

**Learning to live in a different culture: A
phenomenographic study of the adaptation experiences
of cultural-immersion study-abroad sojourners**

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

**Leo W. Hitchcock
Auckland University of Technology
Faculty of Culture and Society
2019**

Abstract

This thesis investigates the learning required for study abroad sojourners to live effectively inside another culture. To live effectively in another culture, the research participants tracked in this thesis had to learn the knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness needed to adapt to different ways of doing things. Cultural knowledge and skills, along with appropriate attitudes and awareness, constitute the four elements of Intercultural Competence (IcC) (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006; Fantini, 2000; Sercu, 2005a).

On entry into their host community, sojourners began to interact with symbols (the products and visible elements or observable realities of a culture [Shaules, 2007; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998]) and rituals (a culture's ways of doing things: their practices) of daily life. Through internalisation of the perceptions of their interaction experiences, they formed understandings to create meaning. Sojourners needed to reshape their long-held cultural understandings to accommodate the meanings of the different culture in which they were immersed. This involved adjustment difficulties for some sojourners, and they resisted some aspects of adjustment to cultural practices. The internalisation process was theorised through symbolic interactionism (SI) (Blumer, 1969/1986; Prus, 1996; Stryker & Vryan, 2003) and examined through phenomenography.

Noteworthy is that participants' recorded their experiences and the perceptions of those experiences immediately, or soon after, an incident occurred. The recorded experiences formed the primary corpus of texts that were analysed, and were supported by an end-of-sojourn interview. Also significant was the adoption of symbolic interactionism which, framed how participants experiences were understood. As the methodological approach, phenomenography enables the analysis of experiences themselves rather than the phenomenon.

Phenomenography and its associated variation theory specifically studies the variation in perceptions of, and the ways of understanding experiences (Berglund, 2005; Berglund, personal communication, 2014; Pang, 2003). Through examining the variations in perceptions and subsequent understanding of experiences over a period of time, the researcher analysed the learning of the IcC required for effective adaptation to a host community. The findings are presented as a set of 'categories of description' summarising the key concepts in terms of **what** was learned in each category, and **how** it was learned (Berglund, 2005; Marton & Booth, 1997). Extensive data was received from 21 participants in varying amounts. Ten phenomenographic categories of description were identified from the data:

1. Learning to adapt to the community's sights and sounds;
2. Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices,
3. Learning to adapt to greeting rituals;
4. Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food and eating;

5. Learning to adapt to differences in orientations to time;
6. Learning to use the local language;
7. Learning to build and adapt to local social networks;
8. Learning to cope with adaptation stresses and overcome culture shock;
9. Learning to adjust to the education and schooling system; and
10. Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships

The findings show that all research participants reached advanced levels of adaptation in some categories. In the remaining categories, research participants reached varying levels of acceptance of and/or adaptation to different aspects of host community life. Some participants merely reached a level of tolerance in some categories and in a few cases, resistance remained. It was thus concluded that IcC learning is not a general continuum as depicted in some key literature (for example Bennett, 1993) but rather varies according to values within specific 'dimensions of culture' (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998. See also Shaules, 2007).

It is anticipated that future study-abroad programmes, and sojourners themselves will benefit from this research, which provides suggestions for the development of techniques and strategies that can be developed to help sojourners to learn IcC during their study-abroad sojourns. Such techniques include a process model for experiential learning of IcC.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Figures	xi
List of Tables	xiii
List of Acronyms	xv
Attestation of Authorship	xvi
Acknowledgements	xvii
Chapter One: Thesis introduction	1
Introduction.....	1
My motivation for undertaking this research	2
The research question	3
History and overview of major study-abroad programmes	4
Organisations and participant numbers	7
Structure of this thesis.....	8
Summary	9
Chapter Two: Theory: SI, Culture, and IcC	11
Introduction.....	11
Symbolic interactionism theory and the allocation of meaning	12
An explanation of 'symbols'.....	14
The allocation of meaning	14
SI ontology	14
SI epistemology.....	15
SI methodology	17
'Culture'	18
'Layers' of culture	20
SI and layers of culture	23
Cultural values and cultural dimensions.....	23
Individualism versus collectivism (individual needs versus group needs)	24
Power distance (degrees of inequality).....	25
Assertiveness versus modesty.....	25
Uncertainty avoidance versus tolerance of ambiguity.....	26
Universalism versus particularism (rules versus relationships)	26
Long-term orientation versus short-term goals	27
Specific versus diffuse (the range of involvement)	27
Neutral versus affective (the range of feelings expressed).....	28

Achievement versus ascription (how status is accorded)	28
Time orientation.....	28
Conceptualising and defining Intercultural Competence (IcC).....	29
Michael Byram's (1997, 2003) model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)	30
Alvino Fantini's (2000, 2006, 2012) definition of IcC.....	31
Lies Sercu's (2005) model	32
Darla Deardorff's (2006) pyramid model.....	32
Consolidating the theoretical framing of IcC in this thesis	33
Context (IcC and ICC).....	33
The elements of IcC	34
The IcC experiential learning and development life-cycle.....	36
Milton Bennett's (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS).....	37
The DMIS and the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory).....	38
The Intercultural Development Continuum	40
Joseph Shaules' (2007) 'Deep Culture' Model of Intercultural Learning.....	41
Usefulness of these models in relation to this study	42
Summary	42
Chapter Three: Literature review: Study-abroad and cultural adaptation	46
Introduction.....	46
Study-abroad programmes and intercultural experiences	46
Cultural adaptation	49
Culture distance and adaptation	49
Culture shock	50
Adaptation stress and developing IcC	52
Other key elements of the cultural adaptation process.....	53
The effect of predisposition, environmental and other factors affecting adaptation.....	56
The significance of preparation	58
Knowing when adaptation and integration into the host community is occurring	59
IcC and education	60
IcC learning, adaptation and cultural dimensions research	62
Inbound versus outbound sojourns.....	63
Recognition of cultural difference through symbols	63
The research gaps and the research questions.....	64
Summary	64

Chapter Four: Methodology and Methods	66
Introduction.....	66
Phenomenography and variation theory	66
Background and overview of phenomenography.....	66
A second-order perspective and non-dualism	67
The object of learning.....	68
Variation theory	69
An experience	69
The experience of learning.....	71
Categories of description	72
The outcome space.....	73
Describing the outcome space.....	73
Structure of the outcome space in this thesis	75
Credibility in phenomenographic research.....	77
Credibility of phenomenographic categories.....	78
Replication of the research	80
Research methods	80
Sampling	80
Data collection.....	83
Data analysis.....	84
Method of analysis and development of the categories of description	84
Sub-categories	91
Determining variations in the what and the how in the categories of description	91
The categories of description hierarchy	92
Describing ‘adaptation’ in the outcome space	93
How stanzas (participant quotes/comments) are presented in the outcome space	95
Comparison with United Nations (UN) categorisation of economies	95
Summary	96
Chapter Five: The Outcome Space: what the sojourners learned, and how	99
Introduction.....	99
Category 1: Learning to adapt to the community’s sights and sounds	100
The internal horizon of focus.....	100
Dimensions of variation in the research participants’ perceptions, and ways of understanding in Category 1: Learning to adapt to the community’s sights and sounds	102
What the research participants learned	105

Comparison with UN categorisations	105
How the external horizon of context affected adaptation	106
Category 2: Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices ('everyday life')	106
The internal horizon of focus	106
Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions, and ways of understanding in Category 2: Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices ('everyday life')	107
What the research participants learned	112
How the external horizon of context affected adaptation	112
Category 3: Learning to adapt to greeting rituals	113
The internal horizon of focus	113
Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 3: Learning to adapt to greeting rituals	114
What the research participants learned	117
How the external horizon of context affected adaptation	118
Category 4: Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food and eating	118
The internal horizon of focus	119
Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 4: Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food and eating.....	120
What the research participants learned	122
How the external horizon of context affected adaptation	123
Category 5: Learning to adapt to differences in orientations to time	123
The internal horizon of focus	123
Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 5: Learning to adapt to differences in orientations to time	125
What the research participants learned	129
How the external horizon of context affected adaptation	130
Category 6: Learning to use the local language.....	130
The internal horizon of focus	130
Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 6: Learning to use the local language.....	131
What the research participants learned	135
How the external horizon of context affected adaptation	136
Category 7: Learning to build and adapt to local social networks.....	137
The internal horizon of focus	138
Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 7: Learning to build and adapt to local social networks	140

