law, to cover their bodies in abaya (black robes and face coverings) as a sign of respect for Muslim modesty laws. It is against the law to disregard fundamentalist dress codes from city to city, though the most stringent prohibitions are found in Mecca, Medinah and other holy sites. For tourists, modest dress is a requirement that, if ignored, can trigger a warning from the Mutawwain (religious police). Women may not converse with men or show affection in public[3]. but with women in Europe, the USA, they have greater freedom in dress, talk to everyone etc. Therefore, there are no absolute "rights" and "wrongs" ,only cultural differences. That is just a small example of the cultural characteristics of two countries but I hope you can understand about the cultural diversity of the culture of countries around the world.

May 8 at 2:02am · Like ·

Nga: Thank for your answer, Hạnh It's interesting and useful .

May 8 at 11:18pm · Like ·

Nguyên: Thank Hạnh

May 8 at 11:19pm · Like

Another example is taken from discussion 3 between Khánh and Hiền. Khánh requested of Hiền further explanation of the concepts of individualist/collectivist, low/high-power-distance culture which the latter had used in her reflection 3.

Khánh: However, you said: "Their behaviour s and thinking reflect the American value of equality of an individualist, low power-distance cultures. Vietnamese Collectivist but a high-power-distance culture." I haven't understand these. Can you explain them clearly?

June 24, 2014 at 6:51pm · Edited · Like

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[3] The student has not written this, but has retrieved these sentences from the Internet, see:
http://traveltips.usatoday.com/culture-traditions-saudi-arabia-16963.html

Hiền : hi Khánh, thank you for your comment and your question. I was referring to individualist and low power distance in the U.S., this means that Americans respect the freedom of the individual. they want to dress, entertainment and treat each other with a relaxed style even when there are differences between them in age or social status. Another example for you to more understandable is students can call teacher by name, and vice versa. to students in Vietnam, they are not allowed to call the teacher's name. it would be considered rude. and it demonstrates the power and distinction clear position in Vietnam. you can read the website to more understand :http://www.eduland.com.vn/.../van-hoa-va-thoi-quen-cua...

June 28, 2014 at 7:18pm · Like · Remove Preview

Khánh: Well, your explain is useful and great. I can understand more about them. Thanks for your opinon!

June 29, 2014 at 11:33pm · Like ·

Khánh's question provided Hiền with a chance to display her procedural knowledge (in her ability to interpret everyday behaviours in the United States, and in her ability to relate them to comparable but different behaviours in Vietnam) and also culture-general knowledge (in her ability to use categories to explain the differences to her peer). It also gave Khánh an opportunity to understand these culture-general concepts that she had failed to generate or use in her reflections 2 and 3. Since these two students did not participate in discussion 2, only in discussion 3 could Khánh "understand more about" such culture-general knowledge as she claimed.

In the above examples, disagreement and questioning helped not only procedural but also culture-general knowledge to emerge. It can be noted from these examples that the students developed their vocabulary about cultural difference. For instance, in this discussion the students had the opportunity to acquire the meaning of words "abaya" and "low power distance". It also seems they learned to use linguistic and non-linguistic resources to agree and explain, or to disagree with and question an issue. It is difficult to illustrate this development; however, in the above examples Nguyên and Khánh edited their comments. Their self-correction suggests a learning process with regard to EFL use. They also learned to apply the Like button to express their views. Hiền employed a Vietnamese link to clarify the concept of power distance. In sum, the students negotiated meaning and knowledge using linguistic and non-linguistic resources.

Sometimes, disagreement and questioning paved the way for culture-general knowledge to emerge much later in the discussion. For example, the arguments between Trang and Thúy about Trang's positive evaluation of Guest 1 and Saudi culture did not result in an emergence of procedural knowledge (see 4.3). Instead, their discussion led to an understanding of similarities between the two different cultures and an ability to figure out the cause of a misconception/misunderstanding. In these situations, the knowledge demonstrated in those abilities was also coded as culture-general knowledge because it was about "factors that influence communication between people from different cultures and/or ethnic groups" (Gudykunst et al, 1991, p. 274). There were cases when it seemed the argument came to an end hastily without sufficient evidence for any cognitive change. For example, despite her very strong well-founded disagreement with Mai's negative evaluation of Saudi culture, Hạnh seemed to leave their argument an unresolved state when she responded to Mai's providing negative images of Saudi Arabia from the internet and CNN on the internet as follows: "thank you for your information. it is useful. i can clearly understand your point." As admitted by several students in their interviews, this way of concluding their discussion helped to "keep harmony" with peers. Though they did not really accept their peers' views, they chose to end it as if they agreed.

There were also cases when disagreements did not directly generate a cognitive change in the discussion (especially when arguments involved personal belief and emotion), but they might trigger further thought in later reflection, and hence resulted in deeper knowledge as in the case of arguments between Trang and Tuấn on the consumption of dog-meat in Vietnam (see 4.3.3). These two cases relating to Trang will be closely discussed in 4.3 regarding two focal informants.

Summary of the students' cognitive development in peer discussions

The students continued to develop procedural knowledge and culture-general knowledge in peer discussions. The generation of new knowledge was triggered by disagreement and questioning. With respect to language, they acquired more EFL vocabulary to express cultural difference. They also learned to use EFL to exchange knowledge, negotiate meaning and stance, and supported this negotiation with non-linguistic resources.

4.2.1.4 Discussion of the students' cognitive development in relation to existing conceptualizations of IC and relevant theories.

In each subsection that follows, a review of findings is given. Subsequently, these findings are discussed in relation to Byram's and Bennett's theories of IC, and other relevant studies.

Cognitive development in chats

As seen above, in the chats, with regard to Saudi culture, the students were more interested in declarative factual knowledge and asked more What and Yes/No-questions. They also requested the guest's opinion about Vietnamese culture. In contrast, they showed more concerns with procedural knowledge about American culture and asked more How/Why-questions and requested the guests' opinions about Vietnamese and American cultures. In negotiating meaning of and knowledge about an issue in question, they also expressed their position on it.

In reference to Byram's description of intercultural knowledge (see 2.3.2.1), in the chats with Guest 1 the students had very limited declarative knowledge and seemingly no procedural knowledge of Saudi culture. Most of their questions were about facts (such as mosques, festivals, food) and their requests were for the guest's opinion about Vietnam. In contrast, in the chats with Guests 2 and 3, the students had some declarative knowledge about the United States, including facts (such as the country has fifty-two states; it has a multi-ethnic population) and behaviours (such as Americans' good treatment of animals). They based their questions on their existing knowledge, and accordingly their questions were about declarative and procedural knowledge. These findings suggest that with regard to Byram's threshold knowledge, the students' knowledge about Saudi culture was far from his proposed level. In comparison, they had considerable knowledge about American culture.

The finding that the students often asked for facts and opinion about Vietnam suggests the students' tendency towards balancing cognitions.

In reference to cognitive theories (e.g., Festinger, 1959), the students had negative cognitions about Saudi culture. They perceived Saudi culture as threatening so when they were put into contact with Guest 1, most of them for safety chose to avoid questions that might cause conflicts. They asked for neutral facts or about Vietnam instead. In comparison, with regard to American culture, with positive cognitions the students felt safe to ask about value-related issues.

In Bennett's terms of sensitivity to cultural difference, the students' questions and interests in different types of knowledge in learning with different guests could evidence particular stages of their IC development. With regard to Saudi culture, their ignorance of this culture, and their enquiries for factual knowledge would suggest a defence stage because they were likely to perceive Saudis in an overgeneralized category of Arabs, denying Saudi distinct features. In the case of Hiền, her question and her evaluation of the culture/country: "I do not think in your country exists the justice and the freedom. […] Have you ever felt unhappy about this?" apparently conveyed a negative perception of the cultural difference and a negative emotional response to it. This would mean she was at the stage of defence. In comparison, the students' knowledge of cultural difference in American behaviours such as treatment of domestic animals and their positive perception of these behaviours demonstrates their awareness of cultural difference. However, their positive cognitions and evaluations of American culture tended to co-occur with negative evaluations of Vietnamese culture. This way of negotiating meaning and asking questions suggests that several students were at the stage of reverse defence.

Similar to findings about questioning techniques in Belz's study of telecollaboration (Belz, 2007), students' use of Why-questions was likely to result in richer learning as this type of interrogation tended to position the respondent "as a languacultural expert" (p. 143). Hence, the respondent as an intercultural informant provided in-depth knowledge about the issue in question. While Belz does not consider requests for opinion as important as Why-questions, the current study suggests that requests for opinion are an effective questioning technique in intercultural learning and development.

Cognitive development in written reflections

In reflections, the students used their linguistic and non-linguistic resources to connect knowledge and cognitions, and to perform cognitive processes. As a result, they constructed higher-level knowledge, i.e. procedural and culture-general knowledge. Their EFL developed in lexical and syntactical terms.

In reference to Byram's theory, that most students' reported only factual knowledge about Saudi Arabia in reflection 1 suggests limited acquisition of intercultural knowledge. Only one student, Nhi, could generate procedural knowledge to interpret the meaning of different behaviours in Saudi culture. With regard to American culture, the emergence of procedural knowledge and culture-general knowledge in reflections 2 and 3 shows the students' acquisition of these types of knowledge. Though Byram does not explicitly foreground culture-general knowledge, this study reveals its importance in IC

development. This finding empirically supports the emphasis on culture-general knowledge in intercultural education (e.g., Bennet, 1993, 2004; Gudykunst et al, 1991; Sercu et al, 2005).

The ways in which the students performed mental processes suggest three arrangements of their cognitions for a balance as described in the theories of cognitive consistency (Festinger, 1959; Heider, 1964) and Piaget's theory of cognitive development. First, they might keep their positive response to the guest separate from their negative response to Saudi culture. Second, they might connect cognitions about the guest with those about the culture. This connection might result in an unjustified evaluation or a potentially-inconsistent cognition because their cognition about the guest was positive, whereas their opinion about Saudi culture was negative. For example: "[…] the guest has huge national pride about family, religion, the human right as well as peace." Third, they might link cognitions in causal and comparative terms and generate the knowledge that Saudi culture was similar to Vietnamese culture and thus to any culture in the world. Accordingly they shifted to a balanced positive cognition and evaluation of the culture. For example, "I had not previously agreed with this problem. But when in contact with his answer, I realized that each country has its own wishes."

These three types of cognitive processes are in line with Bennett's developmental stages of cognitive complexity or sensitivity to cultural difference. First, with regard to Saudi culture, despite some declarative knowledge obtained in the chats, the students did not establish any links between cognitions about the guest and about his culture to generate any deeper knowledge about it in their written reflections. Subsequently, they continued to centre their perception and evaluation on Vietnamese culture and were insensitive to Saudi culture. In other words, most students except Trang and Nhi still remained in the defence stage. Trang was fluctuating between minimization and acceptance, and Nhi proved to shift to acceptance. Secondly, the students' simple connection between their previous negative cognition about Saudi culture and their new positive cognition about the guest resulted in an evaluation. This evaluation was unlikely to be justified and potentially triggered disagreement or conflict in peer discussions due to a lack of sufficient links between cognitions. The third type of process illustrates an appropriate way of establishing links to generate new knowledge and negotiating a stance toward cultural difference. By establishing more complex mental processes, Nhi came to identify that "each country has its own wishes", i.e. every culture is similar in that it has its own way to pursue peace. It

was a perception reflecting transcendent universalism, a developmental stage just beyond the stage of defence as described in Bennett's DMIS.

With respect to American culture, the motivation of cognitive consistency was also found in reflections 2 and 3. As a result, some students remained in reverse defence. Some shifted to minimization, some continued to move through minimization to acceptance, whereas others reached acceptance without evidence of minimization.

The finding that at a particular time in the same context the students performed their cognitive processes in different ways provided empirical evidence for Gudykunst's comments on the influence of cognitive styles in IC (Gudykunst, 2004). According to him, "cognitively simple" people tend to assimilate their observations into their singular perceptive framework whereas "cognitively complex" people tend to have more perceptive frameworks.

Cognitive development in peer discussion

The students continued to develop procedural and culture-general knowledge particularly when they expressed disagreement about and questioned their peers' views and evaluations. Accordingly they enriched their vocabulary for intercultural communication.

With reference to Byram's cognitive objectives, students demonstrated more procedural knowledge. They also developed more culture-general knowledge. With regard to Bennett's developmental stages, some students moved on to minimization or acceptance. Others seemed to stay in reverse defence as in written reflections, or they returned to reverse defence from acceptance. This dynamic complex development will be illustrated and discussed in sections 4.2.3 and 4.3.

In peer discussion, the students' organization of cognitions also suggests a tendency towards cognitive consistency under the influence of external factors such as peers' disagreement or questioning. For instance, for a balance of negative cognitions about Saudi culture, some generated the idea of exception, i.e. they identified the guest as exceptional to the culture, or they simply discredited the guest as a valid representation of the culture (e.g., "I disagree with you about what you said that Arabic is a great country, only through such a guest"). Others shifted to consistency of positive cognitions about Saudi culture (e.g., Trang), arguing that Saudi Arabia was the same as Vietnam and other countries.

Languaging in cognitive development

With regard to language use in cognitive development, the findings are similar to Vygotsky's understanding of the way in which language is used to formulate, articulate and exchange thoughts (Vygotsky, 1962). This phenomenon of using language was conceptualized as "languaging" by Swain (2010) who adapted the concept in her studies of L2 acquisition. In contrast to Vygotsky's description of L1 languaging in cognitive processes, the findings of the present study give an account of languaging in EFL. Unlike Swain and colleagues (Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2015) who analyzed L2 learners' languaging for evidence of L2 learning, the current project investigated L2 learners' use of language to explore IC development. In addition, while other studies about languaging foreground the cognitive dimension, this research addresses the students' use of language to express their feelings, and negotiate stances. In a context of Web 2.0 mediated intercultural EFL education, languaging becomes more complex as it involves L1 and EFL. Moreover, Web 2.0 offers multimodal resources for use to negotiate meaning and knowledge. This finding is similar to the account of Facebook-mediated use of EFL for intercultural communication by Schreiber (2015). Schreiber adopted the concept of translanguaging to discuss the way in which her informant code-meshed among linguistic and multimodal resources to express and negotiate his multilingual stance and identity on Facebook.

4.2.1.5 Overall remarks about the students' cognitive development

In the context of Web 2.0 mediated EFL education, the students developed knowledge and cognition via languaging in social interaction and written reflection. With reference to Byram's IC model, the students accumulated some declarative and procedural knowledge in the chats, written reflections and peer discussions. The students' cognitive changes were in line with Bennett's IC developmental stages. Unlike claims of discrepancies between Byram's and Bennett's models made by Garrett-Rucks (2014), these two theories are complementary in understanding cognitive development. The combination of them in this study shows that in addition to culture-specific knowledge in Byram's model, culture-general knowledge is vital in IC development. The findings provide systematic empirical evidence of shifts among different developmental stages as conceptualized by Bennett. They justify this study's interpretation of fluid non-linear development of IC, at least in a context of Web 2.0 mediated learning for fifteen weeks. This dynamic suggests the role of personal traits in cognitive development as postulated by Piaget (Wadsworth, 1989) among others (Kolb, 1984; Liu et al, 2015).

The study also sheds light on the process of cognitive development. It brings insights from relevant disciplines to understand the principle of cognitive balancing in this process. More importantly, the current project foregrounds the role of linguistic and non-linguistic resources in IC development. In a context of Web 2.0 mediated intercultural EFL education, these resources intertwined with other IC components to generate cognitive changes. Languaging is integral to IC development; therefore, in intercultural EFL educational contexts, linguistic resources should not be treated separately from IC as in Byram's theory, or completely ignored as in Bennett's model.

4.2.2 The students' development of skills

4.2.2.1 The students' development of skills of interpreting and relating

All references coded as skills of interpreting and relating were also coded as procedural knowledge and culture-general knowledge. This was because skills of interpreting and relating were defined as "the ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one's own" (Byram, 1997, p. 52). This ability was further classified into three sub-abilities, the abilities to:

- Identify ethnocentric perspectives in a document or event and explain their origins;
- Identify areas of misunderstanding and dysfunction in an interaction and explain them in terms of each of the cultural systems present;
- Mediate between conflicting interpretations of phenomena (Byram, 1997, p.52)

It is likely that these sub-abilities are a demonstration of the use of procedural knowledge. Culture-general knowledge will facilitate these skills because frameworks are necessary for comparison between cultures (Bennett, 2004). Specifically, "dimensions of cultural variability [such as individualism vs. collectivism] allow students to conceptualize cultural differences and similarities" (Gudykunst et al, 1991, p. 275). Therefore, the emergence of skills of interpreting and relating co-ocurred with the acquisition of procedural knowledge and culture-general knowledge in the learning activities (chatting with the guests, written reflections and peer discussions).

Table 4-4. Emergence of skills in reflections and peer discussions.

	Interpreting	Relating	Identifying Differences	Identifying Similarities	Others
Reflection 1	1	0	7	0	0
Reflection 2	21	8	21	0	1
Reflection 3	17	3	16	4	2
Discussion 1	2	4	5	4	2
Discussion 2	8	1	8	1	0
Discussion 3	7	3	13	11	3

A comparison between the emergence of skills of interpreting and relating and the acquisition of procedural knowledge and culture-general knowledge in reflections 1, 2, 3 shows that there was a positive correlation between the acquisition of knowledge and the development of these skills. A similar comparison of discussions 1, 2, 3 also suggests a positive correlation between the development of knowledge and of these skills. This correlation resulted from the fact that skills of interpreting and relating were a demonstration of procedural and culture-general knowledge.

A comparison between the numbers of references coded as evidence of these skills across different learning activities in the process of learning with Guest 1 shows an increase in skills. The students' abilities of interpreting and relating often developed in peer discussions. However, the opposite tendency was the case with the process of learning with Guests 2 and 3. There were more references coded as skills of interpreting and relating in reflections than in discussions.

4.2.2.2 The students' development of skills of discovery and interaction

Skills of discovery and interaction are defined as the "ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction" (Byram, 1997, p. 52).

Defined as above, skills of discovery and interaction were first of all shown in the way in which the students could "use a range of questioning techniques" "to elicit different interpretations and connotations" of a document or event of interest to them, establish

logical connections to construct an understanding about it and apply this knowledge in real-life interaction (Byram, 1997, p.62). Accordingly, the emergence of these skills correlated with the appearance of types of questions posed by the students and of types of knowledge in the chats and peer discussions. Specifically, in the chats with Guest 1 only Hiền asked for his opinion about a lack of Constitution in Saudi Arabia. This request and the guest's response to it turned out to be a rich point for students to develop their procedural knowledge (why the Saudi live the way they do) and cultural-general knowledge (the perceived similarity in the pursuit of peace in all cultures) as analyzed in 4.2.1 and to be further discussed in 4.3.2.1.

The skill of discovery was also evidenced in the students' organization of their mental processes, i.e. establishing logical links between their various pieces of knowledge to generate new knowledge for themselves, in written reflections. Therefore, the emergence of higher-level knowledge such as procedural knowledge or culture-general knowledge suggests the development of the skill of discovery.

This skill also involved the ability to notice something significant for understanding a culture. The identification of something meaningful for learning might be accidental, but it would also suggest an involvement of several factors including knowledge. This ability to notice was related to higher-level cognitive processes, being the ability to identify similarities and differences within and across cultures, and at the same time to conceptualize these cultural similarities and differences for application to other situations. As specified in 4.2.1.3 about the emergence of knowledge in peer discussions, the ability to identify similarities and differences co-occurred with the emergence of culture-general knowledge and procedural knowledge.

As defined by Byram (1997), the skill of interaction was the ability to combine knowledge, attitudes and skills in real-time communication. This ability involves a modification of one's own thinking, feelings and behaviour and/or mediation for misunderstandings between people from different cultural backgrounds in real-life interaction. There was little evidence of the acquisition of this skill by the students since the interaction was asynchronous.

4.2.3 The students' attitudinal changes

Since an attitude has cognitive and affective dimensions (Stainton Rogers, 2011) and the cognitive dimension has been analyzed in 4.2.1, this section focuses on the students' feelings. Unlike the presentation of findings about cognitive and skill development in each learning activity, this section reports affective and attitudinal changes in the process of learning with each guest. It is intended that this presentation helps cross-check the

analysis of IC development and provide thicker descriptions, hence further tracing the students' trajectories. Therefore, this report on the students' development has three subsections, 4.2.3.1 about the students' attitudinal changes in the process of learning with Guest 1; 4.2.3.2 concerning a report on learning with Guest 2; followed by that with Guest 3 in 4.2.3.3. In each subsection, after findings are presented, they are discussed with reference to the theoretical frameworks and other relevant studies.

4.2.3.1 The students' attitudinal changes in the process of learning with Guest 1

Findings

Feelings encoded in the students' language were found to be associated with their cognitions. Before they chatted with Guest 1 the students demonstrated feelings of insecurity and fear parallel with their scant knowledge of Saudi Arabia. For example, Thúy recalled her feelings before she chatted with the guest: "Before actually talking to him, I felt very afraid, though only speaks through Facebook, but I just fear that, there was a threat whether or not." Hạnh wrote in reflection 1: "I worry when I come into contact with them." Their negative feelings were explicitly expressed in adjectives, verbs and nouns: "afraid", "fear", "threat", and "worry". In addition, negative feelings were encoded in negative judgements of Saudi culture as illustrated below.

Seventeen out of nineteen students reported negative evaluations and an accompanying fear of Saudi culture before contacting the guest (ten of them reported it in reflection 1 and seven more students recalled it in their final reflection). Although they knew little about Saudis, they called on their general perceptions of Arabs with a negative response generated by the latter's different appearance.

> When I think about Arabian, the first image appears in my mind is people with hooded outfit and wearing tight from head to foot. They will be quiet and not sociable. […] I worry when I come into contact with them. (Hạnh. Reflection 1)

They associated Arabs with Muslims and Muslims with injustice and terrorism concomitant with unfounded prejudice and hostility.

> Living in a Muslim country to my way of thinking his thought would be closed, I don't know how to explain it exactly. But I think the Muslim often don't like the others, who have different beliefs with them. […] Military is the field which is provided most money from government. The people of this country are very violent, because of their Muslim. (Mai. Reflection 1)

I used to think that Muslims are rough, and they always solve everything by war. (Nhi. Reflection 1)

Saudi Arabia there is no equality between women and men. Men do not uphold what women can do. They put a lot of laws discriminatory to women. Only such as [men] are allowed to drive in Saudi Arabia, Saudi women are not permitted to drive or to travel abroad without a male relative's approval . No man is allowed to speak or chat with any female in public expect in hospital. They are ready for violence as possible, and they are indifferent to what happened on the road. (Hiền. Reflection 1)

In the conversations with Guest 1, the students' fear and insecurity of the unknown could be interpreted in the way in which they asked questions and in the language they used. First, for safety, most students asked only for declarative knowledge (see 4.2.1.1). Only Hiền asked for the guest's opinion about the lack of "justice and freedom" in Saudi Arabia, with an apparent negative evaluation of Saudi culture. The following excerpt from the chat between Hiền and Guest 1 illustrated a negotiation of emotions, evaluations and stances on Saudi cultural practices.

Hiền : […] I would like to know more about your country. Unlike all other countries, Saudi Arabia has no the Constitution. The state is governed according to Sharia (Islamic law). So I do not think in your country exists the justice and the freedom. Could you tell me about your opinion about this issue? Have you ever felt unhappy about this?

Thank you so much!

April 24 at 10:48am · Like

Guest 2: to be frank, like many middle eastern countries freedom of speech have limits in Saudi Arabia. it has monarchy system and has no constitution as you mentioned. there is no freedom of assembly and protest.

I am looking forward to have a peaceful changes adopted by all.

my concern is to have a progressing country with no chaos.

We love our countries and do not like to see it in struggle.

The best way to change is to work slowly but surly toward our goals.

April 24 at 12:47pm · Like

Hiền's judgement "I do not think in your country exists the justice and the freedom" suggested her feelings of disapproval/dissatisfaction. She seemed to seek a sharing of this feeling and stance from the guest through her leading question "Have you ever felt unhappy about this?" What the guest exchanged with Hiền was not only about information; but also about emotions, attitudes, and a stance. With regard to his country, his response was about complexities of love, concern and desire associated with his stance: "The best way to change is to work slowly but surly toward our goals." Such a response from the guest had a great impact on the cognitive and affective development of those students who noticed and reflected on this rich point, as will be seen in Nhi's reflection below.

After the chats with Guest 1, there was evidence of the student's relief with respect to previous anxiety and insecurity, and this positive feeling was directly generated by the guest's personality, attitudes and behaviours. For instance, as quoted at the beginning of this section, Thúy reported a feeling of "relief" and "comfort" in reflection 1. There also emerged feelings of interest and satisfaction with the knowledge obtained from the guest or generated through establishing links between cognitions. For example, after the chats with Guest 1, Nhi seemed satisfied and excited to identify what she saw as a commonality shared by any culture in this world: the desire for peace. She reflected on her feelings:

> In my eyes, the Muslim is as the terrorist. Until I have met a Muslim guest, I felt he was very friendly and enthusiastic. I often pose the question of violence or terrorism, and I get expectations for peace from his answer. […] and I realized I have the wrong think. I feel excited. Now, I wish to communicate to learn about another culture and my culture. I want to know more through the emotions of that representative for their culture and my culture. (Nhi. Final Reflection)

In discussion 1, most students continued to show insecurity associated with their negative stereotypes of Saudi culture. However, Nguyên and Hạnh started to interpret cultural differences from a perspective alternative to theirs. For example, as quoted above Hạnh wrote about "quiet and not sociable" "people with hooded outfit and wearing tight from head to foot" and her insecurity prior to her exposure to the guest. However, in discussion 1 (see 4.2.1.3) she was able to shift away from this presupposition, explaining to her peers the different Saudi way of dressing "as a sign of respect for Muslim modesty laws". After explaining some Saudi cultural practices and her stance, she sought her peers' agreement: "i hope that you feel interesting with my answer." She seemed satisfied with her discovery about "Muslim modest laws". On sharing it with her peers, she wanted to share these feelings too. One of her peers responded: "Thank for your answer, Hạnh. It's

interesting and useful." The other's response was similar: "Thanks Hạnh. Your information is very useful to me." Eventually satisfaction with the discovery of new knowledge was found among these students. That affective state also meant a reduction of uncertainty about Saudi culture.

As was the case for cognitive development, the students mixed EFL, Vietnamese and non-linguistic resources for affective and attitudinal development. Figure 4-2 shows the above students' use of multimodal resources to express satisfaction and joy when they discovered new knowledge about Saudi culture. The use of different smiling emoticons after verbal thanks and comments vividly illustrates this affective state.

Figure 4-2. Multimodal resources for expressing feelings.

Discussion

First, the findings are discussed with reference to the following attitudinal characteristics of IC.

(a) Interest in everyday experiences of ordinary people in C2

(b) Interest in other perspectives

(c) Willingness to question one's assumptions about C1

(d) Readiness to adapt and interact in an intercultural situation

(e) Readiness to engage with verbal and non-verbal communication with representatives of C2. (Byram, 1997, p.58)

Most students showed (a) in the way they asked questions, discussed and wrote about the guest and their observations about Saudi culture. In the learning process, Hiền seemed to obtain (b) when she asked the guest for his opinion about the lack of constitution in Saudi Arabia. Nhi also demonstrated (b) and (c) when she established connections among cognitions to learn about Saudi Islamic values in reflection 1. While Hiền and Nhi were more ready to shift their attitudes, Nguyên, Hạnh and Nga needed peer discussions to generate new knowledge and change their feelings. Accordingly they achieved (b). With regard to (d) and (e), Hiền demonstrated adaptation in her chat with Guest 1 by shifting her way of addressing him from "Hello Mr [Guest 1's first name]" at the beginning of the chat to "Hello Abo[Guest 1's son's name]" after she learned from the guest that in Saudi culture it was customary to address a father with Abo + son's name (meaning Father of son).

Drawing on Gudykunst's theorization of uncertainty and anxiety management (Gudykunst, 2004, 2005), the findings in this section give better insight into the affective dimension of IC which is not the focus of Bennett's DMIS. The identification of insecurity and fear associated with ignorance or scant knowledge (i.e. uncertainty) about Saudi culture before the students chatted with Guest 1 offered empirical evidence of these feelings in the denial and defence stages. It can be argued that most students' uncertainty/anxiety was above the maximum threshold level, because they were found not to be motivated to communicate and become open to other perspectives (Gudykunst, 2004, 2005). This implies that it is necessary to help reduce their level of uncertainty/anxiety to encourage them to communicate and to shift into a more ethnorelative stage.

The students' affective and attitudinal changes can be traced over the learning activities of chats, written reflection, and peer discussion. In the chats, most students continued displaying fear and insecurity associated with their ignorance or scant knowledge of Saudi culture. Only Hiền overcame such feelings and sought the guest's opinion about Saudi

culture which she criticized as "unjust" and "unhappy". In other words, she moved to defence with an affective state of dissatisfaction.

In reflection1, some more students shifted to defence. Hiền also remained at this stage. The students' fear, dislike and dissatisfaction associated with their negative stereotypes of Saudi culture were similar to those feelings described by Bennett as associated with the cognitive configuration of defence (Bennet, 1993). Porto (2013) also reports on fear described by EFL learners when they were confronted with cultural unfamiliarity. In the current study, some students' anxiety/uncertainty decreased during and after the contact with Guest 1. As postulated by Gudykunst (2004), their anxiety/uncertainty about Saudi culture was then below the maximum threshold but still above the minimum level. Hence, they were motivated to learn about that culture. Trang's discovery of similarity between Saudi and Vietnamese cultures, and Nhi's new understanding of Saudi values seemed to gradually alleviate their fear and anxiety and to transfer their affective state into a new form. Nhi's words "I feel excited" as quoted above suggested her emergent satisfaction after she constructed new knowledge and managed her anxiety in a learning cycle.

In discussion 1, while most students still had negative attitudes to Saudi culture, Hạnh and Nguyên seemed to reach the stage of acceptance (see 4.2.1) when they discussed the Saudi way of dressing. As reported above, associated with their new cognitive configuration was satisfaction. Trang demonstrated an oscillation between minimization and acceptance. Parallel with her cognitive configuration at this stage was satisfaction and joy.[4] Bennett once mentions a similar affective state when he describes "acceptance of cultural difference as […] enjoyable" (Bennett, 1993, p. 47).

Concerning languaging, the students used language to express their affective state associated with each cognitive configuration. On the one hand, they used the semantic resources of EFL vocabulary such as "fear", "scare", "afraid", "interested", "excited", "relief", "happy" to express their different affective states. On the other hand, their evaluation of Guest 1 and Saudi culture encoded their emotions. The students' feelings and stances expressed in their language can be analyzed with reference to the theory of APPRAISAL (Martin, 2000; Martin & White, 2007) in Functional Linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) as reviewed in 2.4.2.

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[4] A more detail analysis of her feelings will be presented in 4.3 which is about two focal students' IC development.