What the research participants learned	145
How the external horizons of context affected adaptation	147
Category 8: Learning to cope with adaptation stresses including overcoming culture shock	147
The internal horizon of focus	147
Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 8: Learning to cope with adaptation stresses and overcome culture shock	149
What the research participants learned	156
How the external horizon of context affected adaptation	157
Category 9: Learning to adjust to differences in the education and schooling system	158
The internal horizon of focus	158
Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 9: Learning to adjust to the education and schooling system	160
What the research participants learned	167
How the external horizon of context affected adaptation	169
Category 10: Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships	170
The internal horizon of focus	170
Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 10: Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships	174
What the research participants learned	186
How the external horizons of context affected adaptation	189
Summary of adaptation within categories	190
How research participants reached their levels of adaptation (the how aspect)	194
Categories 1-3 (adaptation to the sights and sounds, common practices in everyday life, and greeting rituals).....	194
Categories 4-7 (food and associated rituals, adaptation to local orientation to time, adaptation to using the local language, and building social networks)	195
Category 8 (learning to cope with adaptation stresses including culture shock).....	196
Category 9 and 10 (adjusting to the schooling system, and adapting to values at a more implicit level).....	197
Chapter Summary	199
Chapter Six: Discussion, contributions and recommendations	201
Introduction.....	201
Answering the research questions	201

RQ1: To what extent is IcC learned by a sojourner on a cultural-immersion student exchange programme?	201
RQ2: What ways of understanding enhance or detract from IcC?.....	211
RQ3: What are the phenomenographic dimensions of variation that give life to IcC?....	212
Further observations	213
Personal confidence and host family support	213
The 'honeymoon stage' of the sojourn	214
The process of adaptation.....	216
The theory of SI and phenomenography together in practice can support adaptation and the learning of IcC	221
Pre-departure preparation and supported learning of IcC.....	224
Contributions	224
IcC learning is not a general continuum as depicted in the literature but rather varies according to a number of factors.....	225
Resistance indicated by research participants does not mean non-development of IcC	226
Contribution to phenomenography.....	227
Contribution to cultural and IcC research.....	227
How my findings compare to existing research.....	228
Bennett's (1993, 2003) DMIS and Shaules' (2007) Deep Culture Model	228
Layers of culture (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Shaules, 2007; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998).....	229
Dimensions of culture (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Trompenaars and Hampton-Turner's 1998)	229
Knowledge, skills, attitudes, awareness and education (Byram, 1997, 2003; Deardorff, 2006; Fantini, 2006, 2012; Howard-Hamilton. 1998; Sercu, 2005a).....	229
The relationship between learning the language, building a social network of friends, food and successful adaptation (Kim, 1998; Pearson-Evans, 2006; Whorf, 1988).....	230
Culture shock and the 'honeymoon' period (Church, 1982; Kim, 1998; Oberg, 1960; Ward & Kennedy, 1996; Ward et al., 1998; Ward et al., 2001; Weaver, 1993).....	230
The 'Berry Boxes' model (Berry, 1980, 1990; Ward, 2008)	230
Deardorff's (2006) pyramid model of IcC and Kim's (2001) model of factors influencing cross-cultural adaptation	230
Students from collectivist cultures had higher levels of adaptation difficulties in individualist countries (Rienties & Tempelaar, 2013).....	231
Limitations and challenges of this research	231
Recommendations for further research and for practice.....	233
Summary	234
Closing remarks	234

References	236
Appendix A: Ethics Documents and Participant Information Sheets.....	257
Appendix B: AFS International MoU	266
Appendix C1: Milly's Journal (edited).....	269
Appendix C2: Kirby's Journal (edited).....	296
Appendix C3: Anna's Journal (blog entries; edited)	304
Appendix C4: Damon's Journal (blog entries; edited)	312

List of Figures

Figure 1: Diagrammatic representation of the process of SI.....	14
Figure 2: Individuals figuratively sit outside the interaction ‘space’ (see Prawat, 1996; MacKinnon, 2005).....	17
Figure 3: Trompenaars’ and Hampden-Turner’s (1998) ‘Cultural Onion’ (replicated from Shaules, 2007, p. 57).....	21
Figure 4: Hofstede’s and Hofstede’s (2005, p. 7) ‘onion’: Manifestations of culture at different levels of depth.....	22
Figure 5: SI and layers of culture.....	23
Figure 6: The concepts of ‘openness’ (Lewin, 1936), and ‘life spaces’. Adaptation of Lewin’s Circles as cited in Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1998).....	27
Figure 7: Byram’s schema of factors in intercultural communication (Byram, 1997, p. 34).....	31
Figure 8: Deardorff’s (2006, p. 254) pyramid model of Intercultural Competence.....	33
Figure 9: DMIS categories cf. validated IDI (Shaules, 2007, p. 122).....	39
Figure 10: Shaules’ (2007) ‘Deep Culture’ model of cultural learning.....	41
Figure 11: Four social networks (adapted from Pearson-Evans [2006]).....	54
Figure 12: Factors influencing cross-cultural adaptation (Kim, 2001, p. 87).....	57
Figure 13: Berry’s acculturation model (Berry, 1980, p. 14, 1990, p. 245; Burnett & Gardner, 2006, p. 68).....	59
Figure 14: The structure of an experience (Marton & Booth, 1997, p. 88).....	70
Figure 15: The what and how aspects of learning (adapted from Marton & Booth, 1997, p. 85).....	72
Figure 16: A way of describing the outcome space for phenomenographic data analysis (adapted from Cope, 2004).....	74
Figure 17: The structure of the outcome space in this thesis.....	76
Figure 18: The data familiarisation and analysis phases: the ‘constant comparative method’ and ‘continuous refinement’ process of developing categories of description from the data (see Wellington 2000, pp. 137 & 141).....	89
Figure 19: The continuum of research participants’ levels of adaptation (adaptation continuum).....	94
Figure 20: Summary of research participants’ levels of adaptation to the community’s sights and sounds.....	105
Figure 21: Summary research participants’ adaptation to common everyday practices.....	112
Figure 22: Summary of the research participants’ adaptation to greeting rituals.....	118

Figure 23: Summary of the research participants' levels of adaptation to food and rituals associated with food.....	122
Figure 24: Ranges of research participants' adaptation to the local orientation to time.	129
Figure 25: Summary of the variations in the ways that helped research participants build locally-based networks of friends	146
Figure 26: Summary of the variations in learning to overcome adaptation stresses and thus adaptation to such stresses	157
Figure 27: Summary of the research participants' levels of adaptation to schooling and the education system	168
Figure 28: Summary of the variation in research participants' levels of adaptation to values at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships.....	188
Figure 29: Summary of levels of adaptation reached by the research participants	191
Figure 30: Relationship between language, building a social network of friends, and maximum adaptation level	205
Figure 31: Relationship between building a social network of friends and adaptation.....	205
Figure 32: Incidences of the values conflicts within cultural dimensions faced by the research participants.....	208
Figure 33: The process of SI theory that may support the development of lcC.....	212
Figure 34: Kirby's illustration of the ups and downs of his sojourn	215
Figure 35: Simple adaptation pattern	216
Figure 36: Adaptation continuum	216
Figure 37 Incidences of values conflicts reported by research participants.....	220
Figure 38: The adaptation continuum of research participants' levels of adaptation and thus of lcC learning	225
Figure 39: Summary of levels of adaptation reached by all research participants.....	225
Figure 40: An illustration of Phillips' adaptation	226
Figure 41: The integrated SI theory/phenomenography process model for experiential learning of lcC	223

List of Tables

Table 1: The researcher's categorisation of the elements and sub-elements of IcC pertaining to study-abroad sojourners' learning of IcC	34
Table 2: Phenomenographic studies using the what/how and/or referential/structural frameworks (taken from Harris, 2011)	74
Table 3: How this research uses the what/how aspects, the structural aspect, and referential aspect in the outcome space: the outcome space structural framework	75
Table 4: Intercultural or cross-cultural studies using phenomenographic methods	79
Table 5: A sample stanza relating to the greeting ritual experience category	87
Table 6: Identified categories, the codification that identified the categories, and the subsequent category of description	89
Table 7: Categories of description divided into sub-categories.....	91
Table 8: How the hierarchy was applied to the categories of description	93
Table 9: The phenomenographic categories of description and the hierarchy	99
Table 10: Summary of variations in Category 1: Learning to adapt to the community's sights and sounds.....	104
Table 11: Summary of variations in Category 2: Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices ('everyday life')	111
Table 12: Summary of variations in Category 3: Learning to adapt to greeting rituals	117
Table 13: Summary of variations in Category 4: Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food and eating	121
Table 14: Summary of variations in Category 5: Learning to adapt to differences in orientation to time.....	128
Table 15: Summary of variations in Category 6: Learning to use the local language.....	134
Table 16: The month in which research participants indicated that they had learned the local language sufficiently to use it enough to get by effectively	137
Table 17: Summary of variations in Category 7: Learning to build and adapt to local social networks	145
Table 18: Summary of variations in Category 8: Learning to cope with adaptation stresses including overcoming culture shock	156
Table 19: Summary of Category 9: Learning to adjust to differences in the education and schooling system.....	166
Table 20: Summary of cultural dimensions in which research participants faced overcoming or reconciling values while learning to adjust to the education and schooling system.....	169

Table 21: Summary of Category 10: Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships	186
Table 22: Summary of cultural dimensions in which research participants faced overcoming or reconciling values at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships	189
Table 23: Cultural dimensions values faced by research participants within all categories....	191
Table 24: Relationship to UN Categorisations and Hofstede’s Individualist/Collectivist rating table (Hofstede & Hofstede’s, 2005)	192
Table 25: The categories of description hierarchy	194
Table 26: The indicative month in which the research participants had established a network of local friends	203
Table 27: The indicative month in which the research participants had learned enough of their host language to be able to communicate adequately	204
Table 28: Food/adaptation-related comments (numbers of incidences).....	206
Table 29: Cultural values conflicts faced in Category 9: Learning to adjust to the education and schooling system.....	207
Table 30: Summary of IcC knowledge and skills competencies and how these are manifested in research participants’ learning experiences	209
Table 31: Summary of IcC attitude and awareness elements and how these are manifested in research participants’ learning experiences.....	210
Table 32: Damon’s and Milly’s comparative time taken to establish social networks (extracted from Table 17).....	214
Table 33: The categories of description and the hierarchy	216
Table 34: Summary of reactions to experiences, levels of adaptation reached, and time taken; Categories 1–5.....	218
Table 35: Summary of length of time that research participants took to reach their maximum adaptation level measured by living and interacting effectively	219
Table 36: Incidences of recorded value conflicts/time taken to reach maximum adaptation relationship.....	221

List of Acronyms

AIESEC	Formerly known as the Association Internationale des Étudiants en Sciences Économiques et Commerciales (International Association of Students in Economic and Commercial Sciences)
AFS	AFS Intercultural Programs (formerly The American Field Service). ('Intercultural Programmes in New Zealand).
ASSE	American Scandinavian Student Exchange
AUT	Auckland University of Technology
AUTEC	AUT Ethics Committee
BUNAC	BUNAC Travel Services Ltd, formerly British Universities North America Club
DMIS	Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennett, 1993)
EF	Education First (Foundation for Foreign Study)
EFIL	European Federation for Intercultural Learning
EIL	Experiment in International Living
EPL	English as Primary Language
ERASMUS	European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (also referred to as SOCRATES-ERASMUS or just SOCRATES)
ESL	English as Second Language
IcC	Intercultural Competence
ICC	Intercultural Communicative Competence
IDC	Intercultural Development Continuum
IDI	Intercultural Development Inventory
IEP	International Exchange Programmes
JET	Japan Exchange and Teaching
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
mp3	MPEG (audio) Player, (audio layer) III
M-Time	Monochronic (sequential) time
NZ/N.Z.	New Zealand
P-Time	Polychronic (synchronic) time
RQ/s	Research Question/s
SI	Symbolic Interactionism
STS	Student Travel Schools
The AFS	The American Field Service
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
VSA	Volunteer Service Abroad
VSO	Volunteer Service Organisation
YFU	Youth for Understanding

Attestation of Authorship

“I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning”

Signature:

Date: 31/07/2019

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I give a HUGE thank you! to my primary supervisor, Associate Professor Dr. Sharon Harvey of Auckland University of Technology (AUT) Faculty of Culture and Society for her dedication, extreme patience, and attention to detail. It has been a long, sometimes exciting, sometimes frustrating, but mostly invigorating journey. A BIG thank you too to my secondary supervisor, Associate Professor Dr. Tony Clear, AUT Faculty of Design and Creative Technologies for his insightful contextual and thought-provoking comments and ideas. I also give a big thank you to my research participants for their honesty and forthrightness in sharing their experiences with me (and with you, the reader), sharing their good times, their bad times, their exciting times, their highs and lows, and for providing me with much more data than I expected.

Thanks also to Professor Dr. Eveline Dürr, formerly of AUT and later of Institut für Ethnologie, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München for her insights, advice, and pointing me in the right direction, especially in the area of anthropology and culture. And thanks also to Associate Professor Dr. Pang Ming Fai, Faculty of Education, Hong Kong University for his help and advice, mainly in the area of phenomenography and variation theory. I also thank my other sources of information and advice, namely Dr. Betsy Hansel, formerly of AFS International Research office, and Drs Anders Berglund and Anna Eckerdal of Uppsala University.

I also sincerely thank my family for their support, encouragement and thought-provoking ideas throughout this journey. And thanks for the help and support of Ann and my AUT colleagues, especially Petteri. There have been many others whom I have met, albeit very briefly in some cases, who have contributed ideas to a greater or lesser extent and whose name may appear somewhere in these pages – you know who you are.

I must also acknowledge, and indeed dedicate this thesis to, the following, who have all taught me something during my own intercultural competence learning journey: Naki, Mitsuko (especially), and Masuo, Ikumi and Eiko; Yoshiko and Kiori; Vivian (Wing-Sze), and Ronald, Wan Yi (Winnie), Yeung Man Shun and Kwei Ping; Gigi (Ignace Pascal von der Recke Kamatari) and Princess Zoey; Iratxe, Jose and Itxia, and Aimar; Nario and Yoko, Tamaki and Kunio, Sean, Lucas, and Jun, Eiya and Taiki and their families; Aase and Partha, Anne and Kare, Andreas and Sunniva; Catherine and her family; Patricia and her family; Sue, and Sharon (RIP); Polly and her family; Juan, Wagner and Lucia and family; Pom and Oi; Sarah; Fanny; Echo; Alex; Wu, Xiaozhu, Jianguo, Lin, Meilan, Joyce (Jia), and my friends and colleagues at CJLU China; Yaya, Samuel and my friends and colleagues at BINUS Indonesia; Anu; Quan, Danh, Hanh, Duy, and my friends and colleagues at ITEC Viet Nam; Thanh, Nghiem, Hoang Pham, Thao, Huy and the Viet Nam programme graduates; and all my Vietnamese friends and colleagues including my friend Ngoc; Giang and her family.

This research was conducted under AUTEK Reference number 08/220 dated 24 October, 2008.

How shall I talk of the sea to a frog if it has never left its pond?

How shall I talk of the frost to a bird of the summerland if it has never left the place of its birth?

How shall I talk of life to a sage if he is a prisoner of his doctrine?

(Chung Tsu, 4th Century B.C. cited in Fantini, 2000).

Chapter One: Thesis introduction

Introduction

This thesis is about learning the Intercultural Competence (IcC) required for adaptation to living effectively in a culture different to one's own during a cultural-immersion study abroad sojourn. Study abroad sojourners enter a community which has produced, over time, ways of thinking and doing things that are different to their customary ways of thinking and doing things. To adapt to living in their new community, sojourners ideally need to modify and reshape long-held cultural understandings, and re-construct them to accommodate the meanings of the different culture in which they have become immersed. The research focus was the sojourner participants' adaptation experiences, and the perceptions of and the ways in which they came to understand (referred to in this thesis as 'ways of understanding' [Berglund, 2005; Berglund, personal communication, April, 2014; Pang, 2003]) their host culture's symbols and practices: their ways of thinking and doing things.

The research is grounded in the assumption that sojourners enter a community that has been constructed through socialisation (Byram, 1997) and social construction talk (Boghossian, 2001) resulting in 'cultural conditioning': the community's ways of thinking and doing things that have been constructed over time (Lewis, 2006). Through interaction with the host culture's symbols (products and visible elements of a culture [Shaules, 2007]) and practices of everyday life, the sojourner begins to adapt to them, and may resist adjusting to some aspects of the culture's ways of doing things. The process may involve many adjustment difficulties, some causing severe stress (known as 'culture shock') which the sojourner needs to overcome. The resulting learning is about the competence to effectively adapt to and live in harmony, and in friendship and cooperative action, inside a different cultural system.

The research methodology was phenomenography, and applying its associated variation theory. This approach is a study of experiences, and the variation in the perceptions of and ways of understanding those experiences that results in learning something. In this research, these are the cultural adaptation experiences of the participants and the intercultural competence they have learned as a result. And, in the case of what they have learned, where that individual lies on an adaptation continuum. Alternatively, as it is a phenomenographic approach, where the sample collectively range on such a continuum. This continuum became part of the findings.

Symbolic interactionism theory (detailed in the following chapter) provides the frame for an analysis of variations in perceptions and ways of understanding over time. In some cases the 'over time' is very short. For example, the sample all quickly adapted to the sights and sounds of their environment and they stopped commenting about these experiences in their journals. Similarly the sojourners quickly adapted to the greeting ritual, although some commented on their changed understanding. The data analysis was supported by the constant comparative

method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and continuous refinement process of categorising and coding data advocated by Wellington (2000).

In this chapter my motivation for and the purpose of the thesis is outlined, Further, the research questions are presented, followed by a history and overview of the major international cultural-immersion programmes and their roles. The structure of this thesis is also outlined.