For instance, Hiền used JUDGEMENT in "I do not think in your country exists the justice and the freedom". She expressed her attitudes towards the Saudi lack of constitution in terms of moral evaluation. She mitigated her negative appraisal with "I do not think". In reference to APPRAISAL, Hiền's evaluation encodes disapproval or dissatisfaction. This affective state is further clarified by her leading question "Have you ever felt unhappy about this?" She implied that "no constitution" meant being "unhappy".

The above analysis of the students' feelings encoded in their language reveals different affective states associated with cognitive configurations described in Bennett (1993). Compared with the few studies that address the affective dimension (Belz, 2003; Porto, 2013), the current study, by integrating theories of IC and the linguistic theory of APPRAISAL, was able to tentatively trace the students' paths of affective changes through their languaging.

In summary, in the process of learning about Saudi culture the students languaged to express feelings and evaluations. They showed evidence of attitudinal attributes as specified by Byram (1997). The students appeared to shift their emotions and attitudes dynamically among different stages in Bennett's model. Parallel with the cognitive change from denial through defence to minimization and acceptance was the affective transformation from fear and anxiety through dissatisfaction to satisfaction and joy. These changes varied among students.

4.2.3.2 The students' attitudinal changes in the process of learning with Guest 2

Findings

Before chatting with Guest 2, most of the students had feelings of approval/admiration and positive attitudes to US culture and its people. In their written reflections, eighteen out of nineteen students described the United States as a land of equality and freedom where people treated each other equally at home, at school and at work. Fourteen students identified cultural differences in these domains between the United States and Vietnam, and six of these students criticized comparable phenomena in Vietnam. For example, Nga and Tuấn reflected on inequality in Vietnam after they wrote about what they knew of US culture:

> […] when talking about equality and fairness. In Vietnam, equality sometimes not
> evident, they are so seriously in terms of power, status and money. As value men
> above women, rich and poor distinction so make some people's lives are not
> respected, fair. For the U.S., they do not value rich or poor, low or high status, they

are always equal, and provide opportunities for all their citizens as the right to life, learning, working, healing, etc. Speaking of fairness in Vietnam, mostly limited, specific examples of learning such as: no money can't go to school, no medical treatment, no voice in society. But in America, whether rich or poor, they can go to school with the equal position and poor students funded by the state, provided the cost. (Nga. Reflection 0)

Tuấn was even more detailed in his account of gender discrimination in Vietnam.:

In America, men and women are treated almost equally. Women can do men's jobs, husband and wife are sharing household chores and their responsibility of raising their children. Unlike Vietnamese, you can see that, almost in every family and even in society, women are always considered lower than men. They have to do all the house works, taking care of their children and their work while men just work then eat then sleep. (Tuấn. Reflection 0)

These examples suggest that American values of equality became norms by which these students could criticize Vietnamese practices. It seems that encoded in their appraisals of American equality were admiration and approval, whereas associated with their criticism of Vietnamese practices was dissatisfaction.

These attitudes to US and Vietnamese culture remained unchanged in the chats with Guest 2. The way the students introduced their questions further demonstrated a positive evaluation of US culture and a criticism of Vietnamese culture. For example, Trang asked for Guest 2's opinion about the treatment of dogs in the two cultures. While she praised the American love for pets, she disapproved of the consumption of dog-meat in Vietnam.

[In] Viet nam, some people consider dogs and cats as a dish and even call it is culture. They are badly treated and threw away any time. Although there are always argument against this and protect them, it doesn't afford to convince the government ban the restaurants which selling dog 's meat. Through movies that I have watched, I think US's culture respects pets and treats equally with them.Could you tell me your opinion about that? And according to you,eating dog's meat is the difference of culture each countries or be heartless? (Trang-Guest 2's conversation)

During the chats, the students seemed to be constrained by their positive presuppositions about American culture from learning more about it and responded to the guest in reference to this positive frame of thinking. Guest 2 talked about the downside of American cultural practices four times. However, her comments, unexpected to the students, simply

eluded their attention, or they even misinterpreted the information so that it was consistent with their frame of thinking. For example, Khánh seemed unable to understand the weakness of the practice of individual independence in the United States that Guest 2 criticized and disapproved of when she answered Khánh's question (see 4.2.1.1.2):

> […] I would rather not answer questions that you can find on the internet. I will answer questions that I believe will help you understand what I believe. Yes, students have the freedom to choose classes in their fields but many are not disciplined because of the freedoms. In fact, in my childhood, we were considered adults at the age of 18 but could not drink alcohol under we were 21 but could drive at 16. Confusing right? Now most children are not considered adults until the age of 26 under the new healthcare regulations but again, a parent can not view their academic records under another law, HIPPA which you can also google. The parent(s) can pay 100% of tuition but the institution can protect the files of the student. The student can fail two semesters, yet the parent has paid the tuition but not know that their money was been wasted.. So do you think this is independent?? Should the student or son or daughter have this independence? (Khánh-Guest 2's conversation)

Not only Khánh but other students also failed to perceive the guest's perspective. It seemed they could not understand her criticism and dissatisfaction. The evidence in reflection 2 was that they tended to admire American children's self-reliance without any reference to her comment.

Though the students, like Khánh, failed to recognize the guest's personal perspective, they tried to enrich their understanding about American culture by other means. Twelve out of eighteen students could interpret their observation and reported how new perspectives helped change their pre-suppositions about the United States by citing their textbooks or searching the handy resources online, and by connecting their existing cognitions with new pieces of information to generate new understanding of an observation (see 4.2.1.2). For example, Khánh established links between her cognitions to develop a new socio-cultural understanding of elderly Americans living in nursing homes. She also consulted online resources to differently understand the observed phenomenon. For instance, she referred to a website and realized "the drawbacks" of "nursing homes", and that they could be "nightmares of the elderly". Accordingly, she could perceive the phenomenon from another perspective which showed her that these homes were not merely advantageous as per her previous thinking. As a result of such cognitive processes, the students could observe

differences in cultural practices between the United States and Vietnam, and fourteen of them also managed to explain why there were these differences.

In brief, in the chats with Guest 2 and in reflections 2, the students, on the one hand, seemed to be constrained by their own frames of thinking from being open to other perspectives and feelings about a cultural practice. On the other hand, some explicitly requested information in which they were interested from the guest. In addition, they implicitly questioned their own thinking by comparing other sources of information with their pre-suppositions. These tendencies were further evidenced in discussions 2 where the students commented on their peers' evaluation of phenomena they observed in both cultures.

In discussion 2, at eight points the students questioned each other's evaluation of cultural practices or asked for each other's interpretation of these phenomena. While questioning each other's interpretations and evaluations of a cultural practice, some students were able to understand it from different perspectives and accordingly shifted their stereotype. For example, the students perceived hunting as another side of the treatment of animals in the United States. Several students' pre-suppositions about American practices of equality in education were also modified with their self-directed searching for information about the gap between Whites' and Blacks' access to education.

Another example, quoted below, comes from discussion 2 in which Hương managed to evidence the downsides of US education despite its admirable achievements. However, other students seemed to deny perspectives other than those consistent with their frame of thinking. In their discussion on education below, the students tended to praise the US education system and attributed its achievements to American values of equality and individualism. Yet, Hương challenged this evaluation with a new piece of information: cheating as a critical problem in US education.

> Hương: I agree with you about educational program in vietnam is heavier than. American has a good education. It has more famous university such as Harvard.[…]
>
> June 6 at 12:33am · Edited · Like
>
> Hương: But, Besides this strengs in the American Educational System. This educational has some problem such as […] the issue of cheating in schools, […] This link will help you know more about that :http://www.articlemyriad.com/problems-weaknesses.../ andhttp://huc.edu.vn/.../Tam-bien-phap-cai-thien -dai-hoc-My.... So what do you think about this issues Trang?

June 6 at 12:58am · Like · Remove Preview

Tuấn: your point in educational program got only one side is right. in the college systems, american systems are much more heavier in Vietnam. America systems encourage students to self-study a lot. you can read here to understand more about that:

http://huc.edu.vn/chi-tiet/1370/.html

June 6 at 1:40am · Edited · Like · Remove Preview

Liên: I also don't agree with you Hương about issue : "problems that are not being dealt with such as the issue of cheating in schools" I think America hates cheating in school as I know. I've been hearing a lot about the problem: America hates cheating in examinations as well as at work or whatever. if you think you're true, can you give me detail to understand more about this issue?

June 6 at 10:27am · Edited · Like

Hương: Thanks for your comment. But I think each country have cheating in schools. That can happen. And you can read in here. I think it can help you know more that. http://nhatanh.vn/vn/news/520/318/.html andhttp://honvietquochoc.com.vn/.../500-vu-gian-lan-lon-nhat...

June 6 at 10:47am · Like · Remove Preview

Tuấn: i agree with Liên because Americans are very proud of themself. they take pride in their accomplishment and that's why they, almost, don't cheat because it would violate their self-esteem.

June 6 at 11:19am · Like

Thúy: i also agree with Tuấn and Liên. i want to add some comments. Firstly, one of the American values is "self-reliance" . they are try to study hard with their abilities. Secondly, Americans have the same chance of success, so they demonstrate their abilities by themselves and strive for success training. Therefore, I think they respect the ability of myself and believe in their genuine attempt will succeed.

June 6 at 11:10pm · Like

Apparently, Hương tried to prove the existence of some weaknesses of US education, and foregrounded cheating as a serious problem by referring to two different websites as evidence. The website www.articlemyriad.com/problems-weaknesses contained an essay in English about several weaknesses including cheating in US education, and http://

honvietquochoc.com.vn/.../500-vu-gian-lan-lon-nhat ... was a website in Vietnamese reporting the scandal of the Atlanta education authority deceitfully modifying the students' answers in a final examination to meet the national standards set in the "No Child Left Behind" act. Yet, Tuấn, Liên and Thúy simply ignored or denied this information, perhaps due to their positive assumptions regarding US education and values of self-reliance/self-esteem. The students' resistance to reality in this discussion and in reflection 2 above suggests their affective state of comfort associated with their cognition.

The students expressed their feelings, evaluations and stances with a mix of EFL, Vietnamese and non-linguistic resources. For example, Figure 4-3 captures the moment when Hương shifted her feelings from admiration/approval to shock/disappointment after discussion and discovery of the other side of the American treatment of animals. This negative affective state was expressed through an EFL verbal appraisal "That is awful", a sad emoticon and a Vietnamese link with a photograph captioned in Vietnamese: "Eating and enjoying more than 300 heads of animals in an American restaurant" (the researcher's translation).
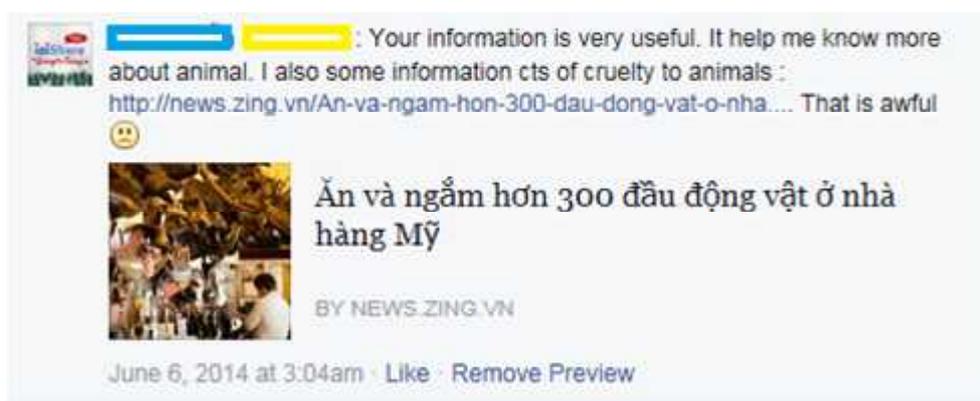
Figure 4-3. Multimodal resources for expressing feelings and stance on treatment of animals.

Similarly, Figure 4-4 demonstrates Thanh's perhaps painful struggle to change her positive cognitive configuration regarding individual independence in the United States. In discussion 2, she and her peer gradually perceived and understood Guest 2's personal perspective on paradoxical American practices of personal independence (see the beginning of this section for Guest 2's comment). This paradox had been unbelievable and incomprehensible to her, but eventually she seemed to perceive the downsides of individual independence. Her cognitive change was paralleled by a negative affective state encoded in her EFL verbal evaluation "it's confusing" and crying emoticon.
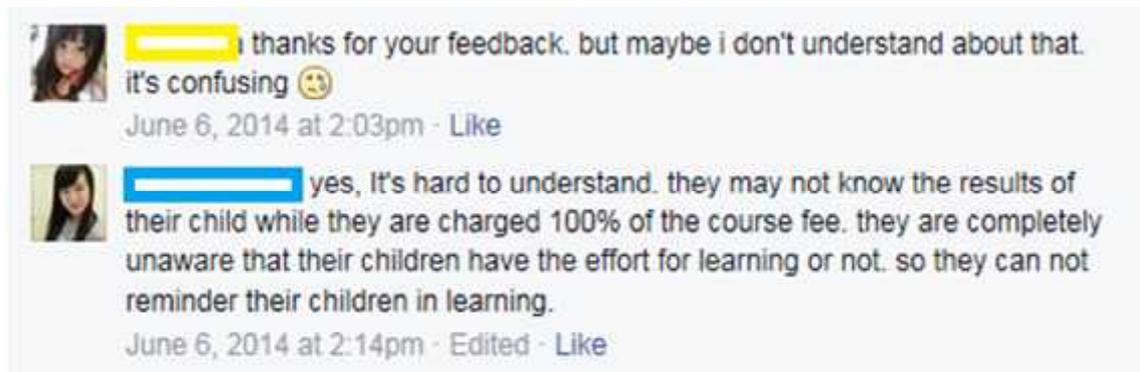
Figure 4-4. Multimodal resources for expressing feelings and stance on practice of personal independence.

Discussion

There seems to be a small mismatch between the students' attitudinal changes and Byram's description of threshold attitudinal attributes. Byram (1997) assumed that learners tended to take their own way of life for granted while they disbelieved the other's. Therefore, acquiring threshold intercultural attitudes means developing a "readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own" (p. 57). The findings about the students' attitudes to US culture show the other-way-round tendency: several students embraced American culture as a better way of life, whereas they tended to criticize their own culture. Through learning, instead of showing "curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own" as described in Byram's theory (p.57), the students demonstrated openness to other perspectives on cultural practices of interest to them in both American and Vietnamese cultures, and accordingly modified their naïve beliefs about the former and attendant distrust of the latter.

With respect to Bennett's DMIS, the students' positive evaluation of US culture and simultaneous disparagement of Vietnamese culture concerning several comparable aspects before they chatted with Guest 2 fit the characterization of reverse defence. (It is necessary to bracket out here the complicated findings that while a student, e.g., Tuấn, might positively evaluate some aspects of US culture such as equality and freedom, he/she might at the same time criticize another phenomenon like materialism in this culture.) The contrasting attitudes toward American and Vietnamese cultures concerning some aspects stayed unchanged in their chats with Guest 2, limiting their sensitivity to other perspectives raised by the guest. In reflection 2 through cognitive processes fourteen students (including Hương) showed evidence of accepting American practices. This shift from reverse defence to acceptance occurred without evidence of minimization.

In discussion 2, Hương was the only one to seemingly identify similarity between American and Vietnamese education when she argued with her peers: "But I think each country have cheating in schools. That can happen." In other words, she was in minimization. The finding about Hương's shift between acceptance and minimization seems to support Bennett's concept of minimization in IC development:

> Overall, developmental movement out of defense is facilitated by emphasizing the commonality of cultures, [...] [with] activities [that] allow people in defense to discover the vulnerability and value that all human beings share. In other words, the antidote to defense is the discovery that everyone is, after all, just human. (Bennett, 1993, pp.40-41)

Yet, the findings about dynamic and complex attitudinal change depending on cultural aspects demonstrates the non-linearity of IC development in this context of Web 2.0 mediated intercultural EFL education carried out over a fifteen-week course. Moreover, the findings imply a problematic categorization of the positive perception of American culture and coinciding criticism of Vietnamese culture as an ethnocentric stage. The problem is that, as reported above, with a positive frame of thinking the students showed evidence of accepting American behaviours. This cognitive frame characterizes an ethno-relative stage (acceptance).

With regard to the affective dimension of attitudes, the students' expressed admiration of several American cultural practices and associated dissatisfaction with Vietnamese culture were evidenced in their evaluations of observed comparable phenomena in the two cultures. This converting of emotions into linguistic forms of evaluation is in line with APPRAISAL. For example, as reported at the beginning of 4.2.3.2, Nga encoded her admiration in her praise of US "equality and fairness", whereas she institutionalized her disappointment with observed inequality in Vietnam in her judgement: "Speaking of fairness in Vietnam, mostly limited, specific examples of learning such as: no money can't go to school, no medical treatment, no voice in society." In terms of APPRAISAL, her evaluation of equality in Vietnam as "limited" conveys a disapproval of this phenomenon. Less explicitly, Tuấn favoured the American treatment of men and women whereas he seemed to disapprove of gender relations in Vietnam: "[Vietnamese] women are always considered lower than men. They have to do all the house works, taking care of their children and their work while men just work then eat then sleep."

These opposite feelings with respect to American and Vietnamese cultures tended to continue through the chats with Guest 2, reflection 2 and discussion 2, limiting the

students' awareness of the guest's feelings about the issue under discussion. For example, Khánh failed to notice the guest's dissatisfaction with American practices of personal independence when the latter explained how children could stay independent of parental control in their university study. Even when the guest let out a frustrated cry: "Parents pay while some students play!" Khánh seemed unable to perceive the guest's disappointment. Similarly, Thúy, Tuấn and Liên blindly refused to perceive cheating in US education due to their positive thinking about this culture.

Khánh's negligence of Guest 2's perspective; and Thúy,Tuấn and Liên's resistance to reality seem consistent with Gudykunst's theory of uncertainty/anxiety management (Gudykunst, 2004, 2005). Their resistance suggests that these students were too certain about American culture to learn. In other words, their uncertainty/anxiety was low, perhaps below the minimum level to be motivated to learn. As a result, it hindered them from interacting (i.e. questioning their assumption) to learn. Accordingly, they processed reality in a simplistic way, only drawing on their single cognitive frame.

In discussion 3 among Hương, Tuấn, Liên, Thúy, feelings were also encoded in the students' evaluations of cheating in US education. In terms of APPRAISAL, Hương internalized disappointment in her evaluation of American education as problematic "This educational has some problem such as […] the issue of cheating in schools," especially when she had held this education system in high esteem. However, unlike her peers she was able to get over her positive stereotype of US education, upsetting her comfort associated with this frame of thinking and allowing dissatisfaction with this phenomenon in US education to arise. In contrast, her three peers stayed comfortable or anxiety-free with their positive frame of thinking about US education and values.

Hương was distinctive in the process of learning about US culture in two ways. Firstly, she was the first to figure out a similarity between the United States and Vietnam, noting that cheating occurred in both cultures. Secondly, she was the only one to report on her anxiety associated with learning about American culture. (This will be further discussed in 5.2.3). Perhaps, unlike anxiety-free students, her anxiety level motivated her to become open to different perspectives.

In conclusion, the students expressed their feelings, evaluations and stances via (trans)languaging in EFL, Vietnamese and multimodal resources. Their attitudinal changes do not fit into Byram's assumption of "disbelief of the other". In relation to Bennett's model, several students showed evidence of reverse defence. The students also demonstrated acceptance of American culture without any trace of minimization with the exception of

Hương. Accordingly, the findings suggest a fluid movement between cognitive configurations (reverse defence, minimization and acceptance).

Moreover, the study sheds light on affective states associated with cognitive frames that are under-explored in Byram's and Bennet's theories. Satisfaction/admiration is associated with a positive thinking of a phenomenon in C2. An anxiety-free state/comfort is also concomitant with this cognitive frame. An affective change to dissatisfaction tends to be parallel with an alternative frame of thinking. Simultaneously, the dissatisfaction with C1 becomes reduced. Subsequently, an affective balance seems to accompany the identification of similarity between two cultures.

With regard to languaging, the way the students used language to express feelings is consistent with APPRAISAL. They conveyed their emotions in words such as "perfect", "fair", "happy", "confusing", "awful". They also institutionalized their affective states in evaluation of observed phenomena. In addition to description of feelings expressed in learners' language in a few studies (Belz, 2003; Porto, 2013), the current study tentatively uncovers the students' affective changes instantiated in a mix of EFL, Vietnamese and multimodal resources.

4.2.3.3 The students' attitudinal changes in the process of learning with Guest 3

Findings

The way in which the students asked questions shows a positive evaluation of American cultural aspects of interest to them, but their discontentedness with comparable practices in Vietnam was not as frequently expressed as in the chats with Guest 2. Of all nine questions asking for procedural knowledge, three were about practices of equality and personal independence in the United States and Vietnam. Only one of these questions implied a negative evaluation of gender relations in Vietnam. The following excerpts from Guest 3's chats with three students illustrate their intercultural attitudes. Kim sought the guest's perspectives on Vietnamese and American ways of raising children.

> Americans have the right to teach children from a very early independence. Do you think better???and In Vietnam, parents awally sheltered wrapper until you can go independent, how do you think??? (Kim-Guest 3's conversation)

Hiền was curious about the way family members treated each other and how she could behave properly in an American family, assuming that her Vietnamese way of behaving might not be appropriate in a new environment.

I'm really sorry for my curiosity, but I hope to receive from you to share more about life in your family. for example: Do everyone in your family share work with each other. they treat each other? and could you tell me more about the cultural behaviour s in American families. if I could come live with an American family. What I have to do things, and how to behave? Thank you so much! I hope to receive your answer as soon as possible ! (Hiền-Guest's 3 conversation)

Lan's request for the guest's evaluation of gender equality in both cultures includes a criticism of this issue in Vietnam.

As far as I know, the U.S. is a gender equality nation so American women are respected in society. Vietnam was a feudal state and general conception of social behaviours is that men have more rights, to be respected and have high social status, and women have inferior role in that society, suppressed and not be respected. In the present, although women have a higher role in society, that old conception still affects deeply in the ideology of Vietnamese and Asians. What do you think about this issue? Thank you very much. (Lan-Guest 3's conversation)

In comparison with the chats with Guest 2, the students tended to be more open to Guest 3's personal perspectives on the issue in question. The chat that follows Lan's question illustrates this development.

Guest 3: I really wish we could talk in person on this subject! When we see more females hired to lead Fortune 500 companies and getting elected to serve as senators for our government, then, you COULD say women will have equality. Here at Penn State, females wanting to rise up through the bureaucracy are STILL not getting hired in the percentage you WOULD think. The big changes for women in the US were in the '70s. And, yes from the 80's until the current year, you would find a higher percentage of women in leadership positions, however, WE are not being considered for "president of Universities. In the field of education, women have a difficult time getting hired to be 'director' of any of the programs....we still have a LONG WAY TO GO for true equality in the US. You would find a lot of OLD SCHOOL BEHAVIOUR S at Penn State and in the U.S. in general. Oh, and by the way, I will vote for Hilary Clinton if she runs for President in the U.S. in 2016.

June 10 at 11:40pm · Edited · Like

Lan: thank you very much for your knowledge you gave. I see these are useful information and i can realize that there are some similarities in gender equality

between Vietnam and America. i hope thank to these similarities, the relationship of the two countries will be more closely. And i hope we will have more good discussion about this topic. But now would you mind helping me to answer two other questions? Ms. [Guest 3]

June 11 at 10:13pm · Like

Obviously, Lan was able to observe the guest's personal perspective. She even internalized this information and generated a new cognition: "there are some similarities in gender equality between Vietnam and America."

The openness to the guest's personal perspective which was different from their frame of thinking was further evidenced in other students' reflection 3. Not only Lan but four other students were also able to notice this perspective on American practices of gender equality, and consequently modified their pre-suppositions about it as they reported in reflection 3. Perceiving Guest 3's personal perspective also helped these students identify a similarity between the two cultures with respect to the issue of gender (in)equality. Apart from this attitudinal change which was directly triggered by the guest's personal perspective, there was also evidence of their attitudinal modification when they compared their existing thoughts with other sources of information. As in reflection 2, in reflection 3 twelve students were able to interpret an observable phenomenon of interest to them, searching for a variety of perspectives on it, making connections between different pieces of knowledge to adapt their view. For example, as analyzed in 4.2.1.2 (p. 76), Nhi connected her perceptions of Guest 3 and information the guest had exchanged to generate a new understanding of Americans. The student then connected this perspective with other views she had found on the internet (e.g., the page in Vietnamese about American support for same-sex marriage http://www.thanhnien.com.vn/pages/20140209/my-tang-quyen-loi-cho-cac-cap-ket-hon-dong-tinh.aspx; the website in English about volunteer activities in the United States http://www.voa.org/Landing.aspx). As a result, she shifted the disapproval associated with her negative appraisal of American individualism to a satisfaction of new knowledge of American practices.

When the students explored American culture from various perspectives they gradually identified similarities between Vietnam and the United States such as interest in social causes, love, respect. For instance, Nhi was able to identify social engagement as a commonality between the "highly individualistic" American culture and "highly socialist"

Vietnamese culture in reflection 3. Associated with this new cognition was an approval encoded in her judgement, "it is really nice":

> The things that I observed and American values behind it is similar to Vietnam. For example, Vietnam has made the fight for gay marriage is legitimate, and the result is success. Although they are not marriage certificate, they can be married without being prevented law. I know that the culture between Vietnam and the U.S. are different. One side is highly individualistic and the other side is highly socialism. But the general point is that both are interested in public interest, so I think it is really nice....
>
> I feel that although each country has its distinct cultural values, they are always ready to fight for the benefit of everyone around. Because they realize that if the benefits of social guarantees, people may be living in happiness. And I think Vietnamese and American people are aware of that. (Nhi. Reflection 3)

Or Hạnh, who was able to perceive the guest's personal perspective on gender equality and work divide in American family, came to recognize similarities between Vietnamese and American families in reflection 3. She even developed her own classification of family types irrespective of American or Vietnamese culture based on love, empathy and respect.

> Relationships between husbands and wives in Viet Nam also have similarities with the U.S. A family has division of work. Women work in society, equal in rank and salary with their husbands. I call it is modern families. Traditional families, women take care of family, children. Man will earn money. In my opinion, each family will be assigned to work different ways. Nothing is absolutely true. A happy family based on equality, love, empathy, respect. (Hạnh. Reflection 3)

Apart from common human interests and needs, the students could gradually identify the vulnerability that any culture faces. They also perceived diversity within Vietnamese culture, and through this diversity their culture expanded its boundary to involve larger cultures of the world such as the LGBT community, pop fans or the elderly. This perception developed more in discussions.

In discussion 3, the students asked each other a total of sixty questions in response to each other's evaluations or stances on an issue under discussion. As analyzed in section 4.2.1.3, it was when the students questioned each other about an issue that further procedural knowledge concerning the issue or culture-general knowledge emerged. For example, triggered by Guest 3's interest in the LGBT community in Vietnam the students

tended to praise the practice of LGBT life in the United States as reflecting the value of freedom while they criticized the legal aspects and social treatment of this community in Vietnam. In response to each other's evaluation and stance on this issue, they came to understand it more comprehensively in historical, sociocultural terms. In other words, they became more interested in and open to other perspectives. Furthermore, they came to identify the commonalities that the LGBT community shared with the non-LGBT community in Vietnam and in the United States. As Trang pointed out, "They are also normal people like us," and Tuấn argued for same-sex marriage.

> [I]t's just because LGBT people after all is human, too. they deserve their rights to love and to live happily with their soulmates. it might be seen as something unnatural because the traditional purpose of a couple is to create new life forms. But remember what is the main reason of marriage, that reason is to bring two human souls together to create something as beautiful as love. Do you all agree with that? (Tuấn. Discussion 3)

The following excerpt from discussion 3 about celebrity fans illustrates that questioning helped the students become more sensitive to their own culture. Subsequently, they could identify commonalities between the two cultures. In reflection 3, Mai praised Americans' pride in their historical values and criticized Vietnamese young people's interest in Korean culture and ignorance of their own. In discussion 3, Minh disagreed with Mai's evaluation. In response, Mai, on the one hand, mitigated her criticism saying "I don't talk about all of youth people", while on the other, she foregrounded "Crazy K-pop fan[s]" to justify her criticism and disapproval of the phenomenon. Quoc's pop-in comment "So in American culture, have they crazy idol ?" triggered Minh's identification of extreme celebrity fans as common among young people in every culture: "yes, everywwhere has crazy fans, not only Kpop."

> Minh: Hi Mai, I see your strong opinions and thoughts through all this reflection and I also found it interesting. When talking about young people in Vietnam, you said that: "They know about Korea more about their mother land, they don't know about the history of their country too. In America, the government attaches special importance to the traditional culture and modern culture, they never forget their history". Would you be so negative when talking about the Vietnamese youth so?
>
> June 22, 2014 at 5:31pm • Like
>
> Mai: Yeah, I don't talk about all of youth people, just a part of them, so I think it's not negative. As you know how the K-pop affected young people. What do we call it?

"Crazy K-pop fan"? Nowadays, less of Vietnam's youth know about their history,[…]. I can't judge it's right or wrong because it's their hobby. But I think it'll be better if they know clear about their mother land. We have good young people too; they have good result, many great achievements. But it's a small part.

June 22, 2014 at 5:48pm • Edited • Like

Minh: Ok, thanks for your respond .I may have misunderstood your mind because your writing makes me think that you equate all young people in Vietnam. I understand you also pressing for how young people living in Vietnam today to talk about their history. […]

June 22, 2014 at 6:05pm • Like

[…]

Quoc: hello Mai: i agree with opinion of Minh . You said that a few youth Vietnam people not remember the history of their country. And They have phenomenon crazy idol about kpop . So in American culture, have they crazy idol ? Can you give a few document abt it? Many thanks !

June 23, 2014 at 1:48pm · Like

[…]

Mai: […] http://kenh14.vn/.../soc-voi-anh-fan-cat-tay-toi-ta-vi... In this you can read about a fan, OMG, i can't imaging. Why did he/she do that? they don't think about their parents? In Vietnam, there are too many acccident ike this. And it's too famous to don't care.

[…] yes, everywwhere has crazy fans, not only Kpop.

The above examples suggest that understanding a cultural issue from different perspectives helped the students identify commonalities between the two cultures. However, recognizing similarities in turn also helped facilitate further understanding differences between the two cultures. For example, in an excerpt of discussion 3 below, Trang and Tuấn came to understand Vietnamese law as similar to that of the United States in protecting women and their rights. In other words, both Vietnamese and US women were similarly protected by law. So if Vietnamese women tended to be abused and were not respected as were US women, it was not because of differences in law, but because the former lacked awareness of their own rights.

Nguyên: Hello Trang. […] I agree with the opinion that the rights of women in the U.S. are legally protected and respected. But when you compare with Vietnam, you say that women in rural and ethnic minority abuse and violence by their husbands, they have not decided on life, the reason is the lack of educational opportunities. I think the main reason because in Vietnam, laws protecting women are not given, women will be compare with men, respect for men, woman is scorned because of social prejudice though women are good or intelligent. For the United States, law about protective of women is high, so gender equality of America is higher than Vietnam. What do you think about this?

June 23, 2014 at 1:48pm • Like

Tuấn: i don't think that the problem is the law or the women rights. because Viet Nam has many laws to protect the equality of gender. such as marriage laws, laws against violence to women. besides that there are so many women organizations in Viet Nam to protect women's rights. i agree with your thinking that Vietnamese women are lacking of understanding of their own rights. so the problem here is education and society awareness. it's not because the law in the US protect women more effectively in Viet Nam.

Nguyên: But in Vietnam, do you think that the laws that protect women is high? Fairness, equality between men and women? Right from birth, women who have a role as a homemaker. But when compared to the U.S., I think the law in the U.S. is higher than Vietna, it's not deny. While the Vietnam commend the U.S, but Vietnam is not yet complete. You can look at this news:

http://vietbao.vn/.../Viet-Nam-chua-dat.../10792711/157/

June 23, 2014 at 3:47pm • Like

Trang: As you said, " the main reason because in Vietnam, laws protecting women are not given, " and i read your link above. in this article, the author is also think that the main reason of unequal gender is vietnamese women are lacking of understanding of their own rights to protect themselves out of violence. You can read paragraph 6 again to confirm. i think the laws of viet nam protect women's right is better than before. it's not different from america so much. In my views, lacking of education is not only women but also men because men need to understand clearly women's right to avoid violate laws. (Discussion 3)

Similarly to learning with Guests 1 and 2, the students mixed EFL, Vietnamese and multimodal resources to express feelings, evaluation and stance. Figure 4-5 shows that Hương used various resources to express her feelings and negotiate evaluation of American pop music and Vietnamese folk music. In response to Guest 3's passion for Vietnamese folk music and love for American rock band Maroon 5, Hương expressed her happiness in verbal thanks and a smiling emoticon. Her pleasure was evidenced in her evaluations "I also like Maroon 5," "I like Adam Levine," "He is so handsome," "It is interesting." She shared her pride in Vietnamese folk music with the guest through her selection of two YouTube videos, one about the most well-known and proud type of Vietnamese folk music *Quan họ* and the other about the folk singing of her town *Hát ví dặm*. She and Guest 2 shared their empathy in and love of Vietnamese and American music through not only English and Vietnamese, but also multimodal resources. (This love and empathy will be further analyzed in 5.2.3).
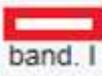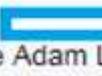
Thanks so much 🙂. Yes. I also like Maroon 5 band. I like Adam Lenive. He is a main singer and so handsome. Now, He is a examiner in The Voice US season 6. It is interesting. Then I will post one traditional Vietnamese folk song for you: One of the best known festivals is the Lim Village Festival in northern Bac Ninh Province in the Red River Delta where males and females sing antiphonal songs called QUAN HO. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cuVRIdiBIQc

June 3, 2014 at 2:00pm · Like · 👍 1

The traditional music of Vietnam consists of songs and music expressing many aspects of village life. Music, from folk to art strata, strongly depends on linguistic accents which are geographically distinctive; north, center, south and south-center. Fo... See More

June 3, 2014 at 2:17pm · Edited · Like
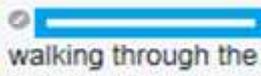
So, the song at the top is so gorgeous! They're walking through the fields and... now they're standing on the boats (hey, watch out...don't fall!!) and ...now they're singing, but what are they saying? What is the song about?

June 4, 2014 at 5:22am · Edited · Like

In the second song, I hear a musician PLUCKING an instrument....is it a 'dan bau'? Next, there is a women singing....very pretty. I don't know HOW she does that with her voice. She makes her voice go UP and down. Is this type of singing common? ▬▬▬, do you sing like this?

June 4, 2014 at 11:34am · Edited · Like
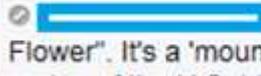
I want to share with you 3 folk songs. This is "Wildwood Flower". It's a 'mountain song' or 'old timey style' song from the Appalachia region of the U.S. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewnfWoSQz3o

The Carter Family - Wildwood Flower

YOUTUBE.COM

June 5, 2014 at 4:19am · Edited · Like · Remove Preview

Figure 4-5. Multimodal resources for expressing feelings about music.

Discussion

Concerning Byram's attitudinal attributes (1997), the students continued to show the openness for alternative perspectives that had emerged in learning with Guest 2. Accordingly, they modified their idealistic attitudes towards American culture and their negative attitudes towards their own culture (e.g., about gender equality as reported above). However, unlike the process of learning with Guest 2, the students also showed

their negative stereotypes of American culture and learned to change these presuppositions (e.g., individualistic Americans don't care about others).

In terms of Bennett's model (1993), compared with learning with Guest 2, more students seemed to shift into minimization. While no reference was coded as identifying similarities in reflection 2 and only one in discussion 2, there were four and eleven references coded as identifying similarities in reflection 3 and discussion 3 respectively (see 1.2.1). For example, as reported above they discovered the common problems of gender discrimination and extreme celebrity fans in Vietnam and in the United States, or they came to see a concern for social issues as universal.

As in learning with Guest 2, the findings seem to support Bennett's postulation that perception of similarities between two cultures facilitates a shift from defence to acceptance. In discussion 3 above, identifying similarities between US law and Vietnamese law enabled Trang, Nguyên and Tuấn to further understand differences between the two cultures. However, the findings also reveal the opposite tendency. Understanding cultural difference from various perspectives helped the students construct knowledge about similarities as reported in the above examples from Lan, Nhi and Hạnh. This suggests that characteristics of acceptance facilitate the perception of commonalities between cultures. Moreover, the findings also uncover the fluidity of cognitive configurations of understanding different American traits which were possible in the space of fifteen weeks. On the one hand, they (e.g., Nhi) stereotyped Americans as egocentric and indifferent. On the other hand, they praised the American values of freedom and equality underlying same-sex marriages. These findings are similar to those of Garrett-Rucks (2014).

With regard to the affective dimension of attitudes, when the students moved into minimization, their affective state also shifted. They tended to hedge their criticism of observable practices in Vietnamese culture, making less generalizations, i.e. they tended to treat reality in a less simplistic way. Simultaneously, their understanding of phenomena became more sophisticated, and they became more sensitive to differences within Vietnamese culture. For example, Mai mitigated her criticism of Vietnamese young behaviour with "part of them", implying that there were behavioural differences amongst Vietnamese young people. In terms of APPRAISAL, this mitigated criticism means that the dissatisfaction encoded in the evaluations became less strong. At the same time, dissatisfaction with US culture emerged when she recognized the commonality it shared with Vietnamese culture concerning celebrity fans.

The findings further evidence the complex languaging in linguistic and multimodal resources to express feelings and negotiate stances as analyzed in 4.2.3.1 and 4.2.3.2.

To sum up, in the learning process, the students' attitudinal changes became complex. In relation to topics such as equality more students showed an attitudinal shift from reverse defence in the chats to minimization in reflection 3 and in discussion 3. Some of them also demonstrated evidence of acceptance. Associated with these cognitive changes were affective transformations. The admiration associated with their positive evaluation of American culture was replaced with a dissatisfaction accompanying the different perception of American culture in minimization. In parallel, their disapproval of Vietnamese culture became less strong. However, the students also demonstrated negative stereotypes of American individualism. Accordingly, they showed movement between defence, minimization and acceptance.

4.2.3.4 Conclusion to section 4.2

In the process of learning with the three guests, the students showed evidence of development of knowledge, skills and attitudes. In addition to culture-specific knowledge as specified by Byram (1997), they acquired culture-general knowledge which proved to be important to their IC development (Bennett, 2004; Gudykunst et al, 1991; Sercu et al, 2005). Accordingly, they developed skills of interacting, relating, discovery and interaction as described by Byram. They not only demonstrated the willingness and ability to suspend negative judgments of other cultures as specified in Byram's theory, but they were more open to other perspectives such that they could modify their idealistic perspectives of other cultures and adapt their negative overgeneralizations about Vietnamese culture.

The process of change was a process of languaging via linguistic and multimodal resources. The students languaged to generate, articulate and exchange thoughts. With reference to cognitive theories (Festinger, 1959; Heider, 1946; Piaget, cited in Wadsworth, 1989), they were motivated to balance their cognitive system. Their cognition might change as a result of this effort. Their feelings shifted in accordance with their cognitive frames. Via languaging or translanguaging (Canagarajah, 2011, 2013; Schreiber, 2015; Swain, 2010) the students also expressed these affective states.

The students showed varied trajectories of IC development as a result of these cognitive and affective adaptations. Their cognitive changes support Bennett's developmental concepts and illustrate the non-linearity of IC development in a context of intercultural EFL education over a span of fifteen weeks. Moreover, these cognitive changes were parallel with affective transformations. IC development varied according to individual students, the

topics they discussed and the culture they were exposed to. Therefore, the chapter will now spotlight two students to illustrate individual complex trajectories.

4.3 Two focal students' trajectories of IC development

This focus on two individual students is intended to illuminate their individual processes of construction of their IC, rather than analyzing their IC at a point in time, thus responding to the comments of Möllering & Levy.

> Due to the limited time frames of most exchanges, [...] the data collected and the methods of analysis mostly show a point-in-time view of intercultural competence, rather than providing insights on the development of intercultural competence of individual learners. (Möllering & Levy, 2012, p. 242)

Two female students, Trang and Thúy, were selected as focal students on the following grounds:

- In terms of language use, they resembled the majority of students in the class with an average or fair level of competence and without previous real-life communication in English with people from other cultures. Accordingly, although their IC development was individual, it might share features with that of other average participants.

- They participated in all the learning activities and the follow-up interviews; therefore, the researcher could trace their IC development over all the activities.

- They belonged to the same team so that the researcher could observe their interaction and mutual influence in IC development .

- In addition to their similarities, the two students also possessed some contrasting traits which could potentially shed light on the role of personal factors in IC development.

Apart from information shared by all participants and described in 3.4.4.2, each of the two students had distinct features as portrayed in their biography and reflection 0. Although both were from Central Vietnam, Thúy was from Nghe An, but Trang from Hoi An. Thúy was pagan whereas Trang was Buddhist. Additionally, while their language competence was similar to the majority of students in the class, Trang was a little better than Thúy in her language skill exam scores and in expressing herself in EFL. Although both wrote in reflection 0 that they wanted to learn about other cultures and dreamt of travelling around the world, Trang seemed more interested in reading about other cultures than Thuy did.

They both had a very idealistic view of the United States and its people. In comparison, with regard to Saudi Arabia, Thúy perceived it as a country of "desert, oil, military and terrorism" (Thúy. Reflection 0) whereas Trang could find Saudi culture "interesting" as described by a Western author in her travel book. Finally, while Thúy wished to "learn cultural knowledge of countries in the world", Trang expressed her "hope" to "compare and contrast cultures", and "understand why" there were cultural differences (Trang. Reflection 0). In other words, Trang expected to learn knowledge of a higher level than Thúy did, and it could be argued that the former was more ready to implement higher-level cognitive processes. The above contrasting features seemed to contribute to different trajectories of IC development as analyzed in the following subsections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 about Thúy and Trang respectively.

4.3.1 Thúy's trajectory of IC development

4.3.1.1 Thúy's IC development in the process of learning with Guest 1

Findings

With a negative image of Saudi Arabia, Thúy was at first very scared and anxious when she was nominated to be the team spokesperson interacting with Guest 1 on Facebook. She recalled:

> Before actually talking to him, I felt very afraid, though only speaks through Facebook, but I just fear that, there was a threat whether or not. (Thúy. Final reflection. 20 June 2014)

However, her contact with the guest exerted an influence on her. In her final reflection, she described how the guest triggered a change in her feelings. This change was something like the relief of tension and fear which would be experienced by a young girl who found herself in a scary isolated house in another culture, said hello and nervously waited for a response, before, to her relief and amazement, there suddenly came a cheerful voice in her mother tongue:

> [The guest] greeted and introduced himself humorously. For example, he offered: "xin chào và chào buổi sáng từ Hail, Saudi Arabia [...]"[5]. I have reduced the initial anxiety and have been ready to communicate and learn about his culture. (Thúy. Final Reflection. 20 June 2014)

---

[5] Hello and good morning from Hali. [The researcher's translation from Vietnamese]

While she chatted with Guest 1 and perhaps observed his chats with other students on Facebook, his "enthusiastic" attitudes and behaviours triggered a change in her attitudes towards Saudis. Her negative affective state became more positive.

Although her feelings changed, her negative cognitions regarding Saudi Arabia seemed persistent during her chat with the guest: his "enthusiastic" attitudes and behaviours helped reduce her fear and anxiety; however, it seemed her negative cognition about Saudi Arabia remained. Accordingly, she was not very involved in her chat: after her self-introduction, Thúy took only two more turns to converse with him. Despite her statement of interest in Saudi culture and of her openness to learning more about it, she asked him just one question "What make you proud of your country?" She neither commented on his answers in the rest of her chat with the guest except for "Thank you".

Her positive feelings about the guest were reported in reflection 1. She developed positive perception about him.

> I think that visitors from Arab Sauda are very enthusiastic, friendly and very knowledgeable. He introduced by himself, greeted us and answered our questions very politely and adequately. I see he is a successful man, he has a happy life with his children and a steadi work. [...] it seems that the guest has huge national pride about family, religion, the human right as well as peace [...].

> […] I find it is very interesting to talk directly and ask questions for guests, it helps me see that the simplest thing to learning a different culture is directly involved and familiarized with friends in these countries. (Thúy. Reflection 1. 20 April 2014)

She confirmed this affective change in her final reflection: "After exposure, I was comfortable and happy." (Thúy. Final Reflection. 20 June 2014)

However, the emotional change tended to be ephemeral. It seemed that under the constraints of her cognitive frame (i.e. negative pre-assumptions about Saudi culture) and the trigger of an external factor (e.g., the negative representation of this culture by the mass media), Thúy returned to her negative feelings. In discussion 1, she showed negative judgments of Arab culture, refusing to believe in the existence of a "normal life" in Saudi Arabia. She supported her judgments with Vietnamese websites about violence and severity in Saudi Arabia to argue with a peer. Encoded in her negative evaluations was her dissatisfaction.

> I disagree with you about what you said that Arabic is a great country, only through such a guest, because as I read in the media, in the Arab country is now the

presence of violence, use of common weapons, the heat is more natural as there are many deserts, hot dry throughout the year. (Discussion 1. 9 May 2014)

At the end of the discussion with her peer, Trang, who had happened to read a travel diary narrated by a Westerner travelling in Saudi Arabia, it seemed that Thúy was persuaded by Trang into believing that life in this country could be as "normal" as in other cultures. Trang also pointed out to her that mass media tended to cover sensational news about Arab cultures so it was unreliable and misleading. Consequently, Thúy responded to Trang:

> i also have the same thinking to Trang, in my view, i think anyone can write an article and post it in internet. each person has their own opinion, it's depends on their attitude. Although they have the same cultural background, the different opinion is inevitable think. in addition, it's have many people is not the Arabian but also write and talk about Arab country, they can't understand everything in the country if they don't approach it, they can't evaluate the problem in the right way. In conclusion, i think we can read informations on the internet but read by picking information, (Discussion 1. 19 May 2014)

Yet, she finally admitted in her reflection that she was still scared of this culture. It seemed that the guest's enthusiastic attitudes and behaviour triggered a change in her feelings about a Saudi and accordingly changed her perception about him from negative to positive. Her peer also had some influence on her cognitions; she came to recognize that Saudi culture could be perceived from different angles. However, her cognition about this culture as a whole seemed persistently negative. This cognition was consistent with her feelings when she wrote her final reflection.

> Through communication with the guest and discussion process, my knowledge has improved dramatically. Thus, I also eliminate stereotypes in my minds of human culture and Arabic. Sense of fear still exists but I have improved. (Thúy. Final reflection. 20 June 2014)

Discussion

Before the chat with Guest 1, Thúy did not know much about Saudi culture. Her knowledge about it was an overgeneralization of Saudis as Arab terrorists, without perceiving any Saudi distinctive characteristics. Parallel with this scant knowledge was her fear of the guest and his culture. In the chat and in reflection 1, on the one hand, she developed positive feelings and perception of the guest. On the other, she still had negative stereotypes of Saudi culture. In discussion 1, she generated a new cognition about Guest

1 as an exception to Saudi culture. Though she seemed to acknowledge the role of media in her negative stereotypes of Saudi culture and accepted that life in Saudi culture might be "normal", she eventually reported her fear of it in her final reflection.

These changes are in line with the theories of cognitive consistency (Festinger, 1959; Heider, 1946) and cognitive theories (Piaget cited in Wadsworth, 1989). Before the chat with Guest 1, there was a consistency between her cognitions and her feelings in her attitudes towards Saudi Arabia. She perceived Saudi Arabia as violent; she perceived the guest as representing this culture; she was scared of communicating with him. All these cognitions and feelings were consistent in a global negative attitude to Saudi Arabia, and it tended to scare her away from this culture. During the chat, the guest's friendliness and enthusiasm reduced her anxiety and enabled her to communicate to learn. However, her lack of engagement in the chat suggests that her anxiety might not have been below the maximum threshold (Gudykunst, 2004, 2005). As a result, she was not motivated enough to communicate and learn more. She tended to process reality in a simplistic way, i.e. within her single negative frame of cognition. To gain cognitive consistency, she regarded the guest as an exception to her perceived violent Saudi Arabia.

With reference to Byram's model, Thúy acquired some factual knowledge about Saudi Arabia, but she showed limited evidence of Byram's five attitudinal attributes (Byram, 1997). For example, although she asked "What make you proud of your country?" she did not appear to show "willingness to seek out or take up opportunities to engage with otherness". Neither did she demonstrate "interest in discovering other perspectives on interpretation of a familiar and unfamiliar phenomena both in [her] own and in other cultures and cultural practices" nor "willingness to question the values and presuppositions in cultural practice" (see Byram, 1997, p.58). Instead, in response to the guest's answer to her question she just expressed her thanks and appreciation of his answer. In reflection 1 and discussion 1, she based her judgments of Saudi culture only on her own Vietnamese norms and values. And she honestly admitted her negative attitudes towards this Arab culture in her final reflection: "Sense of fear still exists […]."

Perhaps Byram's threshold attributes cannot help fully understand Thúy's intercultural attitudes to Saudi culture, given the nuances and changes in her emotions and attitudes towards this culture in the learning process. Instead, Bennett's concepts stages of intercultural sensitivity are helpful. According to Bennett (1993), an overgeneralized configuration of C2 implies a denial of its existence. Therefore, before the chats, Thúy's limited interpretation of Saudi culture as part of a general hostile Arab world suggested

that she was in denial of the possible specificity of Saudi culture. The chat with Guest 1 made her more aware of his culture. However, since the culture was different she still felt insecure and perceived it as "violent and unequal". This meant that she was in defence. Persuaded by Trang, she seemed to momentarily accept Saudi culture as another way of life (i.e. acceptance). Nevertheless, she persisted in "fear" at the end of the learning process. In other words, she returned to defence.

4.3.1.2 Thúy's development of IC in the process of learning with Guests 2 and 3

Findings

Before the learning cycle with Guest 2, Thúy had a very positive attitude and a rosy stereotype regarding American culture which she associated with independence, freedom, and equality. At the same time, she wrote: "It is quite different from Vietnam." With regard to equality, she reflected:

> I see that [Vietnamese] people hardly have equal opportunity to compete. There is a rest of Vietnamese people depending on their family, their status to promote without ability. For example, they failed the entrance university, but they still go to university to study because of having money while the poor student have no afford to continue their studying. (Thúy. Reflection 0. 28 March 2014)

In the chats with Guest 2 she tended to observe behaviours and phenomena that reinforced her positive attitudes towards American culture. She wrote in reflection 2:

> After having met with her, I have not thought much about change than in the past [...]. [Their] cultural value in my opinion is very good and positive. they live democracy, independence, and work hard, respect each other's personal lives and have great love for animals. (Thúy. Reflection 2. 27 May 2014)

As a response to Guest 2's description of her eighty-four-year-old father-in-law's life which is apparently very different from that of elderly people in Vietnam, Thúy managed to locate information and explain it from American perspectives. Accordingly, she gained knowledge that could help her develop skills of interpreting and better understand the phenomenon:

> I have been reading on the internet about social welfare policy for older people and culture of the United States are separate from each member of the family, while the elderly to age in a nursing home, where they will to meet old friends, companionship, have elegant pleasures of the elderly. I think this is a cultural advancement and well suited to the lifestyle of the American West. You can read more about in that website

:http://www.voatiengviet.com/.../tuoi-huu-va.../1812287.html (Thúy. Reflection 2. 27
May 2014)

Subsequently, at the end of her reflection she concluded:

> Through all that I have learned, I have read in the media, I see that American culture
> so rich and diverse, there are very good value and worth learning, but also the values
> that we would never be allowed to perform and not perform it, as is putting the elderly
> at a nursing home, it is going to go against the traditions of our nation. (Thúy.
> Reflection 2. 27 May 2014)

This was an attitude different from that related to her previous positive stereotype. A
change emerged in her cognition towards American culture. She started sensing the
negative side of the American values of "independence" and "self-reliance". However, she
managed to locate additional positive information about the culture: American society had
facilities and values that supported this way of life.

This cognitive change facilitated the emergence of skills of interpreting and relating in her
peer discussion on the issue of the lifestyles of the elderly. Despite her appreciation of the
culturally-justified practice of self-reliance in American culture she strongly supported the
Vietnamese way of living with many generations under one roof. In discussion 2, she
managed to account for her belief in Vietnamese reciprocal relationships, and further
explained the difference between the two ways of life and why each suited one culture not
the other:

> U.S organization focuses on taking care of the elder, especially for retired people. in
> addition, the nursing home in U.S, it has enough facilities, nurses, caregivers,etc. but
> in Viet Nam, the Nursing home is established to help elder people who don't have
> homes, children, and money. (Discussion 2. 7 June 2014)

Thúy continued to reinforce her positive image of independent and self-reliant Americans
in her observations of Guest 3. She tended to notice behaviours and phenomena that were
consistent with her current cognitive frame. Thúy totally ignored the issue of gender
discrimination in the United States raised by Guest 3 when this guest criticized related
practices. Instead, Thúy highly praised American independence and how American
children were taught to be independent from Guest 3's perspective:

> I have found two cultural values of the most prominent Americans. Firstly, the
> independence of the United States, the child will be independent very soon, they
> leave their parents to live independently, but besides that, they are parents to shelter

and transport, they are published mother teaches individuals the most basic of life, stay away from bad habits, such as sex, smoking, etc. and when they are taught the full original knowledge to step into the world they will leave their families, usually at the age of 17.[…] they respect the individual rights of each person and above all they have taught their children how to be independent very interesting (Thúy. Reflection 3. 10 June 2014)

With respect to languaging, Thúy mixed EFL, Vietnamese and multimodal resources to express her thoughts and feelings like other students as analyzed in 4.2.1 and 4.2.3. In interviews she, as well as other students, admitted having used Google translation to help her express meanings. A close examination of quotes from Thúy contributions above uncovers mixing and meshing of these resources. For example, the sentence "but besides that, they are parents to shelter and transport" is a combination of EFL vocabulary, Vietnamese syntax and probable Google translation. The Vietnamese grammatical structure in this sentence would be: Subject+ passive voice marker+ object+ verb (*Họ được bố mẹ che chở*). *Che chở* is a two-word verb in Vietnamese meaning *protect or take care*. When they are separated each word has its own meaning. *Che* has several English equivalents such as *shelter, cover, protect*; and *chở* is comparable to *carry, transport*. Therefore, the sentence should be properly rendered in English: "but besides that, they are protected by their parents."

Discussion

In summary, before and during the chats with Guest 2, with regard to equality and independence Thúy had a positive image of American culture and simultaneously was critical of Vietnamese culture. In reflection 2, she continued to show this tendency. However, she identified the American elderly's practice of self-reliance as an alternative to Vietnamese filial piety and reciprocal relationships. Through cognitive processes she understood American perspectives on their way of life.

With reference to APPRAISAL (Martin, 2000; Martin & White, 2007), Thúy encoded approval and satisfaction in her positive evaluation of American independence and equality. These affective states were evident in her use of "good", "positive", "respect" "love" and so on as quoted above. She maintained her positive feelings towards American culture when developing her knowledge about the American practice and value of self-reliance. Approval is encoded in her expression of "elegant pleasures", "cultural advancement", "well suited" as seen in her reflection 2 above.

Coincident with these positive feelings about American equality and independence is dissatisfaction associated with her criticism of an apparent Vietnamese lack of fairness. For example, this negative affective state is encoded in her expression of "hardly […] equal opportunity to compete". However, with regard to family-related issues, she had a positive cognitive configuration together with satisfied feelings about Vietnamese culture. For instance, she used words such as "sacred", "unconditional love" to talk about Vietnamese family bonds.

The findings suggest that Thúy re-organized her feelings and cognitions to gain a balance in her attitudes to American and Vietnamese culture as described in cognitive theories (Gudykunst, 2004, 2005; Piaget, cited in Wadsworth, 1989) and theories of cognitive consistency (Festinger, 1959; Heider, 1946). Before exposure to Guests 2 and 3, she had consistently positive feelings and cognitions in her attitudes about American culture and people. These positive attitudes were reinforced during and after the chats. However, when she compared the elderly's ways of life in the United States and Vietnam in reflection 2, the simultaneity of her two contrasting cognitions (i.e. She perceived American old people living in nursing homes as "advanced" and Vietnamese elderly parents living with their married children under the same roof as "sacred") seemed to motivate her to look for a way to balance these opposite cognitions by coming to understand values and reasons for two such contrasting ways of life. Accordingly, she balanced her cognitions/attitudes about American culture and also about Vietnamese culture. These attitudes were shown in her skills of interpreting and relating in discussions 2 and 3. They were also consonant with her comment on Guest 2 in her final reflection: "She is respectful of her country culture, and respect the culture of other countries," meaning that she has now learned to respect not only her culture but others' well, as did this respectful guest.

With respect to languaging, the findings about Thúy's mix of EFL, Vietnamese and multimodal resources further reveal the complexity of cognitive and affective processes in EFL contexts. Unlike languaging in face-to face interaction in L1 (Vygotsky, 1962) or L2 (Swain, 2010), Web 2.0 mediated languaging involves not only linguistic resources such as EFL and L1, but also other multimodal resources. As described by Schreiber (2015), languaging means translanguaging in online EFL communication. Consequently it becomes complicated, and successful communication entails reading between the lines. For example, Thúy's sentence "they are parents to shelter and transport" apparently requires the reader competent not only in English but also in Vietnamese and Google translation to make sense of what she stated. Multimodal resources, on the one hand,

empower EFL learners in intercultural communication; on the other hand, they hinder learners from L2 learning and development. This finding requires further research to inform EFL education.

With respect to Byram's description of IC attributes, Thúy acquired some declarative and procedural knowledge about American culture. Accordingly she developed skills of discovering, interpreting and relating. Specifically, she discovered and was able to explain American old people's self-reliant way of life. She was able to relate this phenomenon to the Vietnamese elderly's enjoyment of their children's filial piety. The important point is her ability to withhold judgement, understanding that each way of life fits its culture.

Thúy's cognitive changes support Bennett's developmental concepts of intercultural sensitivity (Bennett, 1993). Her positive cognitions about American equality and simultaneous criticism of an apparent Vietnamese lack of fairness match Bennett's characterization of reverse defence. Her acquisition of knowledge about the American elderly's self-reliance and adapted thinking about children's responsibility in supporting their old parents suggest her position in acceptance or adaptation. However, she showed no evidence of minimization.

The findings about Thúy's affective changes give further insights into shifts between these stages. While she admired American equality, she disapproved of a perceived Vietnamese lack of fairness. In connection with the theory of uncertainty/anxiety management (Gudykunst, 2004, 2005) her uncertainty about this aspect of American seemed below the minimum level. It means that she was too certain about it to be open to learning. Consequently, she tended to assimilate her observations into her single positive frame of thinking. However, since she valued Vietnamese family bonds, she sensed disadvantages of American nursing homes. Subsequently she balanced her cognitions about the American way of life with information about facilities supporting it. As a result, she moved to acceptance, maintaining a balance of cognitions and feelings about the elderly's life in the USA and in Vietnam. She displayed a "double voicing" attitude (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008) to stand somewhere between the two cultures when she came to the conclusion that American culture had "very good value" "worth learning", 'but also the values that we would never be allowed to perform".

Final remarks on Thúy's IC development

Regarding the overall learning process in this course, Thúy did not seem to change her cognitions about Saudi culture. Her feelings shifted dynamically, but eventually returned to

a negative affective state in accordance with her persistent negative cognitions about Saudi Arabia. What she gained from the cycle of learning with Guest 1 was her emergent cognitions about Saudi Arabia: the Saudi guest was friendly and admirable; therefore, he was exceptional to perceived violent Saudi Arabia. Subsequently, she recognized that there were exceptions to any culture, or that one person from a culture did not necessarily represent all characteristics of that culture.

This emergent cognition recurred when she observed and reflected on learning about American culture with Guest 2:

> After having met with her, I have not thought much about change than in the past, but I found her not fully reflect all the values of American culture, but the typical value that Americans, she's had. (Thúy. Reflection 2. 27 May 2014)

She also employed this knowledge to discuss cultural issues related to American culture with her peers, arguing that there were exceptions to any culture, and personal traits did matter:

> I avoided the phrases: "all [American]children" in my reflection when i said this issue. It means that i didn't equate all [American] children to this issue. In any social or in any family, each person has a different personality, not the same. (Discussion 3. 22 June 2014)

The findings about Thúy's data demonstrate her individual trajectory of IC development. In addition to the dimensions of affect, cognition, linguistic and multimodal resources, her personal traits might contribute to this path of development which can be better analyzed in comparison with Trang in the next section.

4.3.2 Trang's trajectory of IC development

4.3.2.1 Trang's changes in IC development in the process learning with Guest 1

Findings

Unlike Thúy, Trang had inconsistent cognitions about Saudi culture and people before she was exposed to Guest 1. On the one hand, she perceived Saudi Arabia as violent as depicted in the mass media and in lessons she had learned at school. On the other, she sensed it to be a fascinating culture and people, worthy of exploration as narrated in a travel diary she had read. The tension between these cognitions aroused her curiosity and motivated her to learn more about Saudi Arabia. She recalled her feelings and cognitions about Saudi culture and people in her final reflection:

I have ever learned about Arabian countries through media and the subject of the history in the world. Regarding this country, I am always curious and exciting to discover human, history, culture and tourism. One of the main reason is because of my favourite journal diary book. The author wrote about culture, food, landscape and she had a lot of great friends in Arab. Especially, I realize that it is so different and not similar to image as I thought when I read and study about Arab. (Trang. Final reflection. 26 June 2014)

On meeting with the guest on Facebook, she developed a positive affective state regarding him and accordingly reinforced her positive feelings and cognitions about this culture and its people. However, the negative cognition about Saudis was by no means shifted or replaced by a positive one. She seemed to be in two minds when she wrote reflection 1.