My motivation for undertaking this research

My motivation for undertaking this research stems from my many years associated with AFS Intercultural Programmes in New Zealand, and my observations during this time of the advanced development of maturity and cultural understanding in returned sojourners. I wondered what experiences the sojourners had during their adaptation to living in another culture for this advanced maturity and understanding to occur. Further, if that process is understood, perhaps attitudes towards and understanding of other cultures generally can be enhanced, along with strategies for improved interaction between different cultures.

AFS Intercultural Programmes New Zealand is an integral member of AFS Intercultural Programs Inc., an international organisation based in New York City. AFS is a voluntary, non-governmental, non-profit organization that provides intercultural learning opportunities that help people develop the required knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding for a more just and peaceful world through student exchanges, volunteer experiences, and professional development. AFS has been operating in New Zealand since 1947 (AFS).

Many human beings appear to have a built-in propensity to favour their own group (Munroe & Munroe, 1980/1997. See also Bochner, 1982) with the normative state being 'ethnocentrism', meaning that one's own culture is the central reality (Bennett, 1993; Blasco, 2012; Hammond & Axelrod, 2006). Communities and social groups have their own longevity as their first priority, which ensures that from an early age members acquire group identity and loyalty (Byram, 1997). Hofstede and Hofstede (2005, p. 5) observed that "in daily conversations, in political discourse, and in the media that feeds them, alien cultures are often pictured in moral terms, as better or worse".

Renowned anthropologist, the late Edward T. Hall, revealed an understanding of why in-group propensity and ethnocentrism may be the case. Hall (1959/1981) maintained that social (and cultural) beliefs and ways of doing things become deeply ingrained, and as a result are not recognised as something that can change within a person. Consequently, Hall concluded that the impression of other social systems being "unnecessary, immoral, backward, crazy" or outmoded can be formed when one encounters a different social system (Hall, 1959/1981, p. 77).

Similarly, one's own cultural worldview must be understood in relation to other cultural worldviews. For example, research among new teachers in Germany (Bender-Szymanski, 2000)

found that globalisation was challenging the German educational system to cope with cultural diversity. Bender-Szymanski argued that a change in perspective was required to deal with the perception and acceptance of cultural difference. Conflict situations between new teachers and their culturally diverse students were studied, with the findings indicating that culturally based conflict situations must be evaluated in the cultural context of the person being evaluated, not of the evaluator. Reason and emotion should be segregated, she said, and that knowing why a person of a different culture acts as they do requires an awareness and understanding of one's own actions. Bender-Szymanski explained that teachers who failed to understand or accept their own cultural position had a tendency to form 'deficit' explanations for their students; that is, they considered that conflicts and poor performance were caused by deficits in the foreign cultures. In her research report, Bender-Szymanski described this as coping with conflict in an **ethnocentric** way, concluding that such teachers failed in their ambitions of intercultural harmony, whereas teachers who coped with conflict in an **ethnorelative** way succeeded. Ethnorelative is defined as one's own culture experienced "in the context of the other cultures" (Bennett & Hammer, 1998, para. 7). In her report, Bender-Szymanski suggested that "intercultural competence is **not** [emphasis added] an ability which arises on its own if [one is] simply involved in continuous cultural contact. On the contrary ... it is a strenuous and never-ending developmental process" (Bender-Szymanski, 2000, p. 247).

The purpose of this thesis is, at the macro level, to effectively contribute to the body of knowledge about developing IcC, with the goal of a greater number of culturally aware, ethnorelative individuals. At the micro level, potential cultural-immersion study-abroad sojourners will benefit from the findings of this research. The findings will enable them to build a set of adaptation techniques and strategies based on observations and recommendations that have been presented in Chapter Six and throughout this thesis.

The research question

The overarching question to be addressed in my research is:

- To what extent is the IcC required for cultural adaptation learned by a sojourner during a cultural-immersion study-abroad programme?

Secondary questions are:

- What ways of understanding adaptation experiences enhance or detract from learning IcC?
- What are the phenomenographic dimensions of variation that give life to IcC?

The phenomenon that is the focus of my study is the learning of IcC that occurs from adaptation experiences during a cultural-immersion study-abroad sojourn. Pope-Davis, Breaux & Liu (1997) defined a cultural-immersion experience as being a direct and prolonged, in vivo contact with a culture that is different from one's own. As a result of my study of cultural-immersion

experiences, knowledge can be gained about how variations over time in the perceptions and understanding of those experiences can contribute to learning IcC.

The findings of this research show **what** the research participants learned in terms of learning IcC through adapting to day-to-day living in their host culture. The findings further show **how** the research participants learned IcC. The **what** and the **how** of learning are presented in the findings (the 'Outcome Space') with the research participants' experiences grouped into hierarchical categories of description, which are then divided according to the variations in form and context, and in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding those experiences.

A sample of 21 study abroad sojourners divided between New Zealanders who went to culturally diverse destinations, and non-New Zealanders who came into New Zealand from diverse locations were recruited. Data relating to the research question was collected from the sample over the period of each participants' sojourn, which ranged between three and 11 months. The mode of data collection was in the form of sojourner experiences being recorded by the participants in a personal journal immediately or as soon as possible after an experience event occurred, combined with end-of-sojourn interviews.

History and overview of major study-abroad programmes

Cultural-immersion, study-abroad programmes with either specific or non-specific aims of imparting IcC and intercultural communicative competencies (ICC) to their participants have been in existence for over 100 years. For example, 2015 marked 110 years of operation for the Language Teaching Assistants programme, originally established between Great Britain, France, and Prussia. The programme was seen as a catalyst for better bilateral and multilateral relations. Its aim was to place international encounters for language teaching assistants within an educational framework (Cranshaw, 2006. See also British Council, 2015).

2017 was the 85th year of World Learning's 'Experiment in International Living' (EIL). EIL is a series of summer programmes for high school students, designed to help participants develop an understanding of different cultures, languages and worldviews, as well as the capacity to see their own lives and country in a broader perspective. Their motto includes the words "bridging cultures, transforming lives" (World Learning, 2017).

Immediately following World War I, the American Field Service (the AFS) began university exchange programmes between France and the USA, with the prime aim of promoting international friendship. The AFS began by providing volunteer mobile ambulance services on the battlefields of France in the early stages of World War I. At the outset of World War II, while suspending the exchange programme, the AFS re-commenced its war-time ambulance service. Now known as AFS Intercultural Programs (AFS), 2017 marked the 70th year of their international high school student exchange programmes (the University programme ceased in the 1950s). These programmes were established specifically to foster friendship, and 'peace

and understanding' between countries that were formerly at war and the USA. New Zealand was one of the group of 10 countries that first began AFS exchanges with the USA in 1947. The AFS network now boasts 12,000+ participants each year among some 98 countries (AFS Intercultural Programs, n.d.).

2018 was the 70th year of AIESEC (the acronym for what was formerly known as the Association Internationale des Étudiants en Sciences Économiques et Commerciales [International Association of Students in Economic and Commercial Sciences]). AIESEC is an exchange programme for university students and recent graduates with the aim of enabling participants to discover and develop their potential and have a positive impact on society (AIESEC, 2012). AIESEC claims to be the world's largest student-run youth leadership development organisation operating in 113 countries, and in 2,400 universities.

The European Union's (EU) ERASMUS (European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students, sometimes referred to as SOCRATES-ERASMUS or just SOCRATES) has been operating for over 30 years. This is a project in which university students from one EU country are able to study at a university in another EU country (Cranshaw, 2006).

Japan's JET (Japan Exchange and Teaching) programme, established by the Japanese government in 1987, is aimed at promoting international exchange between Japan and other nations. The programme operates in some 16 countries (JET Programme, 2017).

Originally, and especially in the 1940s and 1950s era following World War II, cultural-immersion programmes, such as AFS, and like programmes were based on a paradigm of cooperation, friendship and 'peace and understanding', be that as a formal motto ('peace and understanding' is the AFS motto), or an informal aim of the programme. This paradigm was largely based on the desire to counter the effects of global conflict (Broch, 1997). In these earlier years, high school exchange programmes grew rapidly. They were an evolving and expanding set of activities that often reflected or addressed what was happening at the time in the world, with "the variety of activities or approaches [being] what might be termed 'global education' " (Mitchell as quoted in Broch, 1997, p. 40). Three influential world leaders graphically illustrate the developing complexity in this kind of intercultural learning, the addresses themselves developing in complexity.

In July, 1957, President Dwight D. Eisenhower addressed a group of AFS students about to depart for their homes after a year in the US:

I don't know of anything more worthwhile today than for young people of our several countries to visit each other. ... You have come to our homes and have stayed here long enough to decide for yourselves whether most of us wear tails or horns or whether we are on the average a good sort of people ... I think I have spent some 13 years of my life in different foreign countries. I have not come back from one of them without feeling that I learned a lot (as quoted in Broch, 1997, p. 52).