Because I'm quite curious about Islamite from rumours on the internet, I imagine that they will look a little bit frightening. However, whereas with my thinking, Arabia is a great country in which has many good landscapes, a lot of friendly people like [Guest 1] and an interesting culture. (Trang. Reflection 1. 24 April 2014)

Her past positive experience with the travel diary and her current experience with this "enthusiastic" "friendly" guest seemed to lead her to a belief that those perceived frightening people were nonetheless very similar to the Vietnamese. In reflection 1, Vietnamese culture appeared to be central when she wrote that Saudi culture was similar to Vietnamese culture in many ways. It can be inferred that Vietnamese norms still dominated her observations, evaluation and even imaginary action when she wrote reflection 1. It showed that she would behave assuming that there was little difference between Saudi and Vietnamese culture.

I note that Arabians also have rice in lunch as same as vietnamese. However, they prepare it well and serve it in every shape and form, vietnamese often have a simple meal with vegetable,meat, and fish. This behaviour reflects the value of family in Arabia similar to Vietnamese 's family. As you revealed, he asked that we can call him Abo-[Guest 1's son's name] because of father of [Guest 1's son's name]. This means he sure loves his son and his family so much. Before interacting with this guest, I have no idea about Arabians. I just know them through media. However, I was surprised when i found the character of Arabians almost the same with Vietnamese. In Vietnam, people always concentrate on two meals:lunch and dinner. All them have rice and some simple dishes. If I am invited to dinner at the guest's

house, I will greet members in his family with a smile, then I help them prepare for cooking or something I can do. Whereas, if I invite the Arabian guest to my house, I will introduce to them my family and ask them that Do you want to learn how to cook Vietnam dishes?. I think it is a warm party among members. (Trang. Reflection 1. 24 April 2014)

On arguing with Thúy whether there was a "normal life" in Saudi Arabia, she gradually shaped her relativist view of life despite her knowledge of negative aspects of its culture. In response to Thúy's criticism of her evaluation of Saudi Arabia as "a great country" with "many good landscapes" and "a lot of friendly people", she clarified her perception of "a great country":

> For me, i perceive "a great country" when people are living there feel happy and pleasant with their country (of course it has some uprisings every year, but not often). (Discussion 1. 16 May 2014)

While admitting the downsides of Saudi Arabia, she relativized the "greatness" of a country where, despite its adversities, "people feel happy" and satisfied with their nation. This view sounded empathetic. Subsequently, she judged it as the way people there judged it, not according to her own standards.

She came to argue that Saudi Arabia was as normal as any country in the world in that it had both upsides and downsides. She further pointed out that media tended to cover sensational news so that viewers just knew negative aspects of the country:

> in my opinion, the countries in the world which can make people feel fair and equal is extremely rare. Most countries always have social evil or something are unfair among people, even having in American or Viet nam. We only know a part of Arab such as conflict, violent, etc and . However, all of the information we know from media, we haven't ever gone Arab to desire it by ourselves. I think media can not take the exactly information about a country sometimes, they only write the significantly news of the countries. (Discussion 1. 16 May 2014)

To be more convincing and to refute the widely-held image of badly-treated women in Saudi Arabia, she cited a less noticeable online source that showed positive sides of the country and its culture:

> [...] if you search on the internet with the keyword "Saudi Arabia", you will receive about 302 million results. I mean that we never / can't read all of them, for example we can easily find the news of violence because they are the SIGNIFICANT NEWS

from internet. However, I also just read the article "Interesting facts about the language and culture in Saudi Arab" on http://www.inlingua-if.com. According to the article "A very important tradition they have is loyalty to family. This value is taught by the parents to their children and is passed on in every generation. The most respected and revered member in the Arab family is the mother". This shows the opposite informations above. So, which news should we believe in? It seems that most people will only read The SIGNIfICANT NEWS and believe in them.[...] (Discussion 1. 17 May 2014)

She even made a comparison with the situation that outsiders tended to stereotype Vietnam as a land of war and hence deprived themselves of the potential to understand true Vietnamese values:

Likewise, when I asked a foreigner about Vietnam, they only know about vietnam war, [...] . I mean foreigner thinking (if they have never gone vietnam, of course) about vietnam is similar to vietnamese thinking about Arab, they may be don't understand why we are always proud of our country. (Discussion 1. 17 May 2014)

Thus she kept questioning herself and the ways in which she and others had perceived and thought about Saudi culture, and gradually constructed a more mature view:

Thus, interacting with [Guest 1] help me to conclude a point that "we cannot base on the internet and media cannot take the exact information about a country, they only write the significant news of the countries".

I think that we know about Arab as a country which have violence, unequal, unfair and conflict. By contrast, [Guest 1] would proud of his father land. As far as he said "I am proud of Saudi Arabia because, in addition to have my family there, I see my country as a peace maker in Middle East and it support the humanity causes and take care of its citizen". (answer the Thuy's question). I wonder why start to exist the difference of perception between citizen of Arab and foreigners. [...] I relize that that is stereotyping of thinking because of media (Trang. Final reflection. 16 June 2014)

Her process of constructing new knowledge was self-directed. Since her negative knowledge sat side by side the positive story of a Westerner who had travelled and witnessed life in Saudi Arabia, Trang seemed to direct herself to resolve conflicts in her cognitions about this culture. She continued to observe, and put new information and observation into dialogue with her previous information about Saudi culture and even with a similar situation concerning Vietnam. These dialogical and reflective processes

eventually widened her perspectives on Saudi culture and cultivated her openness to learn about otherness as she wrote in her final reflection:

> After interacting with the guest, I have more and more excited to visit Arab someday. If I get to meet an Arabian in person, I will know the ways to treat with them. (Trang. Final reflection. 26 June2014)

To sum up, in the process of learning Trang seemed to progressively undergo positive changes in her IC. Before meeting Guest 1, Trang had inconsistent cognitions about and accordingly inconsistent attitudes towards Saudi culture. On meeting with Guest 1, his "enthusiastic" attitudes and behaviours helped strengthen her positive attitudes. In her discussion with Thúy, this peer's challenging questions offered Trang a chance to present the good side of Saudi Arabia and to question as well as to dialogically reflect on her own and others' perceptions and beliefs about this culture. Ultimately all these seemed to lead her to an openness to learn about Saudi culture rather than a recurrent fear of the culture as in the case of Thúy.

Discussion

With reference to Byram's IC attributes (Byram, 1997), Trang acquired both declarative and procedural knowledge about Saudi culture. Trang also showed clear indicators of the first three attitudinal traits and little evidence of the last two (see 4.2.3.1). For example, she showed "interest in discovering other perspectives on interpretation of […] unfamiliar phenomena in other cultures" (Byram, 1997, p.58). She was curious to learn more about Saudi culture, looking for information to justify an alternative perspective on the culture to that which is widely held. She was also frequently willing to question her own as well as other's presuppositions about this culture. This gave rise to her skills of discovery. Since she was not the designated student to chat directly with Guest 1, she had little chance to demonstrate the other two traits relating readiness to adapt and interact, and readiness to engage with verbal and non-verbal communication with representatives from C2 (Byram, 1997).

In Bennett's terms (Bennett, 1993), Trang seemed to shift from defence to acceptance and oscillated between acceptance and minimization. On the one hand, she had a "frightening" image of Saudis as she wrote in reflection 1. On the other hand, before meeting Guest 1, she was able to identify a different way of life in Saudi Arabia and believed it was an "interesting" place with "friendly" people. This was perhaps thanks to her previous experiences with the travel diary. The contact with Guest 1 confirmed her positive thinking

about Saudis. This evidence suggests a shift from defence to acceptance before reflection 1. Nevertheless, as can be seen in the above quotation from reflection 1, posted just before discussion 1, Vietnamese culture was central to her observation and evaluation of the Saudi way of life, believing Saudis were the same as Vietnamese. This implies her move to minimization.

In discussion 1, since Thúy strongly emphasized negative aspects of Saudi culture to challenge her belief of Saudi Arabia as "a great country", Trang was forced to look at aspects of Saudi culture which were different from that of Vietnam and hence perceived as negative aspects of the former. Trang came to concede these negative aspects, i.e. to accept different aspects of the culture. Specifically, she came to accept that there were differences between the way in which women were treated in Saudi Arabia and in Vietnam.

However, she then tended to look for similarities in the observed differences. While arguing with Thúy that there was a "normal life" in Saudi Arabia, she managed to level out differences between Saudi Arabia and Vietnam (specifically with respect to the treatment of women), saying that "something unfair among people" existed in many cultures. She also managed to show evidence of the respectful treatment of Saudi mother, which was in fact similar to many other cultures including Vietnamese.

Instead of managing to understand the value embedded in a different way of life to appreciate it, Trang chose to minimize difference. Specifically, instead of trying to understand the values underlying the way Saudi women were treated, she accepted the treatment as different and managed to look for some similarity attached to this difference. She took inequality as granted in every culture, i.e. she generalized that inequality was inevitable in any country even Vietnam or the United States. Her view of the perceived differences was thus just fluctuating between minimization and acceptance.

Trang could perhaps have developed her IC further and would not have oscillated between minimization and acceptance if she had managed to understand the values underlying why on the one hand Saudi women needed a male guardian; and why on the other hand they were respected and revered in the family (i.e. had she become more sensitive to cultural difference). As Bennett (1993) emphasized, failure to understand and respect values underlying different behaviours may simply lead back to defence or minimization.

Trang's cognitive and affective adaptation is in line with theories of cognitive consistency (Festinger, 1959; Heider, 1946) and cognitive theories (Gudykunst, 2004, 2005; Piaget, cited in Wadsworth, 1989). Trang experienced cognitive dissonance before the chats with

Guest 1. She perceived Saudi Arabia as violent as depicted in the mass media; she liked the diary, and it was about good things in Saudi Arabia. She was motivated to resolve this dissonance. Meeting the guest reinforced her cognitions about Saudi Arabia as "a great country" worth exploring. Hence, to arrive at cognitive consonance, she discredited the source that provided negative information about Saudi Arabia, arguing with Thúy that the mass media tended to cover sensational news, and therefore distort reality. She also found evidence from the internet to show that there were positive aspects of the culture that people just ignored or missed. Ultimately and overall she had more positive attitudes towards Saudi culture.

In Piaget's terms (cited in Wadsworth, 1989), the diary and Guest 2 were the driving forces for her cognitive development. She accommodated her cognitive frame to fit reality as she came to perceive it. As a result, she shifted to acceptance. Thúy's argument and disagreement also triggered her cognitive equilibration. This time she assimilated new information into her current frame of thinking (minimization). If she had continued to accommodate her frame, she could have developed further. Specifically, if she had acquired the knowledge of Saudi Islamic values and their influence on the treatment of Saudi women, then Trang would have become more sensitive to cultural difference. Perhaps as posited by Gudykunst (2004, 2005), she was so certain about the similarity between cultures that she was unable to be open to other perspectives.

With regard to APPRAISAL, her affective states parallel with her cognitive configurations were expressed with semantic resources for feelings and instantiated in her evaluations. For instance, the fear and anxiety expressed in "frightening" were associated with a defensive attitude. Acceptance was concomitant with satisfaction and joy as instantiated in her evaluation "Arabia is a great country in which has many good landscapes, a lot of friendly people like [Guest 1] and an interesting culture." With reference to the theory of uncertainty/anxiety management, parallel with Trang's certainty about the similarity between the two cultures was an anxiety level perhaps below the minimum threshold (Gudykunst, 2004).

A comparison between Trang's and Thúy's trajectories of IC development in the process learning with Guest 1 suggests that IC development was dynamic and idiosyncratic. First, Thúy's trajectory could be described as oscillating between denial and defence, without evidence of minimization. In comparison, though Trang mentioned her previous defence, in the process of learning she fluctuated between minimization and acceptance. Trang mentioned her frightening image of Saudis as did Thúy; however, unlike Thúy, she was not

scared away. The reason for this was that she had also had a positive experience with this culture through the eyes and experiences of a Westerner traveller in Saudi Arabia. This past encounter appeared to have a positive influence on her view of this culture as she herself pointed out in reflection 1. Her exposure to Guest 1 seemed to strengthen the positive influence to produce change in her cognition and attitude.

An additional explanation is that of different cognitive styles (Gudykunst, 2004; Kolb, 1984). Trang might be more accommodating in her cognitive style than Thúy. In addition, she seemed to be more cognitively complex than Thúy. She processed information in two ways, i.e. accommodating and assimilating, whereas Thúy tended to only assimilate it. Moreover, their difference in IC development can attributed to contrasting expectations of learning. As mentioned earlier, while Thúy expected to acquire cultural knowledge, Trang wanted to understand why there were differences between cultures. These different expectations might result in different motivations for learning.

4.3.2.2 Trang's IC development in the process of learning with Guests 2 and 3

Findings

With regard to American culture, like Thúy, Trang had very positive attitudes towards American culture with no trace of negativity in her reflection at the beginning of the learning process. She wrote about American culture and people before she chatted with Guest 2:

> America is a developed country [...] I have never gone America before and I just know it from media as internet, newspapers, especially the movies of America like Hollywood movie. [...]This land has many advantage to develop ability in many fields [...] The diversity of culture helps them easily accept thinking of others and freely do anything they want. I love free and I bet that most American are always happy because they are free. (Trang. Reflection 0. March 2014)

With this rosy image of US culture in mind, when Guest 2 described her farm Trang tended to notice American aspects that were consistent with her positive cognitions about it. Specifically she praised American love for animals, and criticized the Vietnamese habit of eating dog-meat. She raised this issue in her chat with Guest 2:

> Well, I was really impressed with your seven generation family farm, one dog and one bunny and I just can say "perfect" to you because I always hope for living in a big farm along with my family. However, in Viet nam, some people consider dogs and cats as a dish and even call it is culture. They are badly treated and threw away any

time. Although there are always argument against this and protect them, it doesn't afford to convince the government ban the restaurants which selling dog 's meat. Through movies that I have watched, I think US's culture respects pets and treats equally with them. Could you tell me your opinion about that? And according to you,eating dog's meat is the difference of culture each countries or be heartless? (Trang-Guest 2's conversation. 14 May 2014)

The guest answered her questions, helping her understand the American way of treating pets. However, the American guest also showed her ethno-relative understanding:

While reading your introduction, I said "Oh My"! I can not imagine eating dog-meat. [...] regarding your last question, if I grew up in a culture where eating dog-meat was normal, I would not think it was heartless. But I can inform you that I would never eat dog-meat if I visited your country. (Trang-Guest 2's conversation. 16 May 2014)

Despite the guest's non-judgemental behaviour, Trang seemed very determined in her own negative attitudes towards the Vietnamese custom:

I can affirm with you that I and my family never eat dog-meat. I am not sure it 's culture or not, but i think our country need to have a big change and people should find out that it was heartless. Most vietnamese nowadays don't eat dog, but it 's more popular than in the countryside. I really hope our government will have a bill to protect pets as America. (Trang-Guest 2's conversation. 16 May 2014)

She continued to praise American treatment of animals and criticized the Vietnamese consumption of dog-meat in reflection 2. This unbending attitude also survived a heated discussion with her peers, Thúy and Tuấn. In discussion 2, she seemed to successfully persuade Thúy, who perceived the consumption of dog-meat as "a feature of Vietnamese culture" to believe that eating dog-meat was cruel and thus should be banned. However, Trang was challenged by Tuấn with a series of questions about and arguments against Trang's call for a ban on eating dog-meat in Vietnam. Some of Tuấn's arguments included: "i have a question for you. do you ever eat pork? and if you do then what is your feeling when you eat pork? do you think about the pig that you eat?"; or:

because human, dog, pig and cow are also animal so why can we only eat pig or cow, dogs are animal too. in the course of history and even now, many people hunted porcupines, snakes, pigeon, etc.... for their meat. so all of these animals are considered to be food for human except for dogs and cats, is it fair? (Discussion 2. 6 June 2014)

And:

> the truth is dog-meat is very famous in Vietnam especially in north of Vietnam. and i also eat dog-meat, but i eat dogs not pet dog. these are different, you know. (Discussion 2. 6 June 2014)

The heated debate ended when Tuấn chose to opt out of it with these words:

> [...] there is no right or wrong in this. with you it's wrong, with me it's normal. we should not fight over this. (Discussion 2. 6 June 2014)

Tuấn's win-win solution left Trang to continue on her own with her passionate appeal for action on banning eating dog-meat till the end of discussion 2:

> We are the future generation, need to know correct mistakes in the past. In my opinion, it is a habit which need exclude out of social. (Discussion 2. 6 June 2014)

In her answer to Thúy's question about the feasibility of a measure to stop this habit in Vietnam, Trang showed her strong determination:

> It is difficult but must not impossible. if you follow some organizations, you can find out that they did very well. (Discussion 2. 6 June 2014)

However, that was not the end of her story of attitudes towards this controversial issue. Something emerged in her mind when she wrote her final reflection:

> In the discussing part, I think that I had stereotype when I said eating meat dog is not good and affirm that it needs to reject this habit out of community. It is so difficult to judge among thousands of arguments and it seems both of them is logical. Mrs. [Guest 2] lives in the cultural background which people treat animals better than human, so she felt shock by the fact contrary to her culture. Therefore, she answered my question in amazement and even said that "I can inform you that I would never eat dog-meat if I visited your country".

> On the other hand, I also found out an interesting point that she did not against the issues immediately or judge it is wrong or right. She respects the other points even though it opposites to her culture. She tried to explain that if you ill-treat animals in her country, you will punish by court. (Trang. Final reflection. 26 June 2014)

It is clear here that the guest's behaviour and her discussion with Tuấn who had an opposite view had some influence on Trang, who always questioned her observations, and her ways of thinking and doing. She further clarified this change in an interview with the researcher at the end of the course. She seemed to have accepted the behaviour of eating

dog-meat in Vietnam. There might be several influential factors to explain this. Her room-mates ate dog-meat and were also good reliable friends. Her discussion with Tuấn seemed to shift her perception of the logic and values behind this behaviour. At the time she wrote her final reflection relating to the consumption of dog-meat and her debate with Tuấn, she was experiencing a "disorienting dilemma" (Mezirow, 1991). Trang's process of questioning herself (whether she was right in criticizing those eating dog-meat) was in line with what Paige (1993) wrote about intercultural development below:

> The ambiguities surrounding truth, knowledge, and perception are disturbing to [learners]. The searching self-appraisals are painful and difficult. Moral certainty about rightness and wrongness become less absolute; indeed, it is a common phenomenon for learners to find themselves becoming temporarily immobilized in a state of extreme cultural relativism, hesitant or unable to make judgements. (Paige, 1993, p.3)

In the process of learning with Guest 3, Trang noticed the issue of gender equality raised by the guest (see 4.2.3.3 for Guest 3's perspective). Trang wrote in reflection 3, identifying the limitations of gender equality in the United States:

> Before interacting with the guest, I thought that America is a country which people are democratic and fair and is where people are free to do whatever they like. However, through the answers of Mrs. [Guest 3's name] [...] I think American society now has gender equality than before, but not completely. (Trang. Reflection 3. 15 June 2014)

However, she still believed this situation was much better than Vietnam, emphasizing the problem of the abuse of women in Vietnam. She concluded her comparison of gender equality between the United States and Vietnam: "I think American women have full knowledge and understanding in order to protect themselve."

In discussion 3 (see 4.2.3.3), while examining gender equality in the two countries with Thúy and Tuấn, she identified similarities between US and Vietnamese law. This identification of similarity helped her figure out that the main reason for gender inequality in Vietnam was that women did not understand their legal rights, and neither did men.

Discussion

In Byram's terms, Trang showed evidence of both declarative and procedural knowledge. In addition, she developed her culture-general knowledge that bettered her skills of interpreting and relating. Concerning attitudinal attributes, she demonstrated further

indicators of attitudinal traits in Byram's list (Byram, 1997, p.58). For example, she showed "interest in discovering other perspectives on interpretation of familiar and unfamiliar phenomena both in [her] own and in other cultures and cultural practices," or "willingness to question the values and presuppositions in cultural practices and products" in both cultures. As a Vietnamese she came to understand that the American guest was shocked at Vietnamese eating dog-meat because she came from a culture where "people treat animals better than human". As a Vietnamese from Central Vietnam she also came to accept the "logic" of the Northern Vietnamese behaviour of eating dog-meat.

With reference to Bennett's model, Trang seemed to shift from reverse defence to acceptance (see Bennett, 1993, p. 50). Before chatting with Guest 2, she praised American behaviours and values. During the chat, in reflection 2 and in discussion 2, she reinforced this positive cognition about and attitude towards American culture. Simultaneously she criticized Vietnamese culture. Specifically she classified the Vietnamese habit of eating dog-meat a "heartless" behaviour and called for action to stop it. However, after discussion 2 she showed an understanding and certain respect both for this behaviour of dog-meat eating and for its logic. But like Guest 2, she did not necessarily agree with the act of eating dog-meat.

Regarding the theories of cognitive consistency, before meeting Guest 2 Trang had a positive cognitive and affective balance about American culture and people. She liked American culture; American culture prizes animals/ in American culture dog-meat is not eaten; she liked the guest; the guest loved animals/ did not eat dog-meat, the guest belonged to American culture. With reference to the issue of the Vietnamese consumption of dog-meat, Trang experienced cognitive and affective dissonance. She loved Vietnamese people, and Vietnamese people ate dog-meat; she hated Vietnamese people eating dog-meat. Accordingly, she wanted to make a null relation between "consumption of dog-meat" and "Vietnamese people" by calling for a ban on this habit in Vietnam.

However, while communicating with Guest 2 and writing reflection 1, Trang noticed the guest's ethno-relative behaviour:

> I also found out an interesting point that she did not against the issues immediately or judge it is wrong or right. She respects the other points even though it opposites to her culture. (Trang. Reflection 1. 5 April 2014)

Nevertheless, this noticing or awareness by no means became a cognition that might influence an attitude or trigger a new behaviour in her. Only after she argued with Tuấn who had an opposing view, and after she wrote her reflection on her learning did she

realize that she had judged the behaviour of eating dog-meat totally on her individual background and norms. Tuấn's arguments led her to perceive that there were reasons and logical justifications for eating dog-meat in Vietnam. Moreover, her real-life experiences with those Vietnamese who ate dog-meat, who, contrary to her pre-assumptions and stereotypes, had turned out to be really nice friends seemed to contribute to her change (Trang's interview. 28 June 2014). It can be seen that these newly-developed cognitions were inconsistent with her deeply-held negative belief about the consumption of dog-meat. The cognitive dissonance motivated her to perceive herself as being ethnocentric and stereotyping, and perhaps persuaded her to behave as the guest had done: to choose to stand between the two differences in attitudes and behaviours. She was balancing her cognitions/ thoughts when saying that she had been ethnocentric and stereotyping in her previous call for an official ban on eating dog-meat in Vietnam.

The process of balancing cognitive and affective states was repeated with the topic of gender equality. However, Trang became more sensitive to cultural difference. She could accommodate her frame of thinking to fit reality. For instance, though she had stereotyped the United States as a land of perfect equality, she accepted the limitations of gender equality in the country. She also realized the similarity in law between the two countries. Compared with the process of learning with Guest 1, she developed greater sensitivity to cultural difference when she generated an understanding of the causes of the abuse of Vietnamese women though Vietnamese law on this issue is the same as that of the United States.

The analysis of two focal students' IC development reveals that their trajectories were dynamic and somewhat idiosyncratic. In the same context and motivated by a push towards cognitive consistency, each student adapted her cognitive and affective states in a different way. Accordingly, their trajectories varied according to their past experiences (i.e. the diary, the good experience of sharing accommodation with dog-meat eating people), expectations of learning and perhaps their personal attributes such as cognitive styles.

4.4 Summary of the students' IC development

4.4.1 Languaging in cognitive and affective processes

In the context of Facebook-mediated intercultural EFL education, IC development is a process of languaging (Swain, 2010; Vygotsky, 1962), or translanguaging as labelled in recent studies of this phenomenon (Canagarajah, 2011, 2013; Schreiber, 2015). In this process, the students used a mix of EFL, Vietnamese and multimodal resources to formulate, articulate and exchange thoughts. Specifically, they asked and/or requested the

guests for their opinions. They also questioned and disagreed with peers. They interrogated themselves and established links among pieces of knowledge and cognitions. In addition to cognitive processes, they also "languaged" to express feelings, evaluations and to negotiate stance as hypothesized in Martin (2000, 2003) and Martin and White (2007).

In this process, the students tended to balance their cognitive system in three ways. First, they might entirely ignore/reject the information which was contradictory to their cognitive frame. Secondly, they might discredit the information, or distort it so that their cognition remained unchallenged. These two tendencies mean they assimilated the information into their cognitive structure. Thirdly, they might adopt the opposite view and change their frame of thinking to fit their new understanding of reality. This means they accommodated their frame of thinking. These findings are in line with cognitive theories (Festinger, 1959; Gudykunst, 2004, 2005; Heider, 1946; Piaget, cited in Wadsworth, 1989)

Associated with this process of cognitive adaptation was affective transformation. With regard to C2, lack of knowledge or negative thinking was associated with fear and anxiety. Once procedural knowledge and culture-general knowledge were gained, anxiety was reduced. Satisfaction with the discovery of knowledge was subsequently aroused. In contrast, positive cognition was associated with approval and satisfaction. A shift from this cognitive frame was associated with disappointment. When procedural knowledge and culture-general knowledge were obtained, disappointment decreased. With respect to C1, cognitive and affective change from positive to negative was similar to that concerning C2, i.e. a shift from satisfaction to disappointment. In comparison to fear and anxiety associated with negative cognition of C2, disapproval or disappointment was parallel with criticism of one's own culture (C1). This negative affective state was lessened when procedural knowledge and culture-general knowledge were generated. This cognitive and affective interaction evidences that cognitive change is concomitant with affective transformation.

4.4.2 IC development

4.4.2.1 IC development in the process of learning with Guest 1

The students showed evidence of some development of both declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge about Saudi culture. Some students acquired procedural knowledge sooner than others, and the students who acquired procedural knowledge were found to develop their skills of interpreting and relating, and skills of discovery and interaction. Accordingly, some students developed their intercultural skills more readily than others in

the class. With regard to attitudes, those few students who developed procedural knowledge and intercultural skills demonstrated attitudinal attributes such as interest in everyday life of people in other cultures, interest in their perspectives, willingness to question their own assumptions and readiness to adapt in intercultural situations. These achievements match Byram's description of threshold IC attributes (Byram, 1997).

With respect to Bennett's DMIS (Bennett, 1993, 2004), some students seemed to oscillate between denial and defence of Saudi culture, and others appeared to move to minimization. A few shifted to acceptance with frequent fluctuation between this configuration and minimization, and others displayed evidence of acceptance without minimization. The findings support Bennett's concepts of different cognitive configurations with respect to cultural difference. Moreover, the current study reveals the fluidity of these configurations. They are so provisional and oscillatory that in the context of EFL learning over fifteen weeks it would be better to label them as different cognitive states rather than stages. They were also found to systematically correspond to affective states. These cognitive and affective changes resulted in different trajectories of IC development. They seemed to be influenced by past experiences and other personal traits such as cognitive styles.

4.4.2.2 IC development in the process of learning with Guests 2 and 3

Compared with the process of learning with Guest 1, there was more evidence of the students' development of procedural knowledge. This type of knowledge developed most in the process of learning with Guest 2, and continued to increase when they learned with Guest 3. Culture-general knowledge started to emerge in the students' reflections, and continued to develop in their discussion with peers. Parallel with the acquisition of procedural knowledge and culture-general knowledge was a steady progress in skills of interpreting and relating, and skills of discovery and interaction. Those students who showed the development of knowledge and skills also demonstrated openness to other perspectives on phenomena of interest to them in both the United States and Vietnam, and accordingly modified their positive stereotypes of American culture and simultaneous criticism of Vietnamese culture. Unlike Byram's theory (Byram, 1997), the findings foreground the importance of culture-general knowledge in IC development as postulated by other educators (Bennett, 2004; Gudykunst et al, 1991). The current study also challenges Byram's assumption of learners' "belief about their own culture and disbelief about the other's". While they learned to withhold negative stereotypes about their own culture, they developed awareness of cultural difference within their own culture

(subcultures). Accordingly, they raised their voice as members of communities that expanded outside the borders of Vietnam such as pop fans groups or LGBT community. Subsequently, this finding questions Byram's definition of culture as national in developing IC.

With reference to Bennett's DMIS, the current study supports his hypothesis that identifying similarity and understanding values behind different behaviours are vital in IC development. It also provides linguistic evidence of the nonlinearity between reverse defence, minimization and acceptance. As in the case of learning with the Saudi guest, the findings from the context of learning with the American guests over several weeks show complex, fluid trajectories of IC development. Most students started the process of learning about US culture at the position of reverse defence. Some of them showed evidence of acceptance without any experience of minimization; others shifted from acceptance to minimization and oscillated between these two states. A few stayed in reverse defence. The students' cognitive configurations of C1 and C2 were provisional and oscillatory. Parallel with cognitive shifts was affective transformation. Cognitive and affective shifts depended on the different issues under discussion and seemed to be influenced by personal traits such as past experiences and cognitive styles.

With respect to RQ 1, in the context of intercultural EFL education delivered over a fifteen-week semester, IC can be conceptualized as consisting not only of affective and cognitive dimensions but also of linguistic and multimodal resources. Situational factors should be included in the process of IC development. This comprehensive conceptualization is useful because it can be integrated in an EFL curriculum. As regards RQ 3, the study shows that under the influence of external factors IC development is a process of affective and cognitive adaptation via languaging. It also involves balancing cognitions and shifting feelings associated with those cognitions, and is influenced by situational factors and personal traits. Accordingly, the students' trajectories of IC development shifted dynamically through different states of ethnocentrism to a state of relativizing values underlying cultural difference.

4.4.3 Visualization of IC development in a Web 2.0 mediated intercultural EFL context

The above findings can be summarized as in Table 4-5. For the purposes of EFL education, this proposed framework focuses on EFL, so L1 and multimodal resources are not foregrounded. The four columns represent four IC components: feelings, cognition, skills and language. The horizontal two-headed arrow suggests interaction between the

components in the developmental process. Under an external trigger or motivated by a need for knowledge, people make use of their semiotic resources to negotiate meaning and knowledge. They demonstrate intercultural skills via languaging to construct knowledge. Different cognitive states are parallel with various affective states. The vertical two-headed arrow implies the complexity and fluidity of these states. Cognitive states tend to shift from simplistic to more complex views of cultural difference. Specifically, as demonstrated by the findings of the current study, people can shift from no knowledge, through a generalized view, either positive or negative, to a more sophisticated perception of cultural difference. However, the cognitive pathway may depend on complex situational and personal factors so that it may be nonlinear and dynamic. For example, a person may shift from a state of no knowledge to perception of similarity before identification of generalized difference. Others, or even that person with regard to some other particular phenomenon, may move from stereotyping to relativizing cultural difference without perceiving similarity.