President John F. Kennedy addressed a similar group in 1961:

I hope your experience has taught you a valuable lesson, which is that there are no simple problems, that as we look [from within] the United States around the world at so many different people and ... countries, we build up in our minds stereotypes and prejudices and sympathies and affections, and I'm sure you have learned how far removed we may be from our real understanding of life and of your people. You will go back to your country and they will have stereotypes and prejudices and ideas about the United States. It is going to be your destiny, I hope, to serve in the interests of peace as a bridge between the best parts of my country and your people (as quoted in Broch, 1997, p. 54).

Also, Bill Clinton, as Governor of Alabama, addressed a group in 1991:

On January 14th, [1991], one day before the United States declared war on Iraq, the television news covering a support-the-troops rally showed a small boy of five or six waving a banner before the camera. It said; "See if Allah helps you now, camel-kissing sand niggers". Presumably for the sake of balance, the coverage cut away to footage of an anti-American protest in Baghdad ... [where] one little girl's sign read "America is Satan". The naïve faces of both these children were at odds with the hateful messages they hoisted. It's a tragic example to prove one simple point: Arab cultures have ... a superficial understanding of Western cultures. And this is more than reciprocated by us in the West. ... We [Americans] seem to believe that we are so self-contained, so self-sufficient that we view learning other languages and seeking understanding of other cultures as an educational frill or an indulgence ... It is neither. Business leaders, educators, and my fellow governors see intercultural learning as ... an educational imperative. It is an imperative for peace.

Clearly we must make a quantum leap in educating ... [for] the skills needed to operate effectively in a global marketplace. ... We cannot afford to wait to prepare our young people ... for the global reality that awaits them. Beyond ... competitiveness ... we must become more globally minded, because world peace depends on our ability to understand and empathize with our global neighbors (as quoted in Broch, 1997, p. 55).

More recently, globalisation has shifted the paradigm. Understanding and acceptance of multiple and shifting cultural identities, and of different cultural systems, are no longer necessary just at a national level. They are also necessary at the community level as whole ethnic communities relocate themselves inside new communities and different cultural contexts. The focus is no longer just on learning to live with and understand our distant global neighbours, but on gaining a range of cultural knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness that allows us to operate across cultural boundaries wherever these boundaries may be found, including in our own neighbourhoods and families. As Hall (1976/1981, p. 40) pointed out, "in our shrinking world, one can ill afford cultural illiteracy". Study-abroad programmes, Yashima (2009) argued, play a vital role in developing the required intercultural skills and attitudes in young people to cope with an increasingly globalised world (see also Byram, 2014).

Attending school is a formal learning part of a high school-based study-abroad programme which may, or may not, include cultural content. In an AFS programme, it is the informal experiential learning aspect of the overall intercultural experience that is critical to the learning of IcC. Intercultural experience, in its broadest sense, is unavoidable. We all have experiences that we can learn from: "being astonished, enthralled, bedazzled, confused, contradicted, unaccepted, alienated, misunderstood, welcomed, accepted, understood" (Alred, 2003, p. 27). Alred stated that:

the quality and value of living ... abroad were invariably the result of a complex of factors and influences. A successful outcome was often fortuitous, and herein lies an educational challenge: how to give direction and purpose to the learning that occurs while living

interculturally, so that it contributes to intercultural competence, and not intercultural incompetence (Alred, 2003, p. 27).

In the researcher's experience, if the goals of a sojourn are not made specific, or study-abroad sojourners approach their exchange as a simple overseas 'sojourn' rather than a cultural-immersion IcC learning situation, they do not necessarily see themselves as being in an 'intercultural learning' situation. Rather, they see themselves in an 'intercultural experience' situation. While most sojourns are successful from an intercultural learning viewpoint, some are not, and the sojourner may retain an ethnocentric worldview. Still other sojourners are unable to complete their intercultural experience due to cultural conflicts, host incompatibility, or chronic homesickness (see Hansel, 2008).

Organisations and participant numbers

As well as AFS (which claims to be the largest not-for-profit, high school-based programme), other high school programmes include EF (Education First) Foundation for Foreign Study, ASSE (American Scandinavian Student Exchange), YFU (Youth for Understanding), and STS (Student Travel Schools). EF and STS offer high school and college education and vocational training programmes abroad. Other student exchange programmes offer volunteer work abroad in which the participants become immersed in the culture of the hosting country or region; for example, Volunteer Service Organisation (VSO, or VSA [Volunteer Service Abroad] in New Zealand), and World Learning.

Formal or explicit cultural learning is often a less-considered element of study-abroad programmes. Rather, the focus is on the tacit development of gaining enough understanding to live effectively in another cultural community. Nevertheless, it has become implicit that these programmes will additionally lead to increased cultural capital for the individual, improved international relations and the extra dimension of gaining intercultural competencies (Byram & Feng, 2006). The programmes discussed here are a small sample of the many study-abroad, living-abroad and student exchange programmes available for all ages that are currently operating. These programmes mentioned here can be classified in a number of ways, with some falling into more than one classification. The following list is **not** inclusive of all programmes:

- High school based, where no fees are paid to the host family or school: AFS, ASSE, EF, YFU, STS;
- University based: ERASMUS, AIESEC, IEP (International Exchange Programmes, NZ), STS;
- Language immersion, fee-paying (numerous organisations) and non-fee paying: AFS New Zealand, EIL, STS, JET;
- Community service: EIL, AFS;
- Travel/work: EIL, IEP/BUNAC Travel (formerly British Universities North America Club), STS, Peace Corps;

- Teachers: AFS New Zealand, JET; and
- Ecology and sports programmes: EIL.

The numbers of participants channeled through these various programmes is significant. Within the AFS, ASSE, EF, STS and YFU programmes, some one million sojourners have completed a cultural-immersion study-abroad programme since AFS began its high school student exchanges in 1947. The Federation of the EIL claims that several hundred thousand individuals of all ages have participated in their programmes (Fantini, 2006). AIESEC has alumni of over 1,000,000 students (AIESEC, 2012). The Peace Corps claims it has had some 200,000 participants since being established in 1961 (Peace Corps, 2013). Japan's JET programme boasts some 62,000 alumni (JET Programme, 2017). These metrics do not include the countless students on other programmes not mentioned here who are studying abroad in language and post-secondary study programmes and other programmes similar to those mentioned above.

All of the above programmes have intercultural learning as either an explicit or implicit focus. The sample for this research, however, is focused on high school-based programmes and student teacher-based intercultural programmes: specifically AFS. As already mentioned, the AFS programme has an implicit intercultural learning focus.

Structure of this thesis

The thesis is divided into six chapters: Chapter One, this chapter, contains an introduction to my research. The research questions are presented and explained. This is followed by a history and overview of major study-abroad programmes including participant numbers.

Chapter Two outlines the theory adopted, symbolic interactionism (SI), and includes a discussion of SI and the rationale for this theoretical approach. The chapter outlines SI ontology and epistemology, and the methodology perspectives of SI. The chapter also contains a literature review of culture, cultural values and dimensions of culture, Intercultural Competence (IcC) and the IcC learning life-cycle (IcC development models) and the learning of IcC.

Chapter Three contains an analysis of the literature on study abroad and the expected outcomes of study-abroad programmes, as well as cultural adaptation, including culture shock. Learning IcC through adaptation is discussed, along with recognition of cultural symbols. How this thesis benefits existing literature is highlighted.

Chapter Four outlines the methodological approach: phenomenography and variation theory, and the research methods adopted. An 'experience'; its internal horizon of focus and external horizon of context are explained. The chapter also describes the research sample, as well as the data collection and data analysis methods including how the phenomenographic categories of description and their variations were derived, along with a description of the structural framework for the thesis outcome space (the findings chapter).

Chapter Five details the research Outcome Space and presents the findings of the research in terms of **what** the research participants learned from their adaptation experiences within each of the analysed categories of description, and **how**. These are organised into the internal horizon of focus and its three sets of variations, which are related to variations in the external horizon of context, and the variations in the research participants' perceptions of and their ways of understanding their adaptation experiences. Terminology, including headings, used in Chapter Five are consistent with phenomenographic terminology.

Chapter Six is the discussion, contributions and recommendations chapter. The chapter presents the researcher's answers to the research questions and further observations drawn from the findings. Contributions to the fields of phenomenographic research and to the fields of cultural and IcC studies are presented. Recommendations for further research and practice in the field of study-abroad are also outlined, as well as some techniques and strategies to help cultural-immersion sojourners maximize their IcC learning, and thus their adaptation. Research limitations and comparisons with existing research are also included in Chapter Six.

The Appendices include Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) approval documents, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between AFS International and the researcher, and transcriptions of four research participant journals. Four research participant journals (of 18) are included as they are clearly written and easily readable, and are representative of the cultural adaptation experiences encountered by all the research participants.

Summary

In this chapter, I introduce my research of the participant sojourners' perceptions of and ways of understanding their cultural adaptation experiences, and how their understanding can lead to learning of IcC. I seek to understand the knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness which constitute the elements of IcC that are needed to live effectively in and interact with another cultural system. Many people have a propensity for their own cultural group, not recognising that in-group practices and values can change or be changed (Hall 1959/1981). IcC is not a natural ability, but requires a learning process (Bender-Szymanski, 2000). Further, one's own cultural worldview must be understood and reflected on. Grounded in symbolic interactionism as the underpinning theoretical framework, and using phenomenography and variation theory as the methodological approach, this research examines a sample of AFS cultural-immersion study-abroad sojourners as they adapt to living and interacting effectively with their host culture.

Cultural-immersion study-abroad programmes have a long history and with considerable numbers of participants. The concept of such programmes is no longer largely based on the desire to counter the effects of the global conflict that was World War II and to help prevent repeats of such conflict. Globalisation has shifted the concept to the community level. Study-

abroad programmes now play a vital role in developing the intercultural competences required to cope in an increasingly globalised world (Byram, 2014; Yashima, 2009).

Chapter Two: Theory: SI, Culture, and IcC

Introduction

The theoretical perspective that has been adopted in this research is symbolic interactionism (SI), an interpretivist, explanatory theory. This chapter opens with a brief consideration of the nature of a theory, followed by an in-depth examination of SI. It includes a discussion on the meaning of 'symbols', which, in SI terminology, are those things that are symbolic, or representative, of a culture.

SI is explored in terms of an ontology of social construction (MacKinnon, 2005), an epistemology of interpretivism, and qualitative research methodology (Furlong & Marsh, 1995/2010). These aspects of SI are then related to the qualitative methodology adopted in my research, phenomenography, which is discussed in Chapter Four.

Also I examine how people 'understand', that is, allocate meaning to things that they encounter during day-to-day interactions. I argue that people allocate meaning through a symbolic relationship with their environment. This relationship is known as symbolic interactionism (SI). In SI, people act and react (interact) toward things and other people in the world based on the meaning that those things and people have for them, which may be different from the meanings that they have for others, or that others have. These meanings are derived through interpretation of the interaction experiences, and can be thus modified through further interaction, interpretation and reflexivity over time (Blumer, 1969).

Also in this chapter I provide an overview of the concept of culture and how culture is mobilised in this research. There is a history of the development of the viewpoints and definitions of culture contextual to this research. This information is key to understanding how culture is evolving in the literature as a socially constructed concept. Cultural values and 'dimensions of culture' are also discussed. The dimensions of culture discussed here are derived from the Hofstede's dimensions of culture theory (Hofstede, 2001, 2011; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005) and from the work of Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1998).

A popular metaphor for culture is 'layers of culture', which has been described in terms of a 'cultural onion' (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Shaules, 2007; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). The cultural onion model illustrates that there are explicit aspects of culture, such as cultural symbols and rituals of everyday life, that can be immediately observed, and with which people symbolically interact. However, more inherent and implicit aspects of culture, such as cultural values and associated assumptions about life, cannot be observed, but are the foundations of and drivers for symbols and rituals.

In this thesis I have used the term 'symbols' to represent sights and sounds that are products and visible elements of a culture (Shaules, 2007) to which the research participants react, interpret, and form a perception and meaning (Blumer, 1969/1986, MacKinnon, 2005). The term

'rituals' is used in this thesis to represent those everyday practices of people which are also representative of a culture, such as greeting 'rituals', and rituals associated with food sharing and meals. I have 'borrowed' these terms from the layers of culture model (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005), which is explained later in this chapter. I have used these terms to avoid any possible confusion caused by using other terms to denote the same things.

Also in this chapter several definitions of IcC, and conceptual models of the elements of IcC, are discussed, including Byram's (1997) seminal model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC). All the models and definitions discussed in this chapter concur that IcC comprises knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness elements. The learning and development life-cycle of IcC is also examined. Three IcC development models are presented and reviewed, including Bennett's (1993) widely cited and used Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). The usefulness of these development models in relation to my research and to learning IcC is considered.

Symbolic interactionism theory and the allocation of meaning

The goals of a theory are explanation and/or prediction (Gregor, 2006; Freese, 1980). The theory underpinning this thesis, SI, is an explanatory theory for the inquiry into and explanation (interpretation) of human behaviour. It is a theory for explaining the way an individual allocates meaning and understands phenomena in the world (Gregor, 2006).

SI is a theoretical framework developed from the philosophy of pragmatism (Charon, 1998; Stryker & Vryan, 2003. See also Blumer, 1969/1986). It theorises that humans are **pragmatic** and continually modify their behavior according to the actions of others because they are able to **interpret** these actions to derive a meaning from them, and make a response (Mittapalli & Samaras, 2008). Blumer theorised that an individual acts towards people and things on the basis of the meaning that the individual has given them. Further, he theorised that meanings are derived from social interaction, which provides the symbols for an individual's recognition of, and way of understanding the interaction. Understanding is gained through an interpretive process within the individual (Blumer, 1969/1986), and symbols are interpreted in different ways (MacKinnon, 2005).

While 'symbols' are not necessarily needed for interpretation, symbols can be used to categorise interactions such that one can understand the nature of interactions, and how interactions inform understanding and the creation of relationships between people, objects and representative notions. One can then see how seemingly complex relationships are developed, and that when reduced to symbols are clearer, simpler and more generalisable (Litchfield, personal communication, October 2017). A further explanation of symbols follows this section.

SI theory provides an explanation for how people make sense of day-to-day situations, and the ways they go about their activities. It is grounded in the experiences of the people whose lives are being studied (Prus, 1996). SI takes the everyday experiences of people, and shows a way

to assign an underlying meaning (Pascale, 2011). People's understanding of their community resides in their orientation towards that community's symbols. Their interaction with such symbols determines social and cultural life (Cohen, 1985/2000). SI provides a sense of what is relevant and important to observe, and offers ideas about how to form an explanation (Stryker & Vryan, 2003). Karp & Yoels (1979, p. 36) argued that:

one is not born with a preformed self. Through the use of symbols one learns to take on attitudes, values, and moods appropriate to the particular social circles to which one belongs. ... Our identities [religious, friendship cliques, family, etc.] are established and validated (or invalidated) through the responses which others make to us.

Central to a symbolic interactionist approach is the concept of personal agency (Fine, 1993). Individuals communicate and interact as agents capable of making choices, accepting or rejecting (or something in between) the meanings that they allocate to what they encounter (Blumer, 1969/1986).

Influenced by the philosophy of pragmatism, SI involves an examination of a human's practical relationship with their environment. SI tries to explain what knowledge is for the human being, and how they notice things in the environment; things such as requests, commands, declarations and gestures that indicate an intention and forthcoming action (Charon, 1998. See also Blumer 1969/1986). A person to whom such things are directed responds on the basis of the meaning that the person places on these actions. When the action has the same or similar meaning for both people in the interaction, there is shared understanding (Blumer, 1969/1986). An example of such an interaction is the greeting ritual. A handshake, a bow, or a hug between two individuals of the same culture produces agreement on the understanding of the greeting. However, a person from a culture for whom a hug is not the norm can feel an invasion of privacy when a hug is spontaneously given by someone for whom that form of greeting is the norm. Similarly, someone for whom a hug, or even a handshake, is the norm may regard someone giving a bow as a greeting as cold and unfriendly. Such interactions and reactions occurred for the participants of this research, and are detailed in Chapter Five.

SI further recognises that human beings can participate in social interaction and possess a 'self'; that is, to be able to indicate forthcoming action to others, and interpret forthcoming action indicated to them (Blumer, 1969/1986). For example, when approaching someone one can make a decision as to whether or not to extend a hand for a greeting handshake. If one decides to offer the person a handshake, one extends their hand as they approach, thereby indicating that action. Similarly, if a person is approaching someone and they extend their hand, this indicates that they are offering a handshake. The recipient can then decide whether or not to accept that offer.

Central to SI is the notion that human life is community life. Within the community there exists social structures, or networks, at various levels operating as facilitators (or blockers) of entrance into these networks' interpersonal relationships (Stryker, 2008). Human life is intersubjective,

and people and human behaviour within that context cannot be fully understood “apart from the [social structure] context within which they live” (Prus, 1996, p. 10).