Assumed in this model is the management of knowledge, language, skills and feelings to maintain motivation to learn and become open to new perceptions of the world. With regard to the theory of uncertainty/anxiety management, people should be between the maximum and minimum levels of uncertainty/anxiety so that they are motivated to communicate and learn. In the case of anxiety (due to no knowledge, negative stereotypes or lack of language competence), they need to be self-directed or scaffolded to keep anxiety below the maximum level. This could be facilitated by access to cultural difference and use of other IC components/resources (linguistic and non-linguistic resources, and skills) to communicate and learn. In the case of satisfaction and relief, they should keep these positive affective states above the minimum level of anxiety/uncertainty. This means that they should be ready to challenge their current view or be challenged with new perspectives. In this way, IC development is cyclical and on-going, and people may experience ups and downs in their affective states associated with their discovery of new knowledge and uncertainty about the world. The idea of creating and cultivating doubt and uncertainty is in line with the thinking of educators in intercultural communication (Wilkinson, 2012) and other fields (Mohanan, 1997).

Table 4-5. IC development in an intercultural EFL education context.

Affective state	Cognitive state (knowledge about C2)		Skill	Language (EFL)
Fear, anxiety	No knowledge		- Accessing cultural difference. - Noticing. - Questioning, requesting for opinions - Challenging (expressing agreement and disagreement) - Positioning one's stance, and establishing connections between knowledge and cognitions	- Structures and lexicon for encoding and decoding meanings and stances. - E.g., why /How questions Requests for opinions. - Structures in causal, temporal, comparative, contrastive terms.
Anxiety, dissatisfaction	Negative	Generalization (Declarative Knowledge)		
Approval, satisfaction	Positive			
Less dissatisfaction	Negative	Perception of similarity		
Less satisfaction	Positive			
Enjoyment, relief, excitement	Knowledge of cultural relativity (Procedural knowledge, culture-general knowledge)			

Chapter 5
THE INFLUENCE OF THE LEARNING DESIGN

5.1 Introduction

This chapter analyzes the influence of the learning activities with a view to answering RQ 2 (How can a Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design help EFL learners develop IC?) and RQ 4 (What implications do the findings have for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning designs in an EFL context?). In order to foreground the importance of the learning activities (section 5.2), the researcher summarizes the students' IC development as shown in the analysis of their primary data on Facebook. She then reports from an emic perspective how the students evaluated the learning activities in their final reflection and follow-up interviews. She supplements these data with the information from the end-of-course feedback conducted by the Training Department. In her dual role of teacher-researcher, she hopes that this triangulated data analysis can enhance the trustworthiness of the study. Section 5.3 discusses how these learning activities were mediated by Facebook and scaffolded by the teacher, the guests and peers to argue for the valuable role of Web 2.0 in IC education and for the necessity of the involvement of key people in the learning process. Finally, section 5.6 proposes design principles and a revised Web 2.0 IC learning design.

5.2 The influence of the contact with the guests from other cultures

To implement the principle of social interaction in IC learning, three guests were invited for online cultural exchange with the students. This exchange was enabled by the Facebook group tool. To highlight the influence of this learning activity, this section focuses on an analysis of how chatting with the guests helped the students develop knowledge, skills and attitudes.

5.2.1 In the students' development of knowledge

The findings suggest that the Facebook-mediated exchange with guests from other cultures was vital to the learning design because this learning activity facilitated the students' cognitive development in two ways. First, as shown in the analysis of the chats, they observed and developed their perceptions about the guests who were live, unique cultural representatives. The written reflections reveal that the students then reflected on their observations and perceptions to further develop their knowledge about other cultures. Specifically, while chatting with the three guests, the students observed and built an understanding of the guests' personalities, attitudes, knowledge and behaviour. In using their linguistic and nonlinguistic resources to establish relationships among their

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cognitions, the students developed more complex cognitions. Accordingly, they became more sensitive to cultural difference. For example, they came to an understanding that the Saudi guest did not correspond to their negative perceptions of Saudi culture. They came to see Guest 2 as exceptional to their previous perception of the American individualism as she loved and showed her concern and love for her family members and her community in the same way as did collectivist Vietnamese. In addition to their knowledge of modern US culture, through Guest 3's love of traditional culture the students learned the United States has folk music and folk art, and Americans also love folk culture.

Second, the findings in chapter 4 indicate that the guests' chatting about various aspects of their own culture was a valuable live source of information and knowledge for the students to learn. As seen in section 4.2.1, the students showed evidence of acquiring both declarative and procedural knowledge from the chats with the guests. More importantly, this source of cultural knowledge was personalized, adding rich perspectives to the students' understanding of the other culture. As Levy postulated, culture should be conceptualized as personal in culture teaching (Levy, 2007); consequently, this conceptualization enables students to de-stereotype the culture.

With regard to the complexity of the knowledge obtained, the students developed more procedural knowledge in the process of learning with Guests 2 and 3 than with Guest 1. There could be several reasons for this difference. First, for most of the students their departure point of sensitivity to Saudi culture as denial constrained their willingness to learn and ask questions efficiently. Specifically, they asked Guest 1 fewer questions, and these were Yes-No or What questions aiming at acquiring factual knowledge rather than How/Why questions seeking procedural knowledge (see 4.2.1). Second, it might be also because at the time of the first chat, the students were not familiar with the learning activity.

In contrast, the students asked more questions about procedural knowledge with Guests 2 and 3. There are several possible reasons for this difference. First, they already had more knowledge about US culture thanks to mass media and Hollywood movies, as the students wrote in their reflection. Second, they had learned concepts of intercultural communication in several lessons in the classroom (e.g., cultural values, collectivism vs. individualism, stereotyping, ethnocentrism). Next, the teacher had also made comments on their previous work, and helped with specific problems arising during the chats with Guest 1. All these factors seemed to help them know how to notice something meaningful from the chats with a guest, and ask questions that could lead to more intercultural learning. This

helped them access and develop more knowledge about how American values influenced American daily life.

In addition to the chat evidence, the written reflections reveal that all of the students highly appreciated the opportunities to communicate with the guests. Similarly in the end-of-course evaluation conducted by the University's Training Department, fifteen out of nineteen students rated the experience of chatting with the guests as the learning activity they liked most in the course. The reasons for their high appreciation involved the diversity, the personalization and intimacy, and the self-direction of the acquisition of knowledge. For them the guests provided different types of knowledge that they could not find in books, the media or the internet. Sometimes this knowledge was also private and personal. They also evaluated their chats with the guests as excellent opportunities to learn about topics which they themselves were interested in and wanted to learn about. Through this self-direction, the students empowered themselves as genuine communicators who had their own rich knowledge to confidently share with their interlocutor and then learned about the other culture. They also took responsibility for what they said. They thus became active and self-directed rather than passive teacher-controlled learners. The following examples illustrate the students' evaluation of the knowledge gained in the chats.

Hiền highlighted the personal perspective she and the guests brought to the process of intercultural communication. She thought this personalization was a privilege and responsibility. She enjoyed the advantage of accessing personalized information about the guests and their cultures, so in return she believed it her duty to provide trustworthy information:

> through online activities can help me contact and information exchange with the guests an easier way. have the opportunity to interact, learn from the cultures of other countries, and more a part of their being. because I could ask them more questions privacy and intimacy in their life, if they could share, this is a great thing. I also had the opportunity to introduce Vietnam's culture out to them. improve my skills and behave more responsibly with the content I offer. (Hiền. Final Reflection)

Minh emphasized the diversity of perspectives she could learn:

> In online operation, we are involved to talk and communicate with visitors from around the world. This gives us a new source of information, the amount of new knowledge is extremely diverse too. Or tell stories about the lives of people living in a place halfway around the world in Vietnam. In many areas, they give us the way to

get to know the cultural values of their country. Thereby, we also have new thoughts, positive thoughts, think more open about a country where they live-where we think they have culture and lifestyle totally contrary the habits and customs of Vietnam. (Minh. Final Reflection)

Lan foregrounded the first-hand experience with representatives from other cultures in her reflection. She appreciated the "accuracy" of the knowledge gained because it was directly stated by real "people of different regions" and not reported by a middle agent:

Through discussions with indigenous representatives, we get accurate knowledges about the cultures we need to learn rather than learn through the mass medias such as the internet and television. The direct discussions with representatives also help us have a better understanding about the people of different regions, their subjective views on different issues, which we would not have when we are learning only through medias and books, etc. (Lan. Final Reflection)

Trang believed that she would remember the knowledge she acquired from the chats with the guest more easily because it was what she was interested in and wanted to know. She also thought that the chats with the guests helped her know how to ask suitable questions to learn about other cultures.

In summary, the findings suggest that the activity of exposing students to guests from other cultures on Facebook groups is valuable and beneficial because chatting with the guests, asking them different types of questions helps the students develop declarative and procedural knowledge about other cultures. This knowledge which cannot be found in books and media is rich, diverse, personalized, and drawn from real life.

5.2.2 In the students' development of skills

Chatting proves to be important as the analysis of the data demonstrates how the chats helped the students develop skills of discovery and interaction. First of all, they could discover their ability in intercultural communication. This discovery then helped them gain confidence to communicate with the guests. Most of them admitted that this was the first time they had "talked" with people from other cultures in English. To their amazement, they realized that they were able to make themselves understood and were also able to understand what the guests said. They gained much confidence through this discovery. Subsequently they were more motivated to communicate and learn. For example, Mai wrote in her reflection: "the chat with the guess make student interested in the subject,

give them a chance to use their English in real life although it is not perfect". Or Nga recalled her experiences:

Those are learning experiences memorable. Before, I did not have enough confidence to talk or communicate with foreigners, I think that I cannot afford and partly because of the timid, shy of myself. I'm afraid of grammar wrong, afraid they do not understand what I say, lead to misunderstandings and language barriers. But when I started to get familiar with indigenous people, it helps me a lot more confidence than before, I no longer timid and shy anymore.

There was considerable evidence in the chats to prove that the students' pidgin Vietnamese-English did not hinder them in their intercultural communication. For example, it might have been thought that Kim's question would be incomprehensible to native English speakers because of mistakes in spelling, in grammar and in expression.

Kim : […] and now I have a question that I'm offering to discuss it for understand of US values. Americans have the right to teach children from a very early independence. Do you think better???and In Vietnam, parents awally sheltered wrapper until you can go independent, how do you think???

June 11 at 7:39am · Like

Guest 3: This is a really thoughtful question! I wish I could sit with you face to face to talk about it because it's not a simple answer. I think it's best to be conservative and raise a child in a sheltered manner and then when they're older to allow more freedom (at about the age of 17)...and even more comes as the child goes to college. […] Since my daughter was raised in this town which is 4 hours from a city, she was somewhat sheltered, but like YOU, (right now) she goes to a college in another part of the US and since she is older, she is independent.

Kim used a metaphor of "shelter" and "wrap" that Vietnamese people often use to indicate the inter-dependent and protective relationship between parents and children. Kim expressed this Vietnamese meaning in her two ungrammatical English words "sheltered" and "wrapper". Interestingly, despite the problems, her questions were understood precisely by the guest. The latter even adopted Kim's use of the word "sheltered" in her answer. By doing this, the guest seemed to establish a rapport between herself and the student in conversation.

What happened in this chat suggests that the guest read with interest what the student shared with her and wished to hear from her. With her interest the guest could reconstruct

the meaning the student tried to negotiate in her limited and faulty English. The guest treated the student as a real intellectually-equal interlocutor in conversation rather than as a learner deficient in language competence and intellectually inferior. It can be argued that the focus on meaning rather than on linguistic form helped the conversation unfold smoothly and effectively. The success of the conversation helped increase the student's confidence in using her English for communication. The confidence then empowered the student as a real communicator and an experiential learner in communication. She could talk about her culture and ask for information about the other culture.

Another skill the students developed was that of using "a range of questioning techniques to elicit" information and meaning (Byram, 1997). As described in section 4.2.1.1 they were able to use different types of questions to request information and opinions from the guests. The greater number of complex questions suggests that this ability increased over the learning activities. This advancement might be attributed to the teacher's support as discussed above.

In summary, it can be argued that the support of the guests in the chats helped the students gain confidence and develop their skills of discovery and interaction. This suggests the importance of invitation of guests to intercultural communication classes by using social networks such as Facebook and of their empowerment of the students. However, for this teaching technique to work well, students need the teacher's guidance and feedback (see 5.5.2).

5.2.3 In the students' development of attitudes

It can be inferred from the data analysis that the chatting activity was useful in developing intercultural attitudes. The students developed more interest in discovering other perspectives on interpretation of cultural phenomena, but they did not often show attitudinal change in the chats. Chatting triggered changes in the cognitive and affective dimensions of the students' intercultural attitudes. Most students demonstrated interest in C2 by asking questions about its behaviour and cultural practices. They also showed interest in other perspectives when they asked for procedural knowledge to understand what and how people in C2 performed a particular practice (Byram, 1997). As analyzed in 5.2.1, compared with their learning with Guest 1, the students were able to ask for more behaviour al and procedural knowledge when they chatted with Guests 2 and 3, suggesting that they developed more interest in discovering other perspectives when interacting with Guests 2 and 3.

Although they were interested in other cultures and asked for other perspectives, there is very limited evidence of their ability to interpret a phenomenon from another perspective during the chat with the guest. Instead, they tended to assimilate other perspectives into their frame of thinking. As a result, most of the students' attitudes to the other culture were not changed in the chat with the guest. Although the three guests did explain each issue in question from a new perspective, most of the students could not perceive it on the spot, in the chat. Instead, only after they reflected on their learning experience later could they perceive and understand the new perspective. Therefore, it can be argued that the chat with the guest tended to prepare for cognitive and attitudinal change in the students. It provided them with real-life data for them to compare, contrast and analyze in the follow-up learning activity of reflection.

In addition to the knowledge the students obtained from the contact with the guest, the reported feelings generated by the chat also laid a foundation for affective change to take place later in their reflection and discussion with peers. The contact afforded them opportunities to receive, respond and accept via the senses, but they needed time to organize and internalize their perceptions and feelings. For example, as seen in 4.2.3 most of the students reported or recalled their feelings of fear and insecurity before they chatted with the Saudi guest. These negative feelings were associated with their cognitive frame. They were scared because they knew little about the Saudi culture. Then when they became aware of its difference they felt insecure and worried. While they chatted with the guest, his personality, attitudes and behaviour generated positive feelings. Their positive feelings and new perceptions of the guests enabled attitudinal change to occur in refection and discussion.

To illustrate further the influence of the learning activity of chatting with guests, in interacting with Guest 3 from the United States, Hương showed a change from a feeling of insecurity associated with contacting cultural difference. Hương talked about her anxiety before she chatted with Guest 3. She was worried whether the guest would be able to understand what she said in her self-evaluated poor English. She was also concerned about cultural differences between the American and Vietnamese cultures. She was afraid that she would make mistakes due to these differences. Moreover, Hương's past and family background seemed to worsen her anxiety.

> sometime I feel scare because US cultures and Viet Nam culture are very difference. That make me feel embarrassing. I haven't enough confident in order to communication with [Guest 3]. I don't know ask anything. Because [Guest 3] is a

stranger and she from the United State. This country are developed.S So I seem to feel sorry for contact with her. Before when I haven't talking to Americans, I think that they aren't friendly, egocentric, fat, obnoxious, snobbish, impulsive, flashy. They are cruel person because In Viet Nam war, US is a largest enemy. So I hate Americans and this country. I hope[d] that bad things [would] happen to them.

But then it was her turn to be a representative of her team to chat with Guest 3. The chat started with Hương's self-introduction. However, in the chat the guest took the lead to initiate a topic for information exchange. As a result, they talked on a variety of topics as related to the United States and Vietnam, namely folk arts and music, volunteering, and places of interest. It was while they chatted about places of interest that the topic of Đồng Lộc Junction arose. This was a historical place in Hương's hometown - a memorial to ten Vietnamese girls killed by US bombs in the Vietnam War. Yet, Hương seemed to avoid mentioning it in the chat, considering it a "sensitive" "political" topic (Hương's reflection 1). As she wrote in her reflection before she met with Guest 3 on Facebook, her beliefs of Americans were imprinted in her mind and soul by real-life stories of her parents who were soldiers fighting right in their village at the battle of Đồng Lộc. Apparently, her past and family background negatively influenced the beginning of her communication with this American guest.

Hương's chat with Guest 3 was a long lively conversation on Facebook. Combined with different entries in her reflection, the chat reveals an interaction between her different affective states and cognitions. Her reflection suggests that at the beginning of the chat she was filled with a complexity of contradictory feelings. On the one hand, as mentioned above, she hated Americans and was scared to communicate with Guest 3. On the other hand, like any young Vietnamese now she liked American values of freedom and popular culture spread over the world and to Vietnam via mass media.

Hương's emotional complexity shifted to a positive state in the process of a long chat of thirty turns. A close look at Hương's chat with the guest proves the importance of the guest's support in the student's learning and of social interaction with real people from other cultures as part of the learning design. Hương's affective change is shown towards the end of her conversation. It illustrates the joyful experience she had with Guest 3 when they – an old lady from the United States and a young student from Vietnam – exchanged information and emotional reactions about music. As analyzed in section 4.2.3.3, Hương used smiling emoticons and also encoded her joy in such words as "like", "interesting".

Perhaps this beautiful experience partly helped temporarily drive away the perception of "cruel Americans".

Guest 3 expressed her enjoyment of Hương's information and Vietnamese folk songs the latter provided via YouTube. Her response in the chat expressed an affective reaction to the music. As in the case of Kim quoted in 5.2.2, the manner in which Guest 3 "listened" and responded to Hương's information helped the latter overcome her fear and inferiority complex to participate in the exchange as a real communicator. All her newly-aroused feelings and perceptions in the chat appeared to trigger change in her attitudes as shown in her reflection and follow-up interview. Hương wrote in her reflection: "But After communication with [Guest 3] ennabled me to grow my mind and change many false ideas I had".

In a follow-up interview, when asked, "Why did you feel sorry? What do you mean by 'I seem to feel sorry for contact with her'?" Hương answered as follows:

> I regretted my conversation because I was not confident. This was partly because I was scared. So I was not able to express all my view, my thinking and feelings with [Guest 3]. I regretted having been unable to say all what I thought from the bottom of my heart. I think if I have another chance I hope I will be more straightforward in communication. […] I come to understand in sharing with [Guest] that past [of war and hatred] did go away and love for humans comes. (The researcher's translation of the interview script in Vietnamese)

Apparently, the guests' behaviour and attitudes helped shift the students' fear and worry, at least temporarily. Accordingly, they became more open and confident in learning. However, the real transformation of feelings and cognition took place only when the students truly reflected on their experience as will be presented in 5.3.

5.2.4 Discussion and conclusion

The findings suggest that the contact with the guests played the role of bringing a new reality to the students. It triggered their awareness of cultural differences which had been barely perceptible. This new reality just started the process of learning to change. For change to take place more learning activities were needed; but this starting point was important. Maturana and Varela (1998) foreground the importance of exposure to a "different cultural environment" in raising people's awareness of how they have been conditioned by their own culture:

> We exist in the present; past and future are manners of being now. Only when some interaction dislodges us – such as being suddenly relocated to a different cultural environment – and we reflect upon it, do we bring forth new constellations of relation that we explain by saying that we were not aware of them, or that we took them for granted. (Maturana & Varela, 1998, p. 242)

Many other scholars and educators in intercultural communication assert that exposure to C2 is a prerequisite for intercultural learning (Belz, 2007; Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1993; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013; Thorne, 2006). However, as Maturana and Verela state above, the students needed to have reflection to grow more. Reflection and peer discussion as follow-up learning activities will be discussed 5.3 and 5.4.

Consistent with other research, this present study shows the benefits of inviting guest speakers. First of all, having guest speakers address a class is a potentially effective teaching technique because it helps bring lived experience into the classroom (Kubal, Meyler, Stone, & Mauney, 2003). The students' chats with the guests on Facebook gave them lived experiences in affective, cognitive and behavioural terms. They experienced different affective states while chatting with the guests. They developed their knowledge and generated new cognitions. They used a language other than their mother tongue to communicate, negotiating their thinking, feelings and stances with the guests. Next, as identified by other educators, guest speakers "give real faces and identities to people who are invisible to many students" (N. J. Davis, 1992, p. 235). The students in this study acknowledged that it was the first time they "met" a Saudi. Many of them stated that it was the first time they communicated with an American. They were amazed to find that their real-life communication with a foreigner in EFL worked quite well. Accordingly, things of which they were previously unconscious became real and visible to them first of all thanks to the contact with the guests.

In addition, the students appreciated their chatting experiences with the guests because of several factors as discussed in 5.2.1. Among these was the diversity of knowledge, i.e. the diversity of reality the students could construct thanks to the learning activity. As pointed out by other scholars adopting this teaching technique, inviting guest speakers into the classroom can facilitate the teaching of diversity because students are exposed to diverse life stories (Jacobs, 1998; Poll, 1995). It can be argued that the distinctiveness of the learning design of the current project is the use of Facebook to adapt the teaching technique of inviting guest speakers to the class. In addition, given the physical distance between Vietnam and other countries, it would be most sensible to have guests online

rather than physically in the classroom. Moreover, because of the in-class time limit, it is necessary to have guests online and outside the classroom. The findings suggest that all these factors contribute to students' learning, overcoming weaknesses in other teaching projects. In line with Garrett-Rucks (2010, 2014), the project shows that different guests' personalized views can help the students de-stereotype their perspectives. It can be argued that inviting several guests on Facebook outweighs the online collaboration technique. While students in the former technique could access more life stories and views, the latter often exposes each student to one partner throughout the course. Such one-on-one communication for the whole semester might give rise to stereotype reinforcement or intercultural conflict between two learning partners as documented in some collaboration projects (e.g., Belz, 2005; O'Dowd, 2006a; Ware & Kramsch, 2005).

The findings also show that the learning activity of Facebook-mediated chatting facilitates leaners' self-directedness and agency. The students' reactions, as recorded in their reflections and interviews, may be interpreted in terms of self-directedness and agency (see 5.2.1). This self-directed learning activity was meaningful as suggested by constructivist educators (Hakkarainen, 2009; Kolb, 1984). It also acknowledged the agency of the students in the process of experiential learning: students are agents to determine and direct their learning according to their own disposition and needs (Deters & Swain, 2007).

As analyzed above, the exposure to the guests as representatives from C2 is important, but a mere exposure to C2 does not always result in learning or ensure IC development. This finding supports other intercultural educators' propositions (J. M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004; Bennett, 1993; Hua, 2013; Jackson, 2014a). The study shows that in the chat the questioning technique was important. It helped learners elicit information from the guest. This finding reinforces the questioning technique as an important ability in IC learning (Byram, 1997). Consistent with Belz (2007), the study suggests that students needed to be aware of types of questions that led to type of knowledge they wanted to learn (see 4.2.1). In addition, the analysis reveals that noticing was also important while chatting so that they were able to ask questions that could lead to deep and rich understanding of the issue in study. This finding confirms the importance of noticing in learning hypothesized by Schmidt (1990, 1993). The current study further clarifies that the ability to notice is associated with a linguistic and cultural point conceptualized as a rich point (Belz, 2007; Thorne, 2006), or a critical incident. Therefore, it can be argued that for the learning activity of chatting with guests to be productive it is essential for leaners to know how to notice a rich point and

master questioning techniques. In line with Hua (2014), the finding implies that they need support in the chat. If learners get support at the right place and at the right moment they can develop IC optimally.

The study shows that students could be supported in asking and noticing a rich point in two ways. First, group work seemed to be useful to some extent in supporting the students in the learning activity of chatting with the guests. The students pointed out in reflections and interviews that in groups they could help each other generate questions to ask the guest and answer the guest's questions. Second, the teacher's off-line preparation for the online chats was very important. For example, before chatting the students were guided to introduce their question by telling the guest about their Vietnamese culture and what they already knew about the guest's culture. This guidance helped the students articulate their position at the beginning of the learning process. As Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) among other scholars in the field of intercultural learning (e.g., Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1993) state, learners need first of all to be aware of and articulate their socio-cultural position so that they can connect this position with other perspectives to understand self and others. In this study, when the students connected their position with views of a C2 cultural practice they could identify or notice a rich point. For example, Trang articulated her position as a Vietnamese girl from an ancient town - Hoi An in Southern Vietnam. She disapproved of the Northern Vietnamese habit of eating dogs and explicitly judged it as "heartless". She knew via movies and the guest's self-introduction that Americans loved dogs, treating them as family members. She highly evaluated this American practice. All this led to her question as to whether "eating dog's meat is the difference of culture each countries or be heartless". Among what Guest 2 expressed about herself and American culture, Trang was able to identify treating dogs as a rich point for her to learn about American culture and Vietnamese culture.

Yet, in some cases students posted incomprehensible or unproductive questions. According to Hua (2014), learners need support that suits their ability, motivation and past experiences. In the present study, the guests also played an important role in providing support in accordance to each student's motivation and ability. First, they all positioned the students as real communicators; and this empowered the latter. Accordingly, the students managed to negotiate meanings and stances on each issue under discussion in their limited English language. Moreover, the guests' interest in the students' information about Vietnamese culture encouraged the latter in communication. Their quick and full answers to the students' questions motivated the latter both as communicators and as learners.

Most importantly, the guests' intercultural competence seemed to play a vital role in the students' IC development. In the context of rich points where intercultural conflicts were most likely to occur, the guests' appropriate intercultural attitudes and behaviour proved to be very important for the students to learn. For example, Guest 2 suspended her judgment of Vietnamese eating dog-meat though this practice was opposite to her cultural values, and even though Trang seemed to induce her to judge it as "heartless". Her answer: "… 'Oh My'! I can not imagine eating dog-meat. […] if I grew up in a culture where eating dog-meat was normal, I would not think it was heartless. But I can inform you that I would never eat dog-meat if I visited your country." became another rich point for Trang to notice; she subsequently reflected on it and develop her IC. The findings suggest that the guests' response and behaviour was like a model or an example for the students to look up and follow because Vietnamese culture tends to hold teachers in high esteem and perceive them a good example to adopt. Since the guests were older than them the students were likely to consider them as teachers. In reflections and interviews, they expressed their expectation to learn from and be corrected by the guests. Therefore, in this study the guests played the role of someone with not only better expertise in C2 to support the students to acquire knowledge, but also with a higher level of intercultural competence to help the latter in IC development. The implications of these findings will be further discussed in section 5.5.3.

The students' greater number of complex and productive questions, their final reflections and interviews show that the teacher's feedback on the students' learning in the chats was necessary. As a response to the students' expectations, the teacher commented on the grammatical mistakes in the students' questions. She also gave feedback on question types and the content of questions that could give rise to deep and rich learning. She commented both on Facebook and in the classroom, using some students' productive questions as good examples. This helped the students learn from each other about questioning techniques and noticing.

In conclusion, the findings suggest that Facebook-mediated chatting with the guests was useful in IC learning. It afforded the students lived experiences. Accordingly, they developed knowledge about the guests and their cultures. This knowledge was personalized and diversified, providing students chance to challenge their stereotypes. The students also experienced different feelings. The students needed support from the teacher, the guests and peers to implement this learning activity. Their contact with the guests might have helped with their attitudinal development, but the students did not seem

to change their attitudes to the guests' cultures during the chat. As Bennett (1993) suggested, for changes to take place it is necessary for students to develop cognition and then an understanding about what happens to them in cognitive and affective terms. This development involves reflection. Byram, Kramsch, and Liddicoat and Scarino among others emphasize the importance of reflection on one's experience to develop IC (Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1993; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). The next section will discuss the importance of the students' reflection in IC development.

5.3 The importance of written reflection

5.3.1 In the students' development of knowledge

It can be argued from the findings that reflection should be explicitly taught and properly guided to facilitate IC learning because the analysis of the students' written reflections shows that this learning activity was essential for the students to generate higher-level knowledge, but they were not well aware of its importance. The students were found to generate higher-level knowledge in their written reflections through a process of establishing a connection between their cognitions (see 4.2.1.2). For example, in her written reflection, by establishing a connection among pieces of knowledge she gained from the chat with Guest 1 and her previous knowledge, Nhi could develop a new understanding of reality. In addition, since the reflection was written and posted on Facebook she could connect her knowledge with other sources of online information (e.g., Website links). Consequently, Nhi displayed evidence of having developed procedural knowledge about Islamic practices of eating and dress. She also came to believe that every culture wished to have peace, and each had its own way to realize its wish.

The students were able to produce more procedural knowledge in reflections 2 and 3 than in reflection 1. Culture-general knowledge did not emerge until reflection 2 and continued to develop in reflection 3. One reason for this difference might be the specific guidance for reflection that the teacher provided as a response to some students' request for help with this learning activity. Some students expressed their problems and even frustration with writing the reflection. On Facebook and in the classroom, the teacher explained the requirements of the task in more detail and with a fairly good example of a reflection written by a student in the class. Another reason for the later emergence of culture-general knowledge might be the in-class lessons about intercultural concepts and theories.

It can be seen in 4.2.1 that reflection and connection of different cognitions enabled the students to develop culture-general knowledge. Their acquisition of culture-general knowledge was either bottom-up or top-down. In other words, some students were able to

generate general categories for understanding culture differences; more students tended to apply the concepts provided in class to analyze cultural practices and phenomena they observed and noticed. Most of them contended in their reflection that the experiential learning activities helped them connect practice and theory, though they seemed unaware of the importance of the written reflection in the learning process and did not evaluate it as highly as chatting with the guests or peer discussion. None of the students wrote in their reflection about how the reflective learning activity had helped them in IC development.

5.3.2 In the students' development of skills

The current study shows that written reflections helped the students put their thoughts and feelings into words in EFL. As in chatting with the guests, despite many mistakes in grammar and expression, the students' EFL seemed not to cause intractable barriers in expression and negotiation of their thoughts and feelings in the written reflection. Writing the reflection in English helped them understand what had happened to them in affective and cognitive terms. They established links and relationships among cognitions, expressing them in different grammatical structures of their pidgin of Vietnamese English. For example, in reflection 2 Nhi generated procedural knowledge about personal "independence" in US culture.

> American's culture does not take care of the elderly when they are sick. They go to an elderly retirement home for full care. As far as I know, the United States attaches great importance to the independence and autonomy, it makes them feel happy and excited. It has dominated the behaviour s habits of Americans since childhood. This means that they do not want to rely on anyone too much. In addition, young people are dynamic and their humans strive continuously to have success. This means that they difficult to care for the elderly (grandparents, parents) fully and they hard to ensure the health of the elderly. So, the nursing home is a suitable choice. And the Government pays for this.

Or Kim reflected on what she had noticed in her conversation with Guest 3, and developed her cognitions about power distance in communication in US and Vietnamese cultures. Though her language was here and there faulty, her thoughts seemed clear and logical in her reflection.

> In the communications with [Guest 2], I notice that she is friendly and comfortable, frankness, and special I think she like to oder question for them. Their behaviours and thinking reflect the American value of equality freedom,. In this culture people treat other equally regardless age, social class, level.[…] the majority communication

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of US different VN . In VN, some of old people impose thinkking of them in different young people or when talk together we can see show talk is comfortable and have distance between old-young people.

In this excerpt, Kim appeared to understand how American values influenced the way in which Guest 3 communicated with her. To her, Americans valued freedom and equality; therefore, the American guest treated her as an equal person, being honest with her, asking for her opinion and listening to her in a friendly way. She compared this behaviour to a comparable phenomenon in Vietnam when, according to her, old people impose their thinking on the young. She appreciated the low power distance value she had a chance to experience in the conversation with Guest 3.

These examples together with Nhi's reflection 1 and Khánh's reflection 2 quoted in 4.2.1.2 show that the students developed their skills of interpreting and relating, and of discovery thanks to the activity of reflection. More specifically, they were able to establish links and relationships among cognitions and to generate new knowledge and cognition.

The findings also reveal that written reflections helped the students learn to convey their thoughts, feelings and stances on cultural issues in which they were interested because these reflections were posted on the Facebook group and other students in class read and responded to each other's view in the peer discussion activity. Therefore, the students demonstrated their ability to interpret and relate using a language other than their mother tongue. Moreover, since they were required to compare and contrast their existing knowledge with other sources of information the students were forced to seek more knowledge on the issues of interest to them. Accordingly, they developed skills of discovery. What they discovered sometimes concerned the complexities and dilemma of life which are not explicitly specified in Byram's theory of teaching IC. The finding implies that students need the teacher's support to develop their high-level thinking and skills of discovery.

5.3.3 In the students' development of attitudes

The emergence of new attitudinal traits in the written reflections suggests that this was an essential learning activity that should follow the contact with guests for the students to move forward to develop their intercultural attitudes. While chatting with the guests the students showed evidence of meeting the attitudinal objectives (a) of "interest in the daily experience of a range of social groups within a society" and (b) "interest in other perspectives on interpretation of familiar and unfamiliar phenomena both in one's own and in other cultures" (Byram, 1993, p.58). However, they demonstrated evidence of the

attitudinal objective (c) "willingness to question the values and presuppositions" in either one's own culture or the other culture only when they reflected on the experience of learning with the guests. This suggests that they developed their intercultural attitudes further when they had knowledge, and understood the issue in question in a more complex way via the written reflection.

While establishing connections among different cognitions, the students were found to become more sensitive to cultural difference, i.e. they could understand a cultural issue (in C1 or in C2) from different perspectives. For example (see 4.2.3), Nhi became aware that Saudis had a different way of life because of their Islamic principles. She worked out that these principles and practices aimed at peace. She concluded that Saudis worked towards peace in their own way as did people from other cultures. Likewise, Trang became aware of cultural difference and generated the belief that Saudi culture was as "normal" as Vietnamese culture. All these cognitions/beliefs helped reduce their cognitively-related feelings of insecurity. This reduction of insecurity was reinforced by feelings of security and comfort aroused in the chat by the guest's personality and behaviour. They all helped produce a "respect" for the different Saudis as Nhi wrote in her final reflection. Similarly, thanks to reflection Thúy and Khánh better understood the practices of independence and self-reliance regarding retirement villages for the elderly in the United States. They thus appreciated them in the context of that culture, rather than criticizing them as "immoral" in terms of Vietnamese culture.

5.3.4 Discussion and conclusion

It can be argued that in the context of a fifteen-week course of intercultural EFL learning, guided, written reflection provided the students with opportunities to establish connections and relationships among their previous cognitions and emergent knowledge to carry out their cognitive processes, and generate higher-level knowledge. In doing so, they could modify their pre-suppositions and stereotypes. Accordingly, they could adapt their intercultural attitudes. At the same time, while developing their procedural knowledge about how and why people in C2 performed a particular practice the students developed their skills of interpreting. When they compared C2 with a comparable Vietnamese practice they developed their skills of relating. Only in their reflections did much of procedural knowledge emerge.

The finding that most of the students' procedural knowledge and culture-specific knowledge did not emerge until the reflective activity suggests the essential role of reflection in intercultural learning. Kramsch (1993) believes that people tend to understand

what happened in an intercultural experience when they reflect on it sometimes much later. Ware and Kramsch emphasize the need for the teacher's support in students' reflection so that it "will help them understand better their own reasoning and the cultural context from which it comes, as well as the viewpoints of others" (Ware & Kramsch, 2005, p. 203). According to Byram (1997), learners need to establish connections and relationships among their cognitions in reflection. Thanks to this establishment of connections they develop their knowledge and skills of intercultural competence. Similarly, Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino and Kohler (2003) highlight the role of reflection in generating procedural knowledge "through processes of inferring, comparing, interpreting, discussing, and negotiating meaning in a non-judgmental manner" (p.46). Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) further foreground the affective dimension and its interaction with the cognitive dimension in reflection:

> The process of reflection in intercultural learning is both affective and cognitive. It is affective in that every encounter with diverse others has the potential for emotional impact, either positive or negative, and this impact needs to be considered and interpreted by the learners. It is not enough to know what one's reaction to something is; one has to understand why that reaction is the reaction one experiences. (p.58)

As seen in various examples of the students' written reflections, they reflected on what had happened to them in cognitive and affective terms. They also connected cognitions to generate new knowledge. However, they were less likely to attend to their feelings and understand deeply why a certain feeling emerged. While reading the students' reflections, the teacher wrote comments and sometimes asked them why they felt that way. However, she did not consistently follow up the students' responses to her questions about their feelings to guide them in the process of learning. Nevertheless, there were some examples to show that the teacher had supported students in their improved understanding of the affective dimension of their behaviour (see 5.2.3 with the example of Hương).

In brief, it can be argued that requiring the students to write about what they had learned and to establish connections between their pieces of knowledge helped the students undergo cognitive processes and generated higher-level knowledge (procedural and culture-general knowledge). It also gave them a chance to look back at their feelings. However, for them to better understand their affective changes they needed more support and guidance.

5.4 The importance of peer discussion

In this project, the teacher-researcher took various factors into consideration when designing the peer discussion activity as an important stage in the cycle of experiential learning. It was designed to give the students more social interaction to use what they had learned in the contact with a guest and their written reflection. However, the researcher did not want to involve the guests in another phase of interaction. First, she did not want to overuse the guests' kindness even though they all offered to "talk" to the students in another cycle of experiential learning. Second, it might be more difficult for other teachers to find as devoted guest speakers as those involved in this study because they were the researcher's friends. For the learning design to be plausible in other contexts, the researcher simply requested the guests to chat with the students once at their convenience over a week. To experience more social interaction, the students discussed issues they had written about in their reflection and responded to each other's views in peer discussion.

5.4.1 In the students' development of knowledge

As shown in 4.2.1.3, in peer discussions the students continued to accumulate knowledge both procedural and culture-general, in addition to that gained in written reflections. As Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) put it, the type of social interaction in peer discussion engaged the students in an on-going dialogue in negotiation of meanings with multiple others. They negotiated meanings of and stances on particular phenomena with their peers. In the process of negotiating meaning, as Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) also describe it, the students questioned each other's perspectives, expressed agreement and disagreement asking for further explanations, sometimes understood the reasons why they shared a view or conflicted with each other and accommodated their perspectives. For example, through the heated debate between Trang and Tuấn about the issue of eating dog-meat (and also her reflection on this debate later), Trang came to understand that subcultures such as Southern vs. Northern Vietnam influenced her and Tuấn's thinking and behaviour. As a result, she came to view this practice in a more complex, relative way, accepting "logics behind this behaviour" as she put it (see 4.3.2.2).

In their final reflection and in interviews, the students also evaluated this activity highly, stating that it helped them learn from each other. With regard to cultural aspects in which they were interested, they believed their peers gave them additional knowledge even if this was simply via the indication of a useful website. This knowledge and information helped enrich their knowledge and perspectives on that cultural aspect. They also appreciated

their peers' correction of their misinterpretations of documents or events. As revealed in their final reflection and interviews, peer discussion also triggered their cognitive processes later in their reflection. This helped them better understand themselves.

5.4.2 In the students' development of skills

The findings show that Facebook-mediated peer discussions were useful in developing the students' intercultural skills. As analyzed in 4.2.2.1, in peer discussions the students developed their skills of interpreting and relating together with their development of procedural knowledge. They also acquired skills of discovery and interaction in parallel with their acquisition of the ability to question. Moreover, they were able to further identify differences and commonalities among cultures thanks to their acquisition of culture-general knowledge.

To provide more evidence, the excerpt below illustrates how peer discussion offered Kim a chance to improve her skills of interpreting. Responding to her peer's request for a clarification of her ideas expressed in reflection 3, she managed to paraphrase her written reflection, adding more concrete examples from her own experience.

> Kim: Hi An i will not explain that i give ex to show you see. When i talk with [Guest 3], she answer every question, show talk is comfortable and friendly although she is old people(we are young people) she ready wecome to imformation for us and don't impose us must follow thinking of her. And in VN, when i talk with my gramarmother show talk i always quite, reply "yes" sometime i talk about thinking but it is uncomfortable than when i talk [Guest 3]. because i usually imposed must how do how think...

It is clear that this explanation was more comprehensible than her reflection 3, and An expressed agreement when Kim asked "Do you think so An?":

> An: Thank you Kim for your answer [Guest 3] really is amazing, I wish I had a grandmother like [Guest 3]. She help us so much in the learning process. As you say the U.S. and Vietnam country have differences in behaviour between adults and children. She give us a lot of knowledge about the culture of America country especially in the field about folk music.

In their final reflections and interviews, the students stated that this learning activity enabled every student to equally voice their opinion on the issue under discussion. They also believed that thanks to this activity they developed their ability to express themselves in English. They were able to understand their peers' thinking and feelings. Eventually they

managed to negotiate each other's meanings and stances on particular issues under discussion. However, some students complained about misunderstandings and unsolved conflicts or problems in peer discussions, and wanted to have a more clear-cut solution to those problems. Others were also disappointed with their peers' posting a link or a website as a response to their comment without sufficient explanation about what was in the link.

5.4.3 In the students' development of attitudes

The findings suggest that peer discussions are important the students' attitudinal development. As analyzed in 4.2.3, in peer discussions the students became more interested in "discovering other perspectives on interpretation" of a cultural practice they had observed (Byram, 1997, p.58). This was shown in the way in which they questioned each other's views. They requested either explanation or clarification from their peers. They also expressed their disagreement on each other's views and attitudes. Accordingly, they had opportunities to shape and reshape their thinking through language and multimodal resources. Parallel with this cognitive process was an affective process. As described in 4.2.1.3 and 4.2.3.1, since Hạnh was able to notice some Saudi different behaviours Guest 1 talked about, she wrote about them in her reflection 1. She concluded: "I think every country with a different cultural values, the values that create a distinct identity in the world". Her peers questioned the clarity of Hạnh's evaluation and asked for more explanation. Hạnh had a chance to rearrange her cognitions and also to connect them with new information to articulate her interpretation of several Saudi behaviours according to Saudi historical and socio-cultural perspectives. Her explanation interested and satisfied Nga and Nguyên. A further comparison of Nga's and Nguyên's attitudes as documented in their reflection 1 (written in April) and final reflection (written in late June) suggest that the discussion with Hạnh helped them gain more knowledge, change their feelings associated with a lack of knowledge about Saudi behaviours, and accordingly modify their attitudes. To be more specific, both Nga and Nguyên had not noted any different Saudi behaviours in their reflection 1. Instead, they reported on factual knowledge about Saudi Arabia and their impression of the guest's enthusiasm. In contrast, in the final reflection they both were able to articulate their interpretation of Saudi behaviours (of which they had previously been fearful) in terms of historical and sociocultural context of Saudi Arabia.

5.4.4 Discussion and conclusion

This section shows that in a context of intercultural EFL learning, Facebook-mediated peer discussion was important in IC development. The findings support the socio-constructivist

theory in intercultural education (Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1993; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). Thanks to social interaction the students developed their cognitions. They became more sensitive and tolerant in thinking and behaviour. Thúy's and Trang's discussion about the Saudi way of life provides empirical evidence for Vygostky's argument about peer support in learning. With a higher level of IC, Trang seemed to persuade Thúy to change her frame of thinking, and this is also consistent with Garret-Rucks' findings (2010, 2014). It can be argued that learners tend to shift to a higher level of IC when they learn with a more interculturally-competent peer. In addition, it can be tentatively inferred from other students' discussions that students with similar competence could also help each other to develop IC. These findings have practical implications for teachers organizing groups of learners.

Another factor should be considered since research shows that Confucian Asians tend to be "concerned with social acceptance and others' opinions" (Liu et al., 2015, p. 106). As Confucian Asians, Vietnamese students might seek agreement among peers. This is evidenced in some peer discussions where students unexpectedly expressed agreement with their peers. Therefore, the teacher should give them specific guidance: He/she should emphasize that the aim of peer discussion is for them to see and to practice looking at any cultural phenomenon from different perspectives. In this way, they will develop their tolerance of ambiguity. Sometimes there will be no need to reach a clear-cut answer to an ambiguous situation.

5.4.5 Summary of the influence of the teaching and learning activities

The current study shows that in the context of a fifteen-week intercultural EFL course, each activity in the Facebook-mediated IC learning design had its own role in the students' IC development. First, the Facebook-mediated activity of chatting with the guests made the students aware of cultural difference that they were either unconscious or only partly conscious of. They engaged in lived experiences with cultural difference: They lived them both cognitively and affectively. Cognitively they developed their own perceptions of the guests as personalizations of C2. They also received information about C2 from the guests. Affectively they shifted from feelings of fear of the unknown or feelings of insecurity with the cultural difference to feelings of anxiety relief, confidence or comfort directly aroused by the guests' attitudes and behaviour. This real social interaction also helped them develop confidence and ability to communicate in EFL. However, their attitudes to cultural difference seemed unchanged during the chat. Their cognitive and affective

experiences with the guests seemed to prepare most of the students for change in their written reflections.

Producing a written reflection provided the students with a concrete learning activity allowing them to experience higher-level cognitive processes, and articulate them in their limited English. They established connections and relationships among their previous cognitions, and emergent perceptions and knowledge. Accordingly they generated new, higher-level, knowledge and cognitions. They were able to interpret a cultural phenomenon from different perspectives. In other words, they became more sensitive to cultural difference. They also understood the reasons for such difference. In their reflection they were able to articulate their feelings before, during and after the chats. As a result, many students were able to gradually adapt their intercultural attitudes.

With regard to the learning activity of peer discussion, the students further developed their cognition as a result of questioning each other's views and stances on the cultural issue under discussion. Through this process they gained more knowledge and became more sensitive to cultural difference. This social interaction among peers also helped them develop their confidence and ability to communicate in English.

However, there were several limitations in the learning outcomes after fifteen weeks. First, in reference to Bennett's DMIS not all the students could demonstrate a stable development into the ethno-relative state of acceptance at the end of the course. There was scant evidence of the students' shift into the state of adaptation. In addition, the students tended to pay little attention to the reasons for their affective change. Accordingly, they showed little evidence of understanding of what had happened to them in affective terms.

Despite these limitations, it can be argued that the students eventually showed evidence of achieving the learning objectives thanks to socio-constructivist principles underlying the three learning activities. Their achievements – changes in attitudes, knowledge and skills – might also be attributed to the mediation of Web 2.0 technologies (i.e. Facebook), and support from the teacher, the guests and their peers which is discussed in 5.5.

5.5 Mediation and scaffolding in the teaching and learning activities

This section first analyzes the advantages and disadvantages of the use of Web 2.0 for IC learning based on the findings about the students' changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes and on their opinions about the learning activities. It then discusses the important roles of the teacher, the guests and peers in scaffolding the students' learning. The section

continues with a report on adaptations of the teaching and learning activities over the reiterated cycles of learning with the three guests. Finally, it discusses pedagogical implications for a revision of the learning design and its implementation.

5.5.1 The mediation of Web 2.0 technologies: affordances and constraints

The findings suggest that in the context of a fifteen-week intercultural EFL course, Web 2.0 technologies allowed the achievement of many learning outcomes which otherwise would have been impossible. The two online activities – chatting with the guests and peer discussion – were facilitated by the Facebook Group tool, and they were also supported by other web tools such as YouTube and different websites for social interaction. The students were able to chat with the guests asynchronously via Facebook. They had time to verbalize their thoughts, refer to other resources and web tools, to help each other and to edit their postings. They also made use of many YouTube videos, and pictures as well as articles from different websites to illustrate what they wanted to say (see 4.2.3). As some students acknowledged in their reflections and interviews, the asynchronous conversations gave them sufficient time to formulate their thoughts. Web technologies supported the students' interaction in many ways. For example, they stated that they could search for more information if necessary and even employed Google-translation in order to express their thoughts in English. Additionally, they believed that working in a small group of three helped them edit major mistakes before they uploaded their postings. They also appreciated the availability of the chats and discussions on Facebook, as thus they could re-examine their mistakes corrected by their peers. Perhaps for all these reasons they rated chatting with the guests the learning activity they liked most, followed by peer discussion.

However, the student reflection and end-of-course feedback revealed weaknesses of the asynchronous activities mediated by Web 2.0 technologies. For many students, advantages of social interaction afforded by Web 2.0 such as time flexibility and access to information paradoxically involved disadvantages for their learning such as slowness, lack of response, uncertainty and overwhelmment. For example, on the one hand, they appreciated the time an asynchronous chat offered them to verbalize and to edit their thoughts in English; on the other hand, they believed that asynchronous online communication took a long time. They sometimes had a long wait for an answer from their guest. Consequently, it took some students a couple of weeks to complete a chat with a guest. According to these students, they eventually lost their motivation and became disinterested in the activity due to the slowness of the learning activity. In addition, they

sometimes could not understand what the guest meant due to "the language barrier"; nor did they know whether their interpretation of the guest's words was correct. They wished that the guests provided them with teacher-like feedback on both the content and the grammar of what they had written. Some students were overwhelmed by the amount of information and the diversity of topics in the chats. This meant the course took them "too much time" and "too much work". Another problem with Web 2.0 mediated communication was the availability of the internet and the quality of their internet connection. Two students criticized this in their end-of-course feedback. One of them stated that due to the poor quality of the internet connection at home she had to wait for "hours" at an internet shop before she could access the internet for her homework.

With regards to peers, the students blamed asynchronous Facebook-mediated discussion for time consumption, misbehaviour /misunderstanding and unresolvable conflict/disagreement on an issue in discussion. As in the case of chatting, they sometimes had to wait a long time for a peer's response. Their limited English sometimes caused misinterpretation, and it took them a long time to understand each other. The teacher was not as available as during in-class discussion for help. Paradoxically, some of the advantages of web tools the students used to facilitate their interaction turned out to be disadvantages of online communication when some of them overused the advantages of these tools. For example, several students complained about the fact that their peers had not expressed their view properly, instead just posting a link or a website in response to their comment or question. Several students were unhappy because they thought the discontinuation of asynchronous interaction made them end their discussion without a consensus on the issue under discussion.

5.5.2 Scaffolding in the learning activities

The analysis of the students' changes in knowledge, attitudes and skills in the chats with the guests (see 4.2 and 5.2) reveals the importance of scaffolding before, during and after a chat. This means that there should be a sequence of online and off-line/in-class learning activities. The off-line activities are for students to prepare online activities and for them to give feedback in the classroom. First, it was important to prepare the students in both psychological and linguistic terms before they met with the guests and started their chat on Facebook. Educators involved in internet-mediated teaching and learning (e.g.,Belz, 2005; Ware & Kramsch, 2005) warn of risks of several types so that teachers should take measures to avoid or to minimize them (see 2.6.4.3). One of these is to prepare students before exposing them to online interaction. The present study also documented evidence

of the importance of such preparation. It was necessary to clarify for the students the aims of the online interaction. Prior to Facebook-mediated chats with the guests, activities such as reading, survey completion, group work on questions to be asked seemed to prepare the students psychologically and linguistically. To some extent, these off-line activities helped them become more aware of cultural difference, and they got to know the guests indirectly via their completed survey. Accordingly, they became less worried. They also helped each other in articulating their questions and curiosity in EFL. In their feedback, most of the students stated that they appreciated this preparation for their online interaction with the guests.

During the chats, as analyzed in section 5.2, the guests scaffolded the students in learning in many ways. The guests' "enthusiasm" empowered the students as real communicators who managed anxiety and gained confidence. They were generally able to understand the guests and make themselves understood in EFL. They developed new perceptions and knowledge about the guests and their cultures. The students' IC development could illustrate the relational system of intercultural competence (Spitzberg, 2015). According to Spitzberg, when "mutual trust", "mutual attraction", and "mutual fulfillment of autonomy and intimacy needs" increase, communicators' IC increases. A guest's sincere interest in the student's information and opinion, or his/her trust in the student's ability to communicate helped increase the latter's ability to talk, to ask questions and to become open to learning. In some cases, the guests themselves were examples of intercultural competence that the students looked up to and from which they learned. As stated in their reflection, the students, on the one hand, appreciated this kind of support from the guests; on the other hand, they wished that the guests would also give them feedback on the content and the grammar of what they had written in EFL. Despite this specific lack, the general supportive role of the guests implies that guests invited to an intercultural classroom as a teaching technique should be interculturally competent. The teacher should also explain the aims of chatting to students so that they do not expect much grammatical correction in this social interaction.

After an online interaction with a guest, it is vital for the students to reflect on the interaction to learn. The analysis of the students' IC development shows that only when they reflected on their experience did they change in cognition and attitudes. The learning activity of reflection – establishing links and relationships among cognitions – was key to IC development in the Web 2.0 mediated learning design, though this activity could take place without the affordances of Web 2.0. Reflection could be considered an off-line

learning activity because the students wrote it in Word, and uploaded their file on Facebook for their peers to read, and comment on later in the online activity of peer discussion. Nevertheless, the students seemed unaware of the importance of reflection in their IC development. They did not take this crucial learning activity into account when they evaluated the course and when they commented on the influence of the learning activities on their IC development. Therefore, it can be argued that students need further support in written reflection to fully understand its role in IC learning.

The findings also suggest that the students met difficulties in writing their reflections; therefore, they needed a lot of guidance from the teacher. Though the teacher provided them with general guidelines for writing their reflection at the beginning of the course, the majority of the students were not able to bring up a noticeable rich point for learning in their reflection 1 (see 2.5.3.1 on rich points). Neither could they establish links and relationships between different pieces of knowledge to generate new knowledge and new understanding of a noticed phenomenon. The teacher's feedback and comments on the content of their written reflections was important. The feedback guided the students as to what they should notice in the chats, and how to connect knowledge to create new understanding of a phenomenon or a cultural practice in either C1 or C2. In addition, a good example of reflection from a student and a more specific guiding template for reflection seemed to be helpful for this learning activity. The evidence of the impact of this support was that many more students were able to efficiently reflect on their chats with Guests 2 and 3. They managed to generate new knowledge and an understanding of noticed cultural practices. Accordingly, they were able to adapt their presuppositions and attitudes about those phenomena. In their feedback on the learning activities, the majority of students expressed appreciation of the teacher's comments on the content of their reflections, and their grammatical mistakes and expression.

In peer discussions, the students had support both from the teacher and from their peers, and in their final reflections they positively evaluated this help. As pointed out in 3.4.4.4, the teacher-researcher provided the students with a document setting out the aims and guidelines for peer discussion. She also participated in their online discussions, answering the students' questions directed to her or commenting on the students' ideas. The students also supported each other in interpreting the guests' chats and information from other online sources, in expressing their thoughts in EFL, and in correcting each other's grammatical mistakes. The students also appreciated the teacher's involvement in their peer discussions. They expected her to help with unresolvable disagreement or conflict.

Yet, a couple of students raised the problem that they were overloaded with questions from both peers and the teacher in peer discussion.

In addition to the chats, written reflection and peer discussion, there were also several other activities that prepared for and supported the students' IC learning. They entailed reading articles and chapters on intercultural concepts and theories, in-class discussion on these concepts and theories, in-class watching and discussing several movie excerpts related to intercultural concepts. As the students reported in their reflection and end-of-course feedback, although they found these intercultural concepts and theories were necessary for their intercultural communication, many of them were not interested in the theory lessons and readings. They were more interested and found "fun" in watching and discussing movie excerpts. They wished to have more of these movies in their class. However, because the present project focused on the Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design, the researcher treated these activities as supportive activities in this analysis.

5.5.3 Revisions of the learning cycles in the implementation

The iteration of three learning cycles offered the teacher-researcher opportunities to revise the learning design over the course of the implementation. After the completion of the cycle of learning with Guest 1, the teacher briefly examined the data with a view to revising the learning design for more IC learning to take place in the next learning cycle. She studied the chats, the written reflections, the discussions, and their comments and requests relating to the learning activities. She found that the students had usually asked for factual information. Accordingly, they tended to reflect on this type of knowledge, and were unable to notice a rich point in the chats. Subsequently, they were less likely to establish a connection and a relationship among their cognitions to generate new knowledge. These findings suggested that the students needed further support in their learning. The teacher solved these problems by giving feedback to the students both individually on their reflection uploaded on Facebook and in the classroom. However, due to the time constraints and her limited analysis of the data, the teacher just suggested that the students should focus more on behavioural knowledge rather than factual knowledge and ask questions to understand the logic/value underlying a noticeable behaviour. The teacher showed examples of behavioural information/knowledge from Guest 1's chats and also from his completed cultural survey. In addition, a good sample of student reflection was used to illustrate how they could learn from the chats. Future iterations of the course would benefit from the deeper analysis which has been subsequently undertaken of this example, in particular with respect to how to establish links and relationships among

knowledge and cognitions to generate new knowledge and understanding. With regard to peer discussion, the teacher reminded the students of the aims of this learning activity, emphasizing that sometimes there was no need for them to share the same stance on a cultural issue. The important point was for them to understand the logic underlying a particular perspective.

Learning from the first cycle of learning, both the teacher and the students made changes in the cycle of learning with Guest 2. As mentioned above, the teacher provided the students with a more concrete guiding template for reflection to guide them to talk about their assumptions, to notice a cultural behaviour/phenomenon, to make connections, and to establish their position regarding that behaviour. Accordingly, the students appeared to work more closely with behavioural information provided in Guest 2's cultural survey. At the beginning of their chats, they focused on questions about behaviour and requested the guest's explanation or opinion about it. There were also questions about facts, but there were more questions about behaviour and requests for procedural knowledge than in the chats with Guest 1. More students were able to establish links among their knowledge and cognitions to generate new knowledge in reflection 2 (see 4.2). However, some students were still frustrated with the learning activity of reflection. On Facebook group, a couple of them directly requested more explanation and examples. As a response to this type of requests, the teacher uploaded an explanation of this learning activity and the aims of each step of the activity both in English and in Vietnamese. She also provided a sample of reflection on learning with Guest 2.

In the learning cycle with Guest 3, some adaptation evolved from the guest's desire to involve more students who shared interest in a similar topic or information. She created her own discussion sub-groups based on the topics about which the students asked her. As a result, some teams/sub-groups previously assigned in peer discussions 1 and 2 were submerged. Instead new sub-groups emerged, some of which involved more students (than only three as specified earlier) participating in the chats, answering the guest's question or commenting on an issue under discussion. This was a reason why the chats with Guest 3 were often longer and had more turns than those with Guests 1 and 2. The students had more opportunities to discuss different topics of interest to them. During Guest 3's chats, the teacher noticed this adaptation, and she did not interfere, thinking that this change might be more convenient for both the guest and the students in their interaction.

5.5.4 Discussion and conclusion

The findings suggest that the students' achievements or changes at the end of the course are consistent with the constructivist developmental pedagogical principles in IC learning. It can be argued that their learning outcomes validated the value of experience and reflection that was embedded in the proposed Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design. There was evidence of eight essential characteristics of IC learning: it was experiential, multi-dimensional, self-directed, interactive, reflective, constructive, progressive and iterative. It can be presumed that the emergence of these characteristics was due in large part to the fact that the teacher undertook an active role in designing and organizing teaching and learning activities. She also needed engagement in the students' learning.

However, the difficulties and limitations the students experienced in the learning process and reported in their reflections and interviews suggest a lack of follow-up discussion in the classroom and the teacher's limitation in controlling online activities. First, despite multi-dimensional change in their IC, a limited number of students were able to demonstrate acceptance and adaptation in intercultural contexts. One of the reasons for this limitation might be a lack of in-class discussion and teacher support. The teacher's responses to individual students' reflections seemed insufficient to drive them to an optimal stage of IC development. This was partly because many students, as stated by several of them in their reflections and interviews, did not take these responses very seriously. They did not bother to think appropriately about the teacher's comments or questions. In-class discussion might have worked as a collective exploration of a rich point in which the teacher engaged herself with the students in negotiating an intercultural stance. It was a stance individual students could not achieve when they worked by themselves. They needed the teacher's support as suggested by Ware and Kramsch as follows.

> What the teacher, […], has to model is less a body of knowledge than an intercultural stance. […] This stance includes the willingness to engage with the students in an exploration of difference […]. It entails discussing jointly with the students ways of conducting this exploration and ways of imagining the logic of another person by interpreting his or her utterances, according to evidence from external facts and from the on-going discourse, not random speculation. (Ware & Kramsch, 2005, p. 203)

Another reason for the students' limited IC development (for example, not reaching the stage of adaptation) might be the lack of further social interaction with people from C2. A second cycle of learning with each guest, particularly mediated by technology (e.g., Skype)

that allowed for synchronous interaction, would give the students more opportunities to communicate under the constraints of time and other socio-cultural factors. This context might help them develop and demonstrate their adaptation in an intercultural context more clearly. For example, under the pressure of time they could learn to adapt their conversation style which involves turn taking, back channeling and so on.

The second limitation in the students' achievements concerned the affective dimension of their IC. The findings suggest that students were less likely to attend to changes in their feelings than in their cognition. Accordingly, they better understood their thinking than their feelings. Acting on the reflective guidelines, the students described their feelings in the process of learning. However, they seemed ignorant of why they had experienced such feelings or such affective changes. As discussed above, the students were unlikely to take the teacher's comments and questions further. Moreover, the teacher was unable to follow up the students' responses to her questions about their feelings in their written reflections. Some students' answers to the teacher-researcher's interview questions about their feelings suggest that they were capable of understanding and articulating their feelings and the reasons why they had experienced a particular affective state when they were properly scaffolded. It can be concluded that in-class discussion after the activities of reflection and peer discussion could be a solution to the second limitation in the students' IC development. During in-class discussion, the teacher together with the students could explore affective states at a certain point in the conversations with the guests. The teacher's simple question as to why someone experienced a particular shift in their emotion could help them articulate and better understand their own feelings.

The findings indicate that of the three learning activities, chatting was the most preferred, followed by peer discussion. In response to the end-of-course feedback question "Điều mà bạn thích nhất về hoạt động giảng dạy của giáo viên trong môn học này?" ("What do you like most about the teaching-learning activities in this course?"), thirteen out of nineteen students referred to chatting with the guests and explained why they like it. Two students mentioned peer discussion, and two liked both chatting and peer discussion. One student had no comments, and another wrote a critical comment that will be discussed in the next paragraph. It is perhaps strange that no students mentioned the written reflection. They seemed little aware of the role of the reflection in helping them develop their cognition and modify their attitudes.