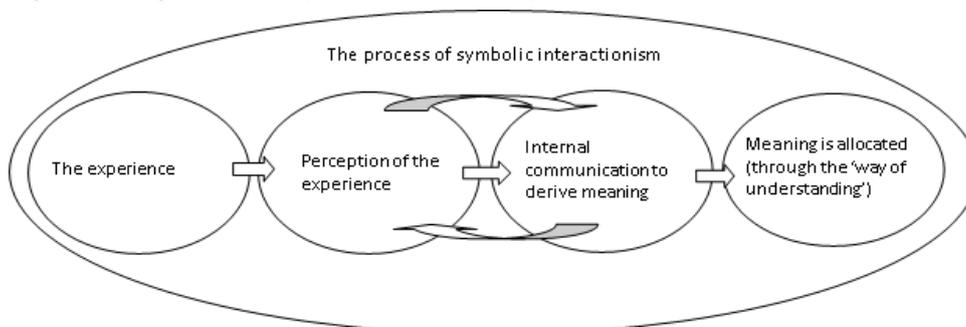
An explanation of ‘symbols’

‘Symbols’ are those things that a culture represents itself with, or those things that represent a culture. Within the context of SI, Litchfield (2005) provided a particularly clear explanation of ‘symbols’. Symbols, he said, can be anything used to represent something of significance to an individual: “animate or inanimate objects, concepts, emotions, people [that is what people represent, or ‘symbolise’ to the receiver], states of mind, or any other phenomena” (Litchfield, 2005, p. 60). Taking these points, “a person receives a stimulus [from the symbol], and interprets the meaning that it has for them” (Litchfield, 2005, p. 60). They can then make a response. Litchfield points out that the creative and extensive use of symbols and symbolism distinguishes humans from other creatures.

The allocation of meaning

According to SI theory, meaning is allocated by people through a **process of interpretation** (Blumer, 1969/1986). When interacting, a person first points out to themselves what it is that they are interacting with, then they communicate with themselves to determine meaning before they interact. Interpretation does not involve an automatic establishment of meaning, but rather a person “selects, checks, suspends, regroupes, and transforms meaning” (Blumer, 1969/1986, p. 5) in the light of the situation and context (see also Stryker & Vryan, 2003). This **includes** previous experiences. Figure 1 is my diagrammatic representation of the process of SI.

Figure 1: Diagrammatic representation of the process of SI



SI ontology

‘Ontology’ is defined as being the nature or essence of something (Crotty, 1998; Cohen & Manion, 1980/1994). SI’s ontology is “the social construction of reality” (MacKinnon, 2005, p. 90). While much of the literature claims ‘constructivism’ as the ontology of SI (MacKinnon, 2005; Furlong & Marsh, 1995/2010; Prawat, 1996), some SI writers claim ‘constructionism’ to be SI’s ontology (Fine, 1993; Parker & Myrick, 2011; Schneider, 1985).

From a constructivist position, the world is actively socially constructed by human agents who are shaped by social, political, and cultural dynamisms (Furlong & Marsh, 1995/2010). Constructivism claims that people do certain things, i.e. one thing and not the other, due to **social constructs**: their ideas, norms, rituals of daily life, values and beliefs that form an interpretive lens through which they view the world (Parsons, 2010). Action “is structured by meanings that particular groups of people develop to interpret and organise their identities, relationships, and environment” (Parsons, 2010, p. 80).

Constructionism, on the other hand, builds on the above theory by the actor being **consciously engaged in ‘constructing’**, whether they are engaged in learning something or engaged in actions that result in the construction of societal laws and regulations (Papert & Harel, 1991. See also Maxwell, 2006).

The cultural-immersion study-abroad sojourners participants in this research were engaged in informal, experiential learning situations. Constructivism therefore is the SI ontology adopted in this research, because the sojourner is learning IcC **irrespective of the circumstances of learning**.

SI epistemology

Epistemology represents “**how** we know what we know” (emphasis added) (Box, 2012, p. 9. See also Crotty, 1998), how what we know is acquired, and how it is transmitted to others (Cohen & Manion, 1980/1994). The epistemological position of SI is interpretivism (Furlong & Marsh, 1995/2010). An interpretivist position was taken for this research, with the research methodology being interpretive. Interpretivist researchers contend that the world is socially constructed, and that social (or cultural) phenomena cannot be understood independently of our interpretations of them (Furlong & Marsh, 1995/2010). Consequently, Furlong and Marsh argued that we should focus on establishing the interpretations and meanings of social phenomena in our research. SI is based on the premise that meanings are constructed through an interpretive process within the person that is dealing with the things that are encountered (Blumer, 1969/1986). It is in this sense that people live in a world of symbols and interact through communication with them (Karp & Yoels, 1986). Therefore, meaning itself is an interpretive process, emerging out of interactions with society’s symbols and rituals (Cohen & Manion, 1994; Plummer, 2000), symbols and rituals being the explicit projections of a culture’s values and beliefs.

The process of interpretation has two distinct steps. First, people interact internally to register and acknowledge their perception of things. Second, there is internal communication to form meaning: the way of understanding something in the world. In familiar, often-repeated experiences, such as encountering familiar symbols and common rituals, the person responds according to presupposed meanings (Blumer, 1969/1986). However, in unfamiliar situations, meaning must be established from the experience.

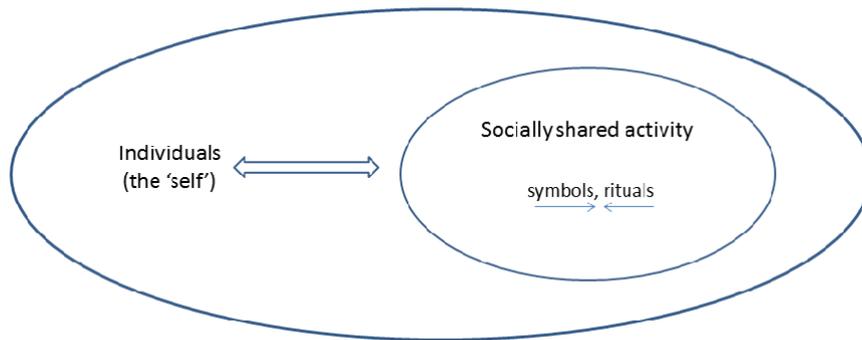
This is precisely the situation in which sojourners in another culture find themselves: they must establish meaning from their way of understanding an experience rather than simply respond according to their presupposed meaning. Every experience in these different situations results in a perception based on a meaning that is already constructed within the sojourner. The difficulty for the sojourner is when the things being interpreted make no sense to them. In this case, the resulting understanding may be deemed to be erroneous, or based on a misconception.

The process of interpretation is aided by the ability to imaginatively rehearse alternative actions before we act, and by the ability to think about and react to our own actions. Humans are active, creative participants who construct their surrounding social world (Mittapalli & Samaras, 2008) and their own meanings. As has been stated, people note things, consciously interpret them, and take action. For a sojourner, social and cultural symbols and rituals are noted, interpreted and given meaning through the sojourner's understanding of them. It is through this process that conscious action is constructed (Blumer, 1969/1986). Without continuous interaction between different social and cultural systems such as those provided by interculturally competent people, societies can become at odds with one another. Human differences can become exaggerated and perpetuated through segregation, and cooperation becomes minimised (Charon, 1998).

Interactions with cultural symbols and rituals enable individuals who are interculturally competent to interpret situations appropriately, and to "develop a sense of self, become socialised, participate in society, and understand the roles and significance of other people" (Claxton & Murray, 1994, p. 422). Participants in day-to-day interaction must build up their own responsive action through constant interpretation of each other's action (Blumer, 1969/1986). As repeated experiences are re-interpreted, reflected on, and meanings re-derived, the context within which the individual defines him- or herself also changes, resulting in the individual being dependent upon adapting and undergoing a process of re-self-definition (Claxton & Murray, 1994).

An important point about SI that Prawat (1996) stressed is that individuals, figuratively, sit both outside the interaction 'space' as they interact, as well as inside it. This includes interaction using language and with people (through symbols), and with events (rituals), all the while developing their own individual perspective and understanding with regard to the interaction. Figure 2 is an illustration of this concept. I have inserted the 'symbols and rituals' aspect of socially shared activities.

Figure 2: Individuals figuratively sit outside the interaction 'space' (adapted from Prawat, 1996. See also MacKinnon, 2005)



Another important point in SI is that the meanings formed by an individual's interaction with symbols and rituals form a 'pre-notion', or preconception, and have an impact on the nature of further interaction (MacKinnon 2005). The key point, as Blumer (1969) explained, is that individuals have a self. Thus, an individual, because they are able to figuratively stand outside of the interaction activity as an 'observer', they can consider and interpret the interaction. An individual interprets the interaction, constructs a meaning based on his or her preconceptions, which is the result of his or her own cultural and social conditioning through their developmental years, and forms a perception of, and way of understanding, what just happened (Blumer, 1969). And thus, over the course of multiple interactions, a cultural community constructs and re-constructs its symbols, rituals (practices) and values, just as the sojourner may do over the time of their sojourn.

SI methodology

Because SI is concerned with a multiplicity of interaction experiences, and the construction of meaning from those interaction experiences, the methodology that follows is necessarily qualitative (Furlong & Marsh, 1995/2010). Furthermore, being a theoretical framework, SI's "methodological principles have to meet the fundamental requirements of empirical science" (Blumer, 1969/1986, p. 21), and people must see the world "from their perspective ... [and] depict it as it appears to them" (Blumer, 1969/1986, p. 22). The viewpoint taken in SI is that society consists of groups of people who are interlinked. SI explains how people fit their individual reactions to the activities that they confront (Blumer, 1969/1986).