As a teacher-researcher, the author considers the student's negative comment a rich point that can potentially shed light on a mismatch between the learning activity and the

student's expectations/values. The criticism read in Vietnamese: "Được online Facebook và không còn gì hơn nữa" meaning "Got access to Facebook and nothing more" (The researcher's translation). As posited by Artze-Vega (2014), "Let your critics be your gurus" because "it's easy to feel emotionally attacked, […] but it doesn't mean your critics don't have a point." This student's evaluation can be interpreted in several ways. This student might have liked the experiences on Facebook, similarly to many other students. However, while others could clarify further why they liked the chats or the peer discussion, this student seemed to claim that he/she had achieved nothing in this course. This particular claim and the limitations of the Facebook-mediated IC learning design voiced by the students more generally might imply a mismatch between the students' expectations of the course and the learning activities of this learning design. This mismatch might be accounted for in terms of cultural difference imbedded in the developmental constructivist pedagogy.

It could be argued that the students underwent intercultural experiences on at least two levels. The first was that of the intercultural interactions with the guests. The second was the experience with the constructivist teaching and learning which is believed to be Western-value-related. Therefore, there are potential contradictions between this pedagogy and Confucian heritage cultures (Nguyen & Le, 2012; Thanh, 2014). Constructivist pedagogy means that students must involve themselves in an experience, and construct knowledge for themselves. In intercultural learning they also need to negotiate their own stance on a cultural issue. This stance often entails a tolerance for ambiguity, or ambivalence. Accordingly, students might feel disoriented or at a loss during or after a learning cycle. All of these characteristics of the developmental constructivist approach to IC teaching and learning are found to be contradictory to educational beliefs and practices in a Confucian heritage culture like that of Vietnam. The students' reflection and interview reveal evidence of these beliefs. Most of the students wished that the guests would correct their grammatical mistakes and ideas in their chats. They also wanted the teacher to correct the content and grammar mistakes in their reflection and peer discussion. These expectations suggest that they positioned themselves as passive rather than active learners. In line with this perspective was the tendency to believe what the teacher or someone in the position of a teacher said as incontrovertible truth. As a result, they usually requested the teacher to solve their conflicts or disagreements. They wanted a clear-cut resolution rather than a tolerance for ambiguity. Additionally, the idea of constructing knowledge for themselves was perhaps so new to them that it eluded their attention when they evaluated the learning activities. They entirely ignored the role of

reflection in helping them generate new knowledge. The mismatch between the students' expectations and the constructivist approach gave several students a feeling that they still had unresolvable problems at the end of the course. And the above student claimed that he/she learned nothing except how to access to Facebook in the course.

In short, the students' limitations in the learning outcomes and their opinions on the teaching and learning activities suggest two implications. First, students should have a chance to communicate with guests for a second time. This would satisfy the wish to continue to talk with the guests. Moreover, if this round of conversation were synchronous, there would be more chances for the students to develop and demonstrate higher levels of IC. Second, there should be an in-class discussion at the end of a learning cycle. This discussion would function as a collective reflection which involved both the teacher and the students in exploring rich points from the learning cycle. Only in this kind of activity can the teacher model the process of learning and negotiating an intercultural stance. In doing it, he/she can also reemphasize to the students that the course is for them to construct their own knowledge and intercultural stance.

5.6 A revised Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design

The findings and their implications for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning inform the revision of the proposed learning design with regard to pedagogical principles, and teaching and learning activities. This section first describes refined design principles, followed by a revised Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design and a specific model for the local context of Vietnamese universities.

5.6.1 Pedagogical principles

The refined principles for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning designs are basically the same as the five draft pedagogical principles used as the guidelines for the implemented learning design. Nevertheless, based on the pedagogical implications of the study, the teacher's engagement in the teaching and learning process will be foregrounded in the refined principles. These pedagogical principles can be described as follows.

- Construction: The teacher should actively construct a meaningful learning environment in order for students to learn. Students should actively construct their own knowledge, skills, stances on intercultural issues.

- Connection: The teacher should make connections and facilitate the making of connections by students. These connections involve the known and the unknown, cognition and affect.

- Interaction: There should be social interaction between students and people from other cultures, between peers, between students and the teacher.

- Reflection: This principle is vital to constructivist learning. Reflection helps students generate higher-level knowledge, better understand their feelings and make change. The teacher also needs to reflect on his/her teaching and students' learning for revision.

- Engagement: This principle implies the deep engagement of students and their responsibility in the process of social interaction and reflection for IC learning. It also foregrounds the teacher's engagement when necessary in the student learning process, sometimes as a role modelling a negotiation of an intercultural stance.

All these five pedagogical principles are interrelated, overlapped and involve both teaching and learning activities.

5.6.2 A revised Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design

Figure 5-1 presents a revised Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design based on the pedagogical principles of construction, connection, interaction, reflection and engagement. Similar to the original design described in Figure 3-2, the revised version highlights the importance of the five pedagogical principles in the teacher's design and organization of learning activities. Accordingly, students undertake a learning process with eight characteristics: it is experiential, reflective, interactive, multi-dimensional, self-directed, constructive, progressive and iterative. They carry out Web 2.0 mediated social interaction and go through lived experiences in terms of cognition, affect and behaviour. They direct their learning to suit their own motivation, interest and ability. They construct their IC development through reflection on their experiences. They repeat the learning cycle of experience and reflection so that their thinking, feeling and behaving can become more complex and flexible.

Since the teacher's engagement is very important, besides preparatory activities he/she needs to design activities for synchronous interaction and collective reflection to further advance students' IC development. The teacher should also continuously reflect on the implementation of teaching and learning activities to revise later cycles of learning. Particularly, when necessary he/she should scaffold students in their process of negotiating meanings and stances on a cultural issue.
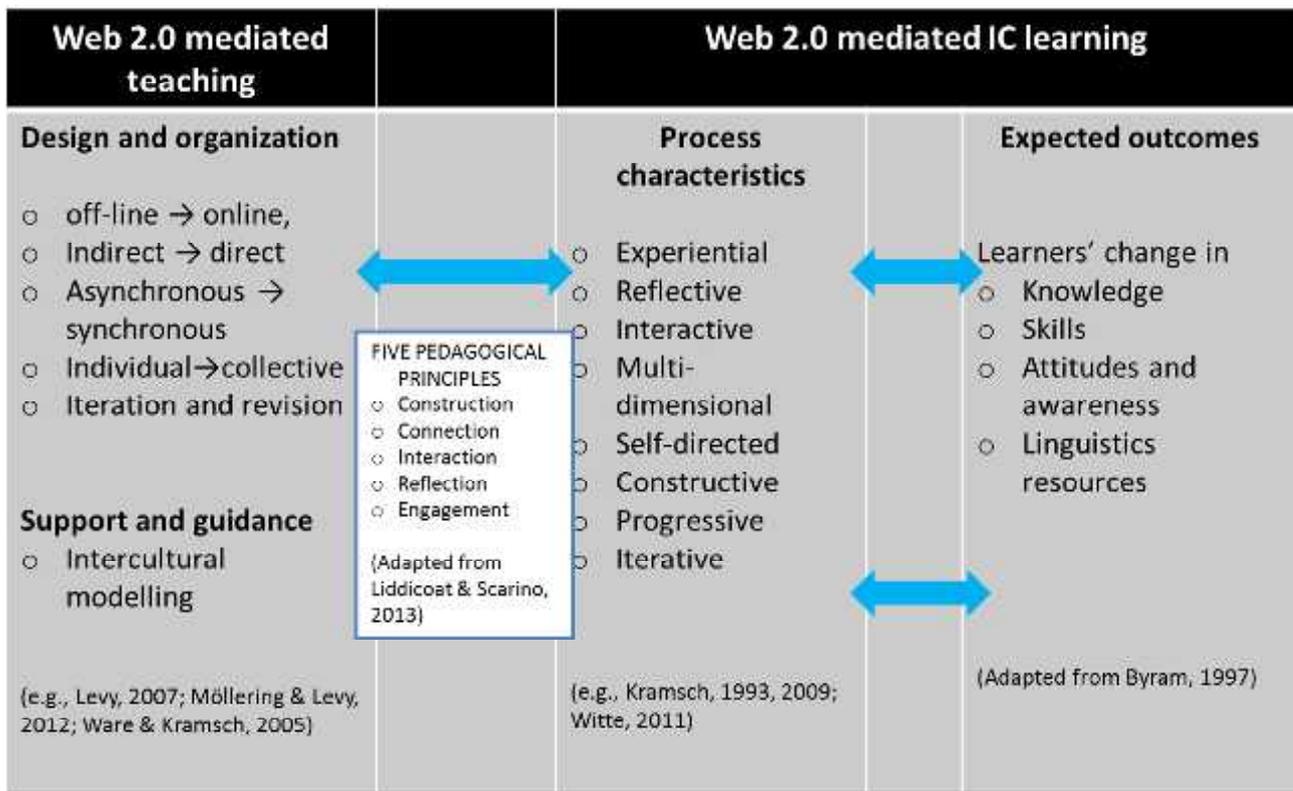
Figure 5-1. A revised model of Web 2.0 mediated IC learning (adapted from Hakkarainen's model for teaching and meaningful learning, 2009, p. 213).

5.6.3 A revised Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design for the local context

As far as the Vietnamese university under study is concerned, the revised Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design is now integrated in the course Intercultural Communication. (see 3.4.4.3 and Appendix 2 on the description of the course)

Two guests from two different cultures will be invited to chat with students on two Facebook groups. The first guest will be invited in week 4. Students in small teams of three will chat with the guest. They will all take turns to exchange ideas asynchronously for a week. Students will write reflections on their experiences of learning/chatting with the guest. Then they will read and comment on each other's reflections. They will discuss issues of interest in their team asynchronously on Facebook group for a week. In week 7, the guest should be invited to chat for a second time, synchronously (e.g., via Skype). They will also write reflections on this interaction. The teacher and students will have an in-class discussion on some rich points emerging from chats with the guest and peer discussions. The second guest will be invited to chat with students in week 9, and the same cycle of learning will take place as in the case with the first guest.

There will be preparatory and scaffolding activities as described in the proposed learning design. In addition, there should be other learning activities such as games, role plays, and watching movies and discussion because students believed that these activities helped add fun and diversify learning activities in class. For example, a great number of games and role plays can be used as activities for language students to explore cultural difference (Fantini, 1997). YouTube also offers video clips with critical incidents or rich points for intercultural learning. Movies such as *Outsourced* could also be used for class discussion on different topics of intercultural communication.

5.7 Conclusions to chapter 5

The two research questions deal specifically with Web 2.0 mediated learning designs:

- RQ 2: How can a Web 2.0 mediated learning design help EFL learners develop IC?

- RQ 4: What implications do the findings have for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning designs in an EFL context?

With respect to these, it can be argued that when a learning design is underpinned by constructivist pedagogy and mediated via a Web 2.0 technology suitable for the local educational context, it can create potentials for students to undergo lived experiences and to reflect on what they have learned, to construct cognitive, affective and behavioural changes in their levels of IC. The findings also suggest that the teacher should guide students so that they can understand and overcome cultural discrepancies between their expectations and Western constructivist pedagogy embedded in the learning design. She/he should also take measures to minimize constraints associated Web 2.0 mediated learning such as time consumption and lack of feedback.

Chapter 6
CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter first reviews the aims and the methodology of the study. Next, the findings and analysis are summarized and their significance discussed. Trajectories of IC development are presented before the influence of the learning design on this development is discussed. The chapter continues with the implications of the findings. After a discussion of the limitations of the study, directions for further research are suggested.

6.2 Overview of the study

Practically motivated and theoretically inspired, the study had a dual aim. On the one hand, it aimed to explore the potential contribution of Web 2.0 to IC development in the context of EFL learning (RQ2: How can a Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design help EFL learners develop IC?; RQ 4: What implications do the findings have for Web 2.0 mediated IC learning designs in an EFL context?). On the other hand, it planned to trace the trajectories of learners' IC development (RQ 1: How can IC be usefully conceptualized in an EFL context?; RQ 3: What are the students' trajectories of IC development?). In other words, the study addressed the practical need to explore another way to develop EFL learners' IC at the researcher's home institution, with the hope that it could be applicable in other EFL contexts. In theoretical terms, it attempted to provide further insights into under-researched aspects of IC development, particularly the interaction between the cognitive and affective dimensions, and the role of language in IC development.

To achieve this dual aim, the project employed a Design-Based Research (DBR) methodology. The findings suggest that this methodology has helped the study contribute to the theory of IC development and improve IC-related educational practices. From a DBR approach, the project was grounded in existing conceptualizations of IC as both multi-dimensional and developmental. Accordingly, it was driven by the constructivist theory of IC education. Drawing on these theoretical frameworks of IC and IC education, and an analysis of the context of IC education for Vietnamese EFL university learners, a Facebook-mediated IC learning design was created and implemented at a Vietnamese university. The learning design basically consisted of three learning cycles in each of which the students chatted with a guest from a different culture, wrote a reflection on that learning activity, and discussed cultural issues with their peers. The iteration of these three

similar learning cycles allowed continuous revision of the teaching and learning activities through both the learners' and the teacher-researcher's reflection.

Data were systematically collected from different sources, and their analysis sheds some light on the students' multidimensional development of IC over a fifteen-week semester. Inductive analysis allowed categories such as past experiences, expectations and different affective states to emerge as influential factors in IC development. In addition, deductive data analysis with reference to existing theories allowed a close methodical integration of theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence; whereby to appraise the existing theories with systematic data. The discussion of the findings in relation to the current theories is summarized in the next section.

6.3 Towards conceptualizing IC and IC development in an EFL context

The findings reveal the students' IC development as a dynamic, complex adaptive interaction among different ethnocentric and ethnorelative states. This section summarizes this process with regard to which IC dimensions were involved and how these interacted and gave rise to overall adaptation or change. This summary is followed by a discussion of what theoretical contributions these findings might make to the field.

6.3.1 Summary of EFL learners' IC development

With regard to RQs 1 and 3, the findings suggest that the students' IC development in the Web 2.0 mediated learning design was a process of languaging to create changes in cognition, affect and intercultural skills. First, they were found to use EFL and multimodal resources to articulate, formulate, and exchange knowledge in their social interaction with people from other cultures and with peers, and in their written reflection. Second, languaging was also a process of expressing feelings and negotiating stances on particular phenomena. It involved the students articulating their position, connecting this position with those of others and questioning to negotiate and adapt stances. In other words, it was a process of negotiation and adaptation in cognitive and affective terms, through languaging. Third, there is evidence that via this process they developed their skills of discovery and interaction, and of interpreting and relating cultural phenomena. Specifically, they were able to discover new knowledge in social interaction and in reflection by questioning and establishing connections among pieces of knowledge and cognitions. Accordingly, via social interaction and reflection they were able to interpret a particular cultural phenomenon of interest to them, relate it to a comparable issue in other cultural contexts, and develop a stance.

In addition, the findings suggest that the process of adaptation involved balancing cognitions and shifting feelings associated with these cognitions. Similarly to cognitive consistency in face-to-face communication, in this context of online asynchronous communication in EFL, the students were found to adapt their cognitive systems in three ways. First, they might choose to entirely ignore the information/knowledge contrary to their cognitive frame to keep the latter consistent. For example, when students had either no knowledge of or only negative thinking about C2, they often ignored new knowledge or positive information about C2. Accordingly the feelings of fear and anxiety associated with their negative cognition remained unchanged. Second, they might assimilate the information or what they perceived into their cognitive frame; or they might discredit the source of information to achieve cognitive consistency. For example, some students claimed that the informant or the phenomenon was only an exception to the general rules of a particular culture. So they continued to be afraid/ anxious if their thinking was negative, or they remained comfortable/ satisfied if their cognitive frame was positive. Third, they might adopt the new information or accommodate their existing cognitions and shift their whole cognitive system into a new balanced state. Consistent with this cognitive adaptation were changes in associated feelings. For example, they accepted a behaviour or a value contradictory to their cognitive frame, and became able to relativize their thinking. Concurrently their feelings became less anxious or even shifted to a state of comfort, or their comfort/satisfaction parallel with their positive thinking was reduced or turned into a state of dissatisfaction associated with the emergent opposite knowledge (see Table 4-5).

Accordingly, this cognitive and affective modification gave rise to an overall change: the students adapted their attitudes and stances on particular cultural issues. In line with this adaptation, the students developed their IC over dynamic trajectories, shifting through different states of ethnocentrism to those of ethnorelativism. Specifically, the students might choose to entirely ignore cultural difference. They might criticize cultural difference or minimize it in reference to their existing cognitive frame and feelings. Alternatively, they might demonstrate an acceptance of cultural difference and relativize values underlying it.

Apart from cognition and affect, other factors appeared to take significant part in these potential processes of adaptation. First of all, the students' linguistic resources including their pidgin Vietnamese English (the interlanguage) and Vietnamese language were actively involved in the processes of shaping, articulating and negotiating cognitions and feelings in social interaction and reflection. Their self-appraised poor EFL and their

awareness that they had never communicated with a "foreigner" in EFL before contributed to their fear/anxiety and lack of confidence in social interaction with the guests. Yet, in the learning process they seemed to gradually discover their potential and ability to communicate in their interlanguage and by other means, exchanging and negotiating thoughts and feelings. There is evidence of a link between the discovery of knowledge about their own ability and the shift from anxiety into a feeling of confidence and eventually of satisfaction with what they achieved in communication. Apart from EFL, the students dynamically used Vietnamese in both their reflections and their social interaction with Vietnamese peers, code-switching between their two languages in peer discussions. In the chats they sometimes used English to express a Vietnamese metaphor to negotiate thoughts and feelings. In the context of online asynchronous communication, they also employed multimodal resources (e.g., emoticons, images and videos) to express and negotiate meanings and feelings. All these rich linguistic and non-linguistic resources, or symbolic resources (Kramsch, 2011), functioned to empower the students with agency in social interaction and written reflection to develop IC.

In addition, it can be argued that the students' background and other personal traits seemed to influence their trajectories of IC development. This impact of personal background and traits could be inferred from the findings that in the same communicative context, individual students experienced different adaptations of cognitions and feelings via languaging, and went through different trajectories of IC development. For example, with regard to Saudi culture, a student with a previous positive experience of this culture might readily shift her IC into minimization whereas other students moved from ignorance through criticism to minimization. Likewise, students with different cognitive styles might have different trajectories of IC development. In addition, students might change their stances according to different topics of discussion. For instance, some students embraced the US practices of and value of equality, but criticized the practice of materialism.

6.3.2 Significance of the findings about IC development

The study provides empirical evidence of IC development in a Web 2.0 mediated intercultural EFL course run over fifteen weeks with regard to under-explored areas in conceptualizations of IC (see 2.3.3): 1) affective states and their interaction with different cognitive states in the IC developmental process, 2) the influence of situational factors and personal traits on IC development, and 3) the function of linguistic and multimodal resources in producing cognitive and affective change.

First, with regard to the affective dimension, its relationship with cognition, and implications for IC education of which contemporary scholars in the field wish to have more investigation and understanding (e.g., Baker, 2015; Belz, 2007; Bennett, 1993, 2004; Borghetti, 2011; Byram, 1997, 2008, 2009; Byram, Holmes, & Savvides, 2013; Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009) the findings reveal an interaction between affective states and cognitive frames. Specifically, while Byram (1997) only hypothesizes inclinations (curiosity, willingness and readiness) as IC attitudinal attributes, there is evidence of different affective states; e.g., dis/inclination (fear/curiosity), in/security (anxiety/comfort), dis/satisfaction (criticism/enjoyment) associated with various cognitive frames. In reference to Bennett's cognitive configurations, the current study provides language-based evidence of their corresponding affective states. Thus, a combination of a multidimensional theory (Byram, 1997, 2009) and a cognitive developmental model of IC (Bennett, 1993, 2004) can help shed some light on the relationship between feelings and different cognitive configurations. More importantly, these findings inform how to help learners manage their feelings and knowledge to learn and become interculturally competent. In relation to the theory of anxiety and uncertainty management (Gudykunst, 2004, 2005), this project provides empirical evidence of the connection between uncertainty and anxiety as hypothesized in this theory, and further explores the association between certainty and satisfaction which is not Gudykunst's focus. Accordingly, it can be argued that it is important not only to keep learners sufficiently free from anxiety (associated with no knowledge/uncertainty or negative thinking) to communicate to learn (i.e. to keep them below the maximum level of anxiety), but it is also essential to cultivate learners' curiosity about difference and willingness to challenge their presuppositions and knowledge/certainty (i.e. to keep them above the minimum level of uncertainty). In other words, it is necessary for learners not to be satisfied with their knowledge, but to be ready and open for any new and alternative way of thinking.

Secondly, the study suggests a relationship between personal traits (e.g., past experience, cognitive styles) and IC development. It also provides evidence of contextual/situational factors in affective and cognitive changes. This project thus empirically supports the hypothesis of relational IC (Spitzberg, 2015). Unlike other studies of Web 2.0 mediated intercultural learning (e.g., Belz, 2007; O'Dowd, 2006a) that enable one-on-one communication, the current project offers students a greater variety of communicative situations. As a result, various factors like the guests' cultures and their interests influenced students differently, giving rise to individual pathways of IC development. The

findings inform IC educators about the necessity to personalize learning activities to optimize individual development.

Most importantly, in response to intercultural educators' criticism of inadequate treatment of language in IC theories (Baker, 2015; Borghetti, 2013; Porto, 2013) the project proposes a model of IC that foregrounds the role of language in cognitive and affective changes and is thus applicable in intercultural language education (see Table 4-5). Unlike Bennett's model overlooking the role of language and Byram's theory separating language from intercultural competence, this study treats language as central to the process of IC development. Accordingly, it provides empirical evidence of how linguistic resources and languaging play a role in creating affective and cognitive changes. It also shows how languaging is supported with online multimodal resources. Therefore, the proposed model based on these empirical data can be integrated into a EFL curriculum.

In summary, the study sheds some light on under-explored areas of IC conceptualization. Specifically, it describes a range of affective states in addition to the "inclinations" that Byram (1997) describes as threshold attitudinal attributes. It also provides evidence of affective changes in accordance with various cognitive configurations as portrayed in Bennett (1993, 2004). It proves the role of situational factors and linguistic resources in IC development. All these findings suggest a more detailed picture of how EFL learners construct their IC, using linguistic and non-linguistic resources to create affective and cognitive changes. Accordingly, with regard to RQ 1, in an EFL context IC can be conceptualized as a process of adapting EFL, multimodal resources, affect and cognition under the influence of external factors. A particular advantage of this conceptualization is that it is more easily integrated into an intercultural EFL curriculum with a view to multi-dimensionally developing learners' IC. As far as RQ 3 is concerned, the findings suggest that EFL learners experience dynamic, nonlinear trajectories of IC development. This stresses the importance of situational factors and personal traits. The findings inform intercultural EFL educators about teaching and learning IC in ways that will be presented in 6.4.

6.4 Towards pedagogical principles of Web 2.0 mediated IC teaching and learning in an EFL context

6.4.1 Summary of the influence of the Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design

With regard to the influence of the Web 2.0 mediated learning design on the students' IC development (RQ 2: How can a Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design help EFL learners develop IC?), the study reveals the impact of the learning design on participants' IC

development. The learning activities of chatting with guests from other cultures and discussing with peers outside the class were mediated by the Facebook group tool without which these social interactions could not have occurred. The students' reflective activity was also facilitated by Web 2.0 technologies allowing them to edit their writings and to easily connect their knowledge with other information available in online multimodal texts (e.g., YouTube videos, website links). The participants' changes in cognitions, feelings, skills and stances suggest the contribution of the Web 2.0 mediated learning activities. Although there were differences among the students as to the levels they achieved, as a whole class, the students were found to acquire not only culture-specific knowledge they were interested in but also culture-general knowledge necessary for an understanding of their processes of intercultural communication. Accordingly, they developed skills of discovery, interaction, interpreting and relating. There is also evidence that they shifted their feelings: they overrode their fear and anxiety, gained more confidence, became satisfied with what they had achieved concerning a cultural issue in the learning process. As a result, they were able to adapt their attitudes and stances on cultural issues of interest to them. Several of them demonstrated a shift from ethnocentrism to acceptance of different cultural practices and their underlying values.

Specifically, the findings suggest that each of the three main teaching learning activities of the three learning cycles in the Web 2.0 mediated learning design made its own contributions to the students' changes and development. First, Facebook-mediated chatting with the guests afforded the students lived experiences. They interacted and gained diverse, rich and personalized knowledge about the guests and C2. However, the students were not likely to change attitudes and stances until they reflected on the learning activity. The exposure to a guest tended just to trigger their awareness of cultural difference. In their written reflections, only when they established connections between their cognitions and other perspectives, and carried out sophisticated cognitive processes did higher-level knowledge emerge and changes in attitude and stance occur. Finally, the learning activity of peer discussion on Facebook enabled them to develop more knowledge and become more sensitive to cultural difference. Similarly to the chats with the guests, in peer discussion the students negotiated each other's stances by asking questions, and making comments on cultural issues under debate.

It can be argued that the students' achievements were also attributable to the tools and the involvement of people in the learning activities. Firstly, Web 2.0 allowed connections to be made. Specifically, Facebook was a tool to connect the students with people from other

cultures regardless of geographical distance and time differences. Other web technologies such as YouTube videos also afforded links to rich information and knowledge used both in the processes of social interaction and in reflection. Facebook also facilitated the students' revisiting and editing their posts because of time flexibility and information availability. Therefore, Web 2.0 not only facilitated social interaction but also enabled students to establish cognitive connections to generate new knowledge in written reflection. Second, the students' learning was scaffolded by the guests, peers and the teacher. The guests empowered them as real communicators and modelled the behaviour of intercultural speakers with advanced levels of IC. Peers provided help in correcting mistakes in grammar, expression and interpretation, and in negotiating knowledge. The teacher as learning designer prepared the students, provided them with guidelines for each learning activity. She also provided them with feedback on their work and offered help when necessary. In addition, the teacher's revisions of the learning cycles over time seemed to advance the students' achievements in the learning process.

With regard to the contributions of the learning activities, data from the chats and the peer discussions were consistent with the students' comments on the learning activities in their final reflection and in the end-of-course evaluation conducted separately by the Training Department. They believed that chatting with the guests enriched their knowledge of other cultures and raised their awareness of the diversity of the world through real-life stories. They were also happy that they could enjoy autonomy and agency in what to share, and how to share in the chats. Similarly, they appreciated peer discussion because this learning activity offered them cooperative opportunities to gain more knowledge, skills and confidence. Despite the vital role of written reflection in their IC development as analyzed in 4.2.1.2, few students commented on this learning activity in the final reflection, and in the end-of-course evaluation none of them reported that they liked it.

The students' under-valuation of this key learning activity and of its contribution to their learning seems related to a mismatch between these Vietnamese students' educational values, expectations and learning practices, and Western constructivist pedagogy. Limited achievements of some students, their cognitive and affective struggle with and sometimes resistance to a certain learning activity suggest that the students experienced a cultural discrepancy in relation to the learning design. This represents another level of intercultural difference, in addition to that encountered in the chats with the guests. The students tended to position themselves as passive learners. They expected to be given knowledge, particularly declarative knowledge, about other cultures and to be helped with language

skills through correction by the guests and the teacher. They also expected communicating via Facebook just to be fun rather than to be a learning process of experience and reflection on the experience to create knowledge and change for them. These expectations went against the principles of constructivist pedagogy embedded in the learning design.

In addition, the students' limited achievements in accepting some behaviours and values in C2 and their opinions on the Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design suggest several constraints of Web 2.0 and weaknesses of the learning design. The most salient has to do with time management, and provision of feedback (see 5.5.2).

In sum, these findings suggest that the students achieved changes because they interacted with people from other cultures, went through lived experiences in both cognitive and affective terms, reflected on what happened to them, drawing on their own agency constructed their understanding of issues of interest to them, and made adaptations through repeated cycles of experiencing and reflecting. In other words, they achieved changes thanks to the characteristics of the learning process as interactive, experiential, multidimensional, reflective, self-directed, constructive, iterative and adaptive. These characteristics of the learning process can be attributed to the design and sequence of learning activities which were modified in the process of learning through the teacher's/designer's reflection, and to the involvement of the teacher, the guests and peers. Web 2.0 was a tool for the students to carry out learning activities. However, there were constraints in the use of Web 2.0 and weaknesses of the learning design. In addition, despite the vital role of written reflection in establishing deep cognitive processes and understanding, the students did not evaluate this learning activity highly.

Therefore, it can be tentatively concluded that for the students to experience those characteristics of the learning process and for them to achieve changes in cognition, attitudes and skills, it is vital to construct a learning environment in which students engage themselves in interactions, make connections and reflect, constructing their understanding and stance, and the teacher also engages herself/himself in this process through interaction, connection, reflection and construction. In other words, both the process of teaching and learning should observe the five principles of connection, interaction, construction, reflection and engagement for the students to achieve changes in their level of IC.

6.4.2 Significance of the findings about the influence of the Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design

With regard to the theory of intercultural education, the study makes two contributions. Firstly, it provided evidence that in an EFL context it is possible to mediate the teaching and learning of IC with Web 2.0 technologies. Secondly, the study suggests design principles which may be useful to EFL teachers who wish to integrate IC and language education and seek pedagogical guidelines (Baker, 2015; Borghetti, 2013; Porto, 2013). The first four principles as summarized in 6.4.1 are similar to Liddicoat and Scarino's (2013). With regard to the fifth, while Liddicoat and Scarino highlight students' responsibility in IC learning, the current study additionally emphasizes the teacher's engagement in the learning process because becoming interculturally competent means challenging one's cultural identity and being exposed to risks (e.g., fear of differences, fear of losing one's identity). Working on their own, learners often feel at a loss when they are in between the two cultures, so they need timely support from the teacher to shift to a higher level of IC. Moreover, constructivist pedagogy and online learning may be unfamiliar to students, the teacher's guidance and help with each activity is necessary.

These five principles can be applied, with consideration of local contexts, in other learning designs that integrate Web 2.0 technologies in intercultural education in general and intercultural EFL education in particular. This is because these guidelines are not only grounded in constructivist pedagogy, but also built on previous theoretical and empirical studies on intercultural education. They have been further refined after implementation and reflection on the practice of these principles in a context of intercultural EFL education. These design principles in a context of Web 2.0 mediated intercultural EFL education also shed light on pedagogical theories for integration of technologies in education in general (e.g., Levy, 2007, 2009; Litchfield et al, 2007; Herrington et al, 2007; Schenker, 2012; Hung, 2013) (see 3.3).

In practical terms, this project concretely illustrates the process of the creation of a learning design and its implementation. An EFL teacher can apply this process of defining the learning objectives, generating the draft pedagogical principles, translating them into teaching and meaningful learning activities, and selecting a suitable Web 2.0 tool to create a design. She/he subsequently puts it into practice, reflects on its implementation and revises it. Alternatively, the proposed learning design in this study might be simply adapted in other similar contexts of intercultural EFL learning. While some useful learning designs are available for integrating IC education in the context of EFL reading class (e.g.,Porto,

2013), the current proposed design can be adapted for an integrated EFL class. In comparison with existing Web 2.0 mediated learning designs based on online one-on-one interaction (e.g.,Belz, 2007; Ware & Kramsch, 2005), this design based on iteration of several cycles of interacting and learning with different people from various cultures potentially offers a richer intercultural environment for students to be aware of cultural difference and learn. The present project thus has several advantages over telecollaboration. First, it offers learners chance to meet a succession of people from different cultures, so culture is not specific. Accordingly, the social connections potentially prevent stereotypes. Learners also have no expectation to become long life friends with different guest speakers as in the case with one-on-one interaction.

The present study thus presents a model of IC teaching and learning which is alternative to current telecollaboration projects. Because teachers can flexibly invite several guest speakers for different phases of the course, it can overcome weaknesses of telecollaboration such as problems in finding stable project partners. Moreover, as described in 3.4.4.3, to teach the personal facet of culture (Levy, 2007), guest speakers as personalizations of C2 are invited to exchange information about cultural issues of interest to them and to students. They are not as closely involved in the course syllabi and course evaluation as in telecollaboration, so the current project avoids the likely incompatibility in teaching plans of two partner institutions (O'Dowd, 2012). Finally, this proposed Web 2.0 mediated IC learning can help solve the theoretical and practical problems associated with IC teaching and learning in the local context of EFL education in Vietnam. These solutions include providing pedagogical guidelines, and a concrete IC learning design that offers an authentic, meaningful intercultural learning environment. Accordingly, EFL learners can potentially develop their intercultural competence not only in terms of cognition but also in respect to affect, behaviour and linguistic resources.

6.5 Implications

6.5.1 Implications of IC conceptualization for research and education

In addition to cognition, affect and skills as IC components (Bennett, 1993; Byram, 1997), there is evidence of multiple other dimensions such as language (Baker, 2015), personal traits and situational factors in hypothesized IC development (Liu et al, 2015; Spitzberg, 2015). It can be argued that an conceptualization including all these dimensions can potentially help research studies obtain a richer understanding of IC and IC development. With regard to intercultural EFL education, linguistic resources and languaging should even be central to the conceptualization of IC and to establishing the learning objectives.

This is because there is empirical evidence that languaging was key to the interactive and adaptive processes of forming, expressing and negotiating thoughts, feelings and stances. The students actively used the linguistic resources of an interlanguage (Vietnamese English) and L1 (Vietnamese). Without the linguistic resources and languaging, the interactive and adaptive processes could not have happened. It can be argued that including linguistic resources as a dimension of IC draws intercultural educators' attention to EFL and L1 when they establish the IC learning objectives. It is necessary, for example, to put the ability to use EFL to express and articulate a thought as a learning objective. Therefore, the teacher needs to plan the teaching of lexicon and grammatical structures for students to implement skills such as questioning, expressing disagreement. In addition, it is important for learners to develop the ability to (trans)language to express feelings and stances, and negotiate them properly.

Furthermore, the project demonstrates the importance of conceptualizing IC as involving non-linguistic/multimodal resources in a Web 2.0 mediated communication context. This conceptualization suggests further research which would, in turn, lead to an in-depth understanding of how images such as emoticons or videos are involved in the interactive and adaptive processes of forming, conveying, and negotiating thoughts, feelings and stances. In pedagogical terms, inclusion of multimodal resources as integral dimensions of IC requires the teaching and learning of how to (trans)language using multimodal resources to form meanings/thoughts and feelings, express them, and negotiate stances in Web 2.0 mediated social interaction and reflection. For example, learners might be allowed or encouraged to employ multimodal resources to support intercultural communication. Once they gain confidence and reduce anxiety, they can try to be more verbal in EFL. This perspective could sound very demanding to a language teacher who wishes to use a virtual environment for teaching IC. However, it is vital, particularly given the context in which more and more young people are engaged in the cyber world, drawing on what is available to shape their position and interact with others. This symbolic aspect of teaching and learning means helping learners develop the ability to identify and understand the meaning of a text, whether it is a linguistic or a multimodal one.

As far as the personal dimension of IC is concerned, the proposed conceptualization of IC raises the awareness of research design to capture the complexity of IC. For example, researchers might employ useful tools to collect data about informants' background and cognitive style. This potentially results in a more comprehensive understanding of IC development. In pedagogical terms, the personal dimension of IC suggests individualized

learning in intercultural education. It is necessary to attend to individual traits to optimize the learning process and IC development. Individual learners should also be taught to be aware of the influence of personal traits in their interlocutor's IC to make appropriate negotiation and adaptation. This perspective thus acknowledges each intercultural communicator's personality and past at a particular point of time in the process of communication. For example, an intercultural communicator would not expect an interlocutor with a negative experience of C2 to be as ready as other interlocutors without such experiences to become open to learning and shifting cognition and feelings in the process of intercultural communication.

The findings about how multiple dimensions of IC interact to give rise to an overall stance or behaviour have significant implications for research and education in intercultural communication. Specifically, they suggest an inclusion of languaging and developmental aspects in the conceptualization of IC. With respect to research, this conceptualization of IC requires a compatible methodology to capture this process of languaging and its contribution to IC development. As regards intercultural EFL education, it is imperative to design and organize learning activities to facilitate learners' ability to use linguistic resources (and also other symbolic/multimodal resources) to establish their position, make connections between their position and others, negotiate and adapt their stance. However, it is necessary to further investigate the process of languaging to inform the teaching and learning of this ability.

The developmental conceptualization of IC as constant inter-related adaptation under the principle of balancing suggests three implications for intercultural education. First, it foregrounds the importance of cognitive change in IC development. As analyzed in 4.2.1.3, a change in cognitive and affective balance can be triggered by an external factor, for example a guest's enthusiasm. Though external factors can have influence on both cognitive and affective dimensions of IC, a cognitive change tends to give rise to a transformation in cognition-related feelings (e.g., Acquiring knowledge leads to a reduction of anxiety associated with uncertainty) while feelings directly aroused by an external factor may be ephemeral (e.g., The guest's friendliness reduces students' fear temporarily during the chat). This implies the importance of cognition in driving change in attitudes and stances. This implication is in line with Bennett's suggestion of starting the IC developmental process with cognition (Bennett, 1993, 2004). The vital point is that deep cognitive change requires reflection. Shifts in cognition takes place when learners gain a profound understanding of their cognitive change and also how this change is associated

with their feelings. Therefore, the second implication is the importance of reflection in IC learning. As analyzed earlier, procedural and culture-general knowledge often emerge in reflection. Although declarative knowledge of a specific culture is useful, procedural knowledge and culture-general knowledge are found to facilitate deep cognitive change and subsequent change of feelings associated with this cognition in the transition between significant different stances (e.g., from minimization of cultural difference to acceptance of it). Finally, the finding about cognitive and affective balance suggests that in the process of learning, suitable timely support in a student's cognitive processes can help him/her optimally develop IC. For example, a student may need scaffolding to generate procedural and culture-general knowledge from different pieces of knowledge about comparable phenomena in two cultures to accept a cultural value such as self-reliance in C2.

6.5.2 Implications of research design

The study suggests the importance of the DBR methodology in studies of intercultural education. It can be argued that the findings are attributed to the five characteristics of DBR which are 1) grounded in theory and real-world context; 2) interactive, iterative and flexible; 3) integrative; 4) contextual; and 5) pragmatic (see 3.3). Firmly grounded in the existing theories and methodically designed to allow for the existence and emergence of various dimensions in the research design, the study was able to capture the interaction among these dimensions in the process of learning and development. For instance, the study was designed according to the social constructivist pedagogical principles in IC teaching and learning. This pedagogical theory guided the design of teaching and learning activities, via which data were collected. More specifically, the principle of connection informed the researcher of the necessity for the students to establish and become aware of their position at the beginning of the learning process. Therefore, she designed the learning activities of writing an auto-biography and an account of their expectations of the course in order for students to reflect on their position at the beginning of the learning process. Thereafter, the students were able to draw on their knowledge about this position to understand changes and emerging stances. The researcher was also able to trace the students' trajectories of IC development based on this pre-learning source of data. Moreover, in order to understand the affective dimension of IC, the participants were explicitly asked to comment on it in their written reflections and interviews.

In addition, this could be seen to demonstrate the usefulness of a methodical integration of two complementary theoretical approaches to a study of IC. This bridges theoretical gaps in a way not possible through an adoption of a single approach. Such a combination

foregrounds the factors neglected in one theory alone. Moreover, reference to other disciplines such as Psychology and Functional Linguistics also helped to better understand this interaction than use of the field of intercultural communication alone. For example, theories of cognitive consistency (Festinger, 1959; Heider, 1946) enriched understandings of cognitive shifts in Bennett's DMIS (1993). The theory of APPRAISAL (Martin, 2000; Martin & White, 2007) facilitated an analysis of affective changes encoded in learners' EFL. As Gudykunst suggests, "Integrating theories, […], will increase our ability to understand intercultural communication" (Gudykunst, 2005, p. 26), and the current project demonstrates the value of employing multiple approaches to the study of IC to understand it more comprehensively. Drawing both on a component theory (Byram, 1997, 2009; Byram et al, 2013) and a developmental model (Bennett, 1993, 2004), as pointed out in 6.3.2, this study sheds more light on the interaction of IC dimensions when it analyzes the data in reference to cognitive theories and the functional linguists' theory of APPRAISAL.

The findings also highlight the importance of mixed methods (DBR characteristic 3) in research into IC. Employment of various methods of data collection allows a more comprehensive investigation of IC, and thus provides more evidence of changes in multiple dimensions of IC. Specifically, the chats and online discussions provided rich data for discourse analysis, resulting in vivid descriptions of how learners "languaged" to create knowledge and to express different affective states associated with various cognitive frames. In addition, written reflections and interviews (and end-of-course feedback) enabled the study to obtain the informants' voices on the issues under investigation.

However, the findings suggest that the research should be open for new categories and concepts to emerge. This inductive approach allows the generation of new or further understandings of the phenomenon under study. The insight into concepts of linguistic and non-linguistic resources, and personal traits (past experience and cognitive styles) as dimensions of IC came from such an inductive approach. So did the notion of languaging and balancing interaction between IC components in the developmental process.

6.5.3 Implications of creating and implementing a Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design

The findings about the influence of the Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design suggest that the most important elements of such a design are the principles of constructivist pedagogy that are consistent with the characteristics and aims of the learning process. As other studies of technology-mediated learning (e.g.,Nguyen & Le, 2012) indicate, Web 2.0 social networking only provides tools that need adapting for such learning designs. The findings

inform designers and educators about caution and flexibility when they wish to adopt a constructivist approach to intercultural EFL education. When implementing such a design, they should also take measures to ensure such social networking tools as Facebook really become tools of education.

First, it can be argued that the mismatch in this study between the students' expectations and the learning activities might be attributed to the conflict between the Western constructivist pedagogy and the Vietnamese students' expectations, educational values and practices (Nguyen & Le, 2012; Thanh, 2014). Many of these seemed to be associated with Confucian heritage cultures (Thanh, 2014). It can be inferred that the students' expectations of "receiving" knowledge rather than constructing it themselves made the written reflection a problematic learning activity to them, and they did not perceive its importance. Their belief in teachers as sages who always provide them truths and all solutions to any problems restricted their critical thinking. Additionally, the desire to achieve harmony or to save their peer's face in discussions also limited their construction of new knowledge. This cultural discrepancy needs further exploration to ensure better design and implementation in teaching and learning. In practical terms, teachers should reflect on the teaching and learning process to make necessary adjustments and adaptation. For example, in the second learning cycle, the teacher provided a more detailed template to guide the students to write reflections and discussed with them how new understanding emerged in a good piece of reflection from a student .

Second, the students' limited achievements, and the mismatch between their expectations and the learning experiences suggest that the teacher take measures to make sure learners understand the learning activities and aims. Learners should understand how social networking tools like Facebook can help IC development through each learning activity. All of this should be taught to learners explicitly and continuously because in this project several of the teachers' comments and instructions tended to elude the students' attention and response. Moreover, to turn a social networking technology into a meaningful educational tool, teachers should make the learning activities that use the tool consistent with the IC teaching and learning aims. The whole learning design should also be well integrated in the curriculum and the course syllabus in terms of learning aims and sequence of online and offline/in-class activities. Learners should explicitly reflect on their achievements in reference to meanings of each learning activity and the tool(s) used for it. With regard to its implementation, the teacher should take an active role in teaching and

learning with students. She/he should adopt a reflexive approach to teaching and co-learning with her/his students as a form of professional development.

6.6 Limitations

Due to time constraints, this PhD study had several limitations. The first concerns the data collection, specifically the implementation of the learning design. If time had permitted, it could have been useful to run two classes sequentially, in order to benefit from insights gained in the first iteration of the course or to test findings from the first iteration.

The second time constraint was that of differences in time zones. The study could have given further insights into IC development had it included synchronous interaction with guests via Web 2.0 technologies such as Skype. Data from this type of interaction might help us understand how students negotiate their stance under the constraint of time. Such data might offer richer linguistic and non-linguistic evidence of their IC development. However, because of the time difference between Vietnam and other countries like the United States and Saudi Arabia, and also due to the poor quality of internet connection at the university under study, this type of synchronous interaction did not take place.

A further limitation concerns the data analysis. As mentioned above, the researcher was only able to implement the design in one class due to the limited time. An analysis of data from another iteration could have offered additional empirical evidence for the researcher to make further hypotheses about the students' IC development. For example, the extent to which a guest's and the students' cultures are different might influence their social interaction and accordingly the students' IC development. This could already be hypothesized from the finding that the students tended to be less engaged in learning with the Saudi guest than with the US guests, although an alternative explanation would be the fact that the guest was the first external participant, and thus the students were unfamiliar with the learning activity. The scheduling of the Saudi guest as Guest 2 in another iteration and systematic analysis of data collected from that cycle of learning could clarify this issue.

Moreover, given the relational nature of IC development, the current study could be considered limited in that it did not adequately take the guests' voices into account, apart from their expression in the chats. Due to time constraints and the scope of a PhD project, the researcher focused on the interrelated interaction and adaptation of IC dimensions at the expense of the influence of external factors that triggered that internal interaction. An analysis of a guest's reflection and comment on his/her experiences with the students could have further illuminated the relational nature of IC development. For example, findings might have clarified why a given guest was more engaged in chatting with a

particular student than the others, and explained whether this student gained more confidence and became more open to IC learning. Had this additional research been conducted, the study could have shed more light on the role of guests in students' IC development and provided more insight into the implications of inviting guests online as a teaching technique.

As other recent studies (e.g., Baker, 2015) in the field suggest, a comprehensive understanding of IC development in an EFL context requires reference to the literature on EFL instruction. For example, a deeper understanding of IC development might have been gained in relation to the knowledge about acquisition of language skills of negotiating in English. Moreover, a systematic investigation of how the students used Vietnamese and multimodal resources would have provided further insight into IC development.

Finally, the researcher was also the instructor involved in the teaching and data collection process. This dual position allowed her to collect data systematically and facilitated a vigorous triangulation of different data sources; however, it constrained her in several ways. There might potentially be some biases in data collection and analysis. Though she took measures to minimize the influence of course assessment in her data collection (e.g., triangulating the data sets, providing guidelines and instruction for learning activities and assessment criteria, and blind marking), the data set associated with the final reflection, in particular on the processes of teaching and learning, might be biased.

Despite these limitations, as shown in chapters 4 and 5, the project provides a useful conceptualization of IC in an EFL context (RQ 1), and a description of complex, fluid trajectories of IC development (RQ 3). It also provides evidence of how a Web 2.0 mediated learning design can help develop IC (RQ 2), and further informs EFL educators about pedagogical principles and how to create a Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design (RQ 4).

6.7 Suggestions for further studies

This PhD project, therefore, identifies specific questions for further research. First, it is important to explore the relational nature of IC development, in other words, how two communicators interact, negotiate and adapt their stances, and how they influence each other. With regard to the Web 2.0 mediated IC learning design proposed in this study, it would be useful to collect reflective data from guests and explore their change in intercultural stances. In this way, IC development would be understood more comprehensively.

Second, it is important to investigate how communicators from different cultures behave synchronously online. Therefore, Web 2.0 technologies for synchronous interaction such as Skype should be employed in the teaching and learning process and data collection. Next, it is also necessary to explore the relationship between IC development and communicative competence. Such research will contribute to the integration of intercultural education into foreign language education in both theoretical and practical terms. For example, it would be possible to conduct an investigation of a link between acquisition of language for negotiation and IC development, particularly the competence of expressing and responding to disagreements, and IC development because this linguistic point is found to be often associated with the rich point for further negotiation or reflection to develop IC. Or a future study could focus on learners' strategies of multimodal resources as an aid to linguistic resources for negotiating stance in intercultural communication.

Moreover, in order to further refine the pedagogical principles for Web 2.0 IC learning designs, it is necessary to investigate the teacher's feedbacks and students' responses to them. Future research could also implement the proposed design in other contexts; for example, intercultural EFL learning in countries other than Vietnam. Finally, a follow-up study on the post-course influence of the design (i.e. after graduation) might suggest practical implications of IC teaching and learning. It might also provide an understanding of the students' long term IC development and the influence of the learning design as formal IC education on this development.

6.8 Final remarks

In a context of Web 2.0 mediated intercultural EFL education, the study found more dimensions of IC at work in addition to those frequently cited in the literature. It also illuminates the dynamic, complex, inter-related interaction of IC dimensions, in particular languaging and balancing. These findings require conceptualizing IC both in multidimensional and developmental terms. Specifically, IC should be conceptualized as a fluid complex process of interaction and adaptation of multiple dimensions. In research, this reimagined conceptualization will allow for more comprehensive, genuine understanding of IC and its development. In education, it will guide teachers in defining learning objectives and activities. Accordingly, such a conceptualization will help raise learners' awareness of their IC as intercultural speakers and how it works in relation to their intercultural interlocutor.

This fluidity and complexity of IC in terms of dimensions and processes requires researchers, educators and intercultural speakers to have a perspective that moves away

from essentialist views of IC and to be open to contextual and idiosyncratic factors of IC. For EFL educators, developing learners' IC not only means building up their ability to become tolerant of general cultural differences, but also entails cultivating a capacity to become appreciative of situational factors and idiosyncrasy. This perspective is perhaps necessary in the current globalization when the concept of culture becomes very fluid, and personal identities are increasingly recognized (Borghetti, 2013; Kramsch, 2014).

This flexible perspective is also relevant to the issues of integrating Web 2.0 in education in this time of globalization online and of adopting Western constructivist pedagogy in a non-Western culture. Because of their novelty, these issues can be considered as cultural differences to learners. Therefore, the teacher should acknowledge the contextual and individual factors as important dimensions in learners' interaction with these new cultural discrepancies so that he/she can understand their emergent difficulties and take suitable measures to facilitate their IC development.

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Appendix 1.

QUESTIONNAIRE   **No.**

I am conducting a PhD study on technology integration in culture learning. This questionnaire is purely for research purposes, and all information you provide will be held in strict confidence. Thank you for your kind assistance.

A. Demographic data

1. Your gender (Please tick your choice):   [ ] Female
                                            [ ] Male
2. Your age: …………………………………
3. How long have you been studying English?   .... years.
4. Have you been exposed to another culture? (Please tick all that apply.)
   [ ] a. Interacted with foreigners (face to face).
   [ ] b. Interacted with foreigners (online).
   [ ] c. Been to another culture/country.

B. Data about technology use

1. What hardware do you currently use? (Please tick all that apply.)

Hardware	In class	Outside class (home, internet shop, etc.)
a. Desktop		
b. Laptop		
c. Cell phone – no internet		
d. Cell phone – wireless internet enabled		
e. Tablet/ iPad		
f. Others: (Pls specify) ……………………………		

2. How would you evaluate the **college's technology infrastructure in terms of meeting your technology needs on campus**? (Please circle a number: 1.very unsatisfactory, 2. unsatisfactory, 3. not certain, 4. satisfactory, 5. very satisfactory)

Items of evaluation	← less satisfactory			more satisfactory →	
a. Number of computers	1	2	3	4	5
b. Quality of computers	1	2	3	4	5
c. Internet connectivity and Wi-Fi	1	2	3	4	5
d. Data quota/ limits	1	2	3	4	5

Your comment/ please explain your evaluation:
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3. How would you evaluate your access to **technology infrastructure in terms of meeting your technology needs outside class**? (Please circle a number: 1.very unsatisfactory, 2. unsatisfactory, 3. not certain, 4. satisfactory, 5. very satisfactory)

Items of evaluation	←————————————————————→				
	less satisfactory			more satisfactory	
a. Number of computers	1	2	3	4	5
b. Quality of computers	1	2	3	4	5
c. Internet connectivity and Wi-Fi	1	2	3	4	5
d. Data quota/ limits	1	2	3	4	5

Your comment/ please explain your evaluation:
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4. Which of the following best describes you? (Please tick **one** only)
[ ] a. I am skeptical of new technologies and use them only when I have to.
[ ] b. I am usually one of the last people I know to use new technologies.
[ ] c. I usually use new technologies when most people I know do.
[ ] d. I like new technologies and use them before most people I know.
[ ] e. I love technologies and am among the first to experiment with and use them.

5. Which best describes your preference? (Please tick **one** only)
[ ] a. I prefer taking courses that use no Information Technology.
[ ] b. I prefer taking courses that use limited Information Technology.
[ ] c. I prefer taking courses that use a moderate level of Information Technology.
[ ] d. I prefer taking courses that use Information Technology extensively.
[ ] e. I prefer taking courses that use Information technology exclusively.

6. What is your skill level for the following?

	Not at all skilled	Not very skilled	Fairly skilled	Very skilled	Expert
a. Using the college/university website					
b. Spreadsheets (Excel, etc.)					
c. Presentation software (powerpoint,etc.)					
d. Graphic software (photoshop, etc.)					
e. Computer maintenance (software updates, security, etc.)					
f. Using the internet to effectively and efficiently search for information.					
g. Evaluating the reliability and credibility of online sources of information.					
h. Understanding the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access to and use of digital information.					

7. How often do you use Web 2.0 technologies **in class**? What do you do with them? (Please tick the appropriate box regarding "How often?", and provide information about "What do you do?")

Technologies	Never	Sometimes a year	Monthly	Weekly	Several times a week	Daily	What do you do? (e.g., read for information, reflect and contribute your ideas and resources, etc.)
a. Wikis							…………………………………
b. Blogs							…………………………………
c. Email							…………………………………
d. Face book							…………………………………
e. You Tube							…………………………………
f. Discussion Forum							…………………………………
g. Skype							…………………………………
h. Video conference							…………………………………
i. Virtual world/games							…………………………………
j. Twitter							…………………………………
k. e-Portfolio							…………………………………
l. Flickr							…………………………………
m. Google Plus							…………………………………
n. Others: (Pls specify) ……………………							…………………………………
……………………							…………………………………
……………………							…………………………………

8. How often do you use Web 2.0 technologies **outside class**? What do you do with them? (Please tick the appropriate box regarding "How often?", and provide information about "What do you do?")

Technologies	How often?						What do you do? (e.g., read for information, reflect and contribute your ideas and resources, etc.)
	Never	Sometimes a year	Monthly	Weekly	Several times a week	Daily	
a. Wikis							…………………………………
b. Blogs							…………………………………
c. Email							…………………………………
d. Face book							…………………………………
e. You Tube							…………………………………
f. Discussion Forum							…………………………………
g. Skype							…………………………………
h. Video conference							…………………………………
i. Virtual world/games							…………………………………
j. Twitter							…………………………………
k. e-Portfolio							…………………………………
l. Flickr							…………………………………
m. Google Plus							…………………………………
n. Others: (Pls specify) ……………………							…………………………………
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9. In **your experience**, in what ways do Web 2.0 technologies **<u>actually help</u>** you in culture learning?
   They help you…. (Please tick the appropriate box for each statement below).

		Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
a.	get access to cultural knowledge (e.g., find information about a country).						
b.	communicate with others (e.g., talk/ write to your friends about a cultural event/concept).						
c.	collaborate with others (e.g., exchange ideas or work with others to clarify a cultural gaffe or to understand a cultural value).						
d.	experience real-life activities (e.g., make friends with people from other countries online, participate in an online debate in an English newspaper).						
e.	create new artifacts (e.g., create and upload an image/ video about a cultural event; write an article about a cultural value).						
f.	reflect and evaluate (e.g, reflect on and evaluate a cultural theory).						
g.	Others: ……………………….						

10. In what ways do you **think** Web 2.0 technologies can potentially help you in culture learning?
They can potentially help you… (Please tick the appropriate box for each statement below).

		Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
a.	get access to cultural knowledge (e.g., find information about a country).						
b.	communicate with others (e.g., talk/ write to your friends about a cultural event/concept).						
c.	collaborate with others (e.g., exchange ideas or work with others to clarify a cultural gaffe or to understand a cultural value).						
d.	experience real-life activities (e.g., make friends with people from other countries online, participate in an online debate in an English newspaper).						
e.	create new artifacts (e.g., create and upload an image/ video about a cultural event; write an article about a cultural value).						
f.	reflect and evaluate (e.g., reflect on and evaluate a cultural theory).						
g.	Others: ……………………….						

11. Rank the three (3) top Web 2.0 technologies that you perceive would be most helpful for culture learning? Comment why you think so?

Ranking	Comments
1. ………………..	…………………………………………………………………….. …………………………………………………………………… …………………………………………………………………… …………………………………………………………………… ……………………………………………………………………
2. ………………..	…………………………………………………………………… …………………………………………………………………… …………………………………………………………………… …………………………………………………………………… ……………………………………………………………………
3. ………………..	…………………………………………………………………… …………………………………………………………………… …………………………………………………………………… …………………………………………………………………… ……………………………………………………………………

12. Do you have any concerns about using Web 2.0 technologies to support your culture learning (e.g., data security, personal identity)? (Please tick your choice)

                    [ ] Yes   [ ] No

If Yes, what are they?

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Thank you so much for your assistance.

Appendix 2

Syllabus

Course title: Intercultural Communication

Credit: 2

Aims:

- ✓ To provide EFL students with basic knowledge about theories in intercultural communication,

- ✓ To help EFL students develop intercultural communicative competence.

Course contents:

Week	Chapter
1 -2	Introduction Terms and principles in intercultural communication
3-4	Cultural influences on communication
5-6	Cultural variations in styles of thinking Cultural influences on teaching and learning
7-8	Culture and verbal communication
9-10	Culture and nonverbal communication
11-12-13	Intercultural and intergroup communication Social and personal identity – Intergroup communication Cultural conflict – Culture shock
14	Improving intergroup communication
15	Wrap-up

Assessment:

- ✓ 40%: Communication with guests (15%)+ Peer discussion online (15%)+ Class participation (10%).

- ✓ 20%: Written reflections (5% for each of the two first, and 10% for the third one).

- ✓ 40%: Final reflective essay.

Textbook and reading materials:

Compiled book chapters and articles on intercultural communication.

Appendix 3

Sequence of Facebook-mediated IC learning activities and in-class activities

Week	Off-line/ in-class activities	Online activities
1	**Introduction to the course** - Teacher introduced the syllabus. - Teacher organized teams of three students. - Teacher gave instructions how to access different Facebook groups. - Course expectations **Homework** - Cultural survey - Students wrote about what they knew about American and Saudi cultures (Reflection 0)	- Teacher created four Facebook groups: One (named Group forum) for interaction between students and teacher, and three others (known as Guest forum), each of which was a space for students to chat with a guest. - Teacher uploaded the cultural survey to Facebook. - Students and guests uploaded their completed surveys and course expectations to Facebook.
2	**Terms and principles** - Teacher and students discussed the reading materials about terms and principles in intercultural communication. - Data from the completed surveys were used as illustrations of terms and principles. **Homework** - Student autobiography. - Discussion and comparison of completed surveys.	- Students submitted their bio and reflections 0. - Students posted their comparisons on Group forum.

3	**Cultural influences on communication** - Teacher and students discussed the relevant concepts (e.g., Individualism vs. Collectivism), and gave examples. - Students watched a section of the movie *Outsourced* and discussed cultural influences on the characters' behaviour and communication. **Homework** - Students read the book chapter and wrote a comparison of the information in the chapter, their previous thinking about Americans and values as reflected in surveys completed by Americans.	- Teacher uploaded a book chapter on American values on Group forum. - Students uploaded their writings on Group forum.
4	- Teacher showed good examples of student writings. - The whole class compared and discussed cultural values as reflected in surveys completed by Vietnamese students and Americans. - Students prepared for online communication with Guest 1.	
5	**Cultural influence on teaching and learning** - Teacher and students discussed the reading.	- Teacher invited Guest 1 to join Guest 1 forum. He greeted students and introduced himself. - Team representative said hello,

	- Students analyzed the way they wrote their autobiography to see how culture influenced their writing.	and introduced herself/himself and her/his team on the forum. - Students and Guest asked questions and exchanged information about their cultures.
6	- Students asked questions and comments on any problems that emerged in their contacts with Guest 1. - Teacher guided students to write reflection 1. - Teacher guided students to discuss each other's reflections.	- Students posted their written reflections on Group forum. - Students discussed cultural issues by posting comments in boxes below their peer's reflections. - Teacher intervened in discussions if necessary.
7	**Culture and verbal communication** - Teacher and students discussed the questions given in the reading material.	- Students continued with their online discussions.
8	- Students analyzed some samples of intercultural communication. - Students observed some chats with Guest 1, analyzed and discussed how culture influenced the guest's thinking, behaviour and communication.	- A similar procedure of inviting and chatting with Guest 2 took place.
9	**Culture and non-verbal communication** - Teacher and students discussed the questions given in the reading material.	- Students discussed cultural aspects learned with Guest 2.

10	- Students watched video clips about cultural differences in nonverbal communication and discuss.	- Students continued with their online discussions.
11	**Interpersonal and intergroup communication** - Teacher and students discussed the questions given in the reading text.	- Guest 3 was invited and chatted with students.
12	- Teacher and students discussed the questions given in the reading text. - Students watched YouTube video clips about ethnocentric judgements, and discussed. - Students analyzed the guests' conversations and peer discussions for any misinterpretation, ethnocentrism, stereotypes and prejudice.	- Chats with Guest 3 continued. - Students discussed cultural aspects learned with Guest 3.
13	**Culture shock** - Teacher and students discussed the questions given in the reading text. - Students watched some excerpts from the film *Outsourced* for the main character's symptoms of culture shock.	- Students continued with their online discussions.
14	**Improving intergroup communication** - Teacher and students discussed the questions given in the	- Students sent teacher an electronic copy of their final reflection, and submitted a hard copy at the Department Office.

		reading text.	
		- Teacher further guided students to write the final essay.	
15		**Wrap-up** Students' further questions, and course feedback.	