Based on the theory contained within this chapter there are consequential implications for research (Prus, 1996). According to Prus, this means that people studying people need to take regard of:

1. The intersubjective nature of human behaviour;
2. The worldviews of those who are being studied;
3. The meanings that they attach to themselves and to symbols (in the broad sense);
4. The ways people do things (on both a solitary and an interactive basis);

5. The attempts people make to influence, to accommodate, and to resist the viewpoints of others;
6. The relationships people develop with others and how they maintain these relationships; and
7. The processes that influence the build-up of experiences over time (Prus, 1996, pp. 18-19).

The above seven points are an examination of **experiences**, people's **perceptions** of those experiences, and the subsequent development of meanings based on their **ways of understanding**. This, I argue, is ideally suited to the research methodology that I have used: phenomenography. Phenomenography is a study of the perceptions of experiences and the way they are understood by the person who has had the experience. Such a study of experiences opens up the perceptions of people to the researcher (Prus, 1996). Phenomenography takes a non-dualist stance, where one's own self is "thoroughly grounded in people's experiences in the interactive community of others" (Prus, 1996, p. 36). People's interpretations are "rooted in the stocks of knowledge that people accumulate through associations with others" (Prus, 1996, p. 36) over time and within their own society. Prus argued that human experience is intersubjective, that we must learn what these intersubjective meanings are, and that we can do that only by becoming involved with symbols and interpreting **experiences** (Charmaz, 1996, as cited in Prus, 1996).

Experiences are created through people interpreting and reflecting, and working out actions which align, or otherwise, with the acts of others. As Blumer (1969, p 538. See also Prus, 1996) notes (author's emphasis):

Symbolic interaction involves **interpretation**, or ascertaining the meaning of the actions and remarks of the other person, and **definition**, or conveying indications to another person as to how to act. Human association consists of a process of such interpretation and definition. Through this process the participants fit their own acts to the on-going acts of one another...

Sojourners enter an unfamiliar society, the actions of which are not fully understood, and must be interpreted based on their experiences in their own society. Consequently, the resulting meanings derived in the unfamiliar society are prone to misinterpretation and therefore mistakes can be made in subsequent action. The adaptation processes and IcC learning techniques and strategies discussed in this thesis will greatly reduce the instances of misinterpretation of actions, thereby contributing to a more satisfying set of experiences that are more valuable to the sojourner in the long-term.

'Culture'

'Culture' is a broad term that carries many meanings and definitions. In this thesis I work with the term as it is used in the anthropological context. This is because the study is about interaction at a socio/cultural level. In this context, culture can very broadly be defined as "the full range of

learned human behavior patterns” (O’Neil. n.d., para. 1). It is a shared system of meanings to make sense of the world (Inda & Rosaldo, 2001).

Culture was first used in the anthropological context by English anthropologist Edward B. Tylor in *Primitive Culture*, published in 1871 (Logan, 2013). Tylor said that culture, “taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man [sic] as a member of society” (Tylor, 1871/1929, p. 1). Tylor recognised the complexity of culture as a concept, as well as the effect that culture has on the lives of individuals in a community.

Eighty-eight years later, renowned anthropologist Edward T. Hall presented a broader view of culture, as well as introducing the concept of intercultural conflict that can arise due to culturally based misunderstanding. Hall’s (1959/1981) view was that culture is “an unconscious framework which makes communication possible, but makes intercultural conflict inevitable” ... [as people are] generally unaware of their cultural conditioning, and that hidden differences in how we think,... [create] barriers to cross-cultural understanding” (Shaules, 2007, p. 27. See also Hall 1959/1981). Hall argued that day-to-day behaviour is tied to shared deep and implicit meanings, values and socially accepted protocols. Cross-cultural interaction, therefore, means interaction with different worldviews (Shaules, 2007), thereby giving rise to misunderstanding, and sometimes conflict. This, Hall (1976/1981) argued, is due to the cultural undercurrents that structure our contexts and shape our lives. Hall (1959/1981, p. 186) added (author’s emphasis):

Culture is not one thing, but many. There is no one basic unit or elemental particle, no single isolate for all culture... There is also a principle of relativity in culture... Experience is something which people project on the outside world as they gain it in its culturally determined form. ... **There is no experience independent of culture against which culture can be measured.**

Hall (1959/1981, 1976/1981) recognised that an individual’s cultural conditioning is the basis of their thoughts and actions, which are underpinned by implicit protocols, values and beliefs. Hall further noted that people are generally unaware of their cultural conditioning, which is a barrier to understanding why other cultures think and act differently. People’s acts are culturally based, and projected to those outside a given culture, and culture can be measured against those acts. This is culture as it affects the individual and those who observe the acts of individuals within a cultural grouping.

A more recent viewpoint of culture pertains to groups and to individuals. Valsiner (2007, p. 21) referred to culture as “a group of people who ‘belong together’” and share a common set of customs and values. Therefore, Valsiner stated, individuals “belong to” their culture and the “culture belongs to the person” (p. 21). Culture, he argued, is an organiser of the psychological systems of individuals. Culture, Valsiner added, is not an entity but is a process of internalisation and externalisation, and thus can be described as a socially constructed, evolving and changing notion. Valsiner’s viewpoint reflects Tylor’s and Hall’s notions that culture underpins the thoughts and actions of individuals, and, furthermore, that individuals with similar thoughts and actions

come to form a group of people who belong together. The above viewpoints of culture, and the notion of culture being socially constructed has been adopted in this thesis.

When a sojourner enters their host community, they begin to symbolically interact with the people that make up the community. The way a sojourner acts and thinks during their interactions is based on their cultural conditioning. The sojourner forms perceptions and a way of understanding the interactions, and begins to allocate meaning to what they have experienced based on their own cultural conditioning. The meaning allocated affects the sojourner's adaptation to the community's values, ultimately determining the success, or otherwise, of their adaptation to day-to-day life in that culture.

'Layers' of culture

One of the ways culture has been analysed in the literature has been through metaphor. Culture has explicit, or visible, elements that one immediately notices when encountering a culture different from one's own, and implicit, or unseen, elements that are at the core of a culture. Thus, a culture can be described as having 'layers' (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). This section discusses layers of culture through the 'cultural onion' metaphor: Trompenaars' and Hampden-Turner's (1998; Shaules, 2007) and Hofstede and Hofstede's (2005) 'onion' models.

The two onion models presented here represent any given culture's outer, visible (explicit), and inner (implicit) 'layers'. The term 'onion' is not used by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner; rather, it is used by Shaules (2007) to describe the Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner layers of culture concept. The onion metaphor is used in this thesis to conceptualise not only the explicit aspects of a culture that the sojourner sees and must adapt to, but also the implicit or unseen aspects of a culture that the sojourner must understand and reconcile with in order to effectively adapt to daily life in that culture.

While the idea of explicit and implicit layers as illustrated in a cultural onion metaphor is accepted in this thesis, the explicit and implicit layers of culture have also been described as an 'iceberg' metaphor (the iceberg metaphor is credited to Edward T. Hall in his book *Beyond Culture* [1976/1981]). An iceberg metaphor has surface-level, visible aspects of culture (symbols and rituals), with deeper, unseen and underlying values and beliefs systems that support, and are the drivers for, these cultural symbols and rituals.

The 'onion' models of layers of culture

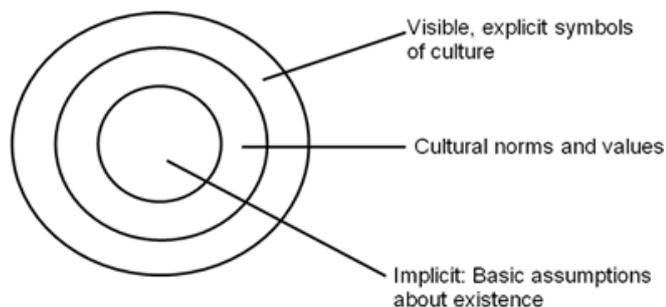
In both the onion models, the explicit, visible, outer layer are those aspects of culture that can be immediately observed: a culture's symbols. This includes a culture's language, monuments and shrines, art and architecture, dance and song, food, images, gestures, as well as people who possess characteristics that are indicative of that culture (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Litchfield, 2005; Shaules, 2007). Symbols carry a particular meaning that is recognised by those

who share a particular culture. Symbols are what a tourist or sojourner immediately witnesses when crossing a cultural boundary.

At the next onion layer Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998) place 'cultural norms and values'. 'Norms' include 'rituals', which are described by Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) as the everyday protocols that people follow in their activities. It is the way they behave based on their values, which includes concepts of what is 'right' and what is 'wrong' (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998).

At the core, implicit layer of Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's (1998) onion, lie the fundamental dimensions of culture from which a culture's values are constructed: a society's basic assumptions about life. These values and cultural dimensions are discussed in the following section.

Figure 3: Trompenaars' and Hampden-Turner's (1998) 'Cultural Onion' (replicated from Shaules, 2007, p. 57)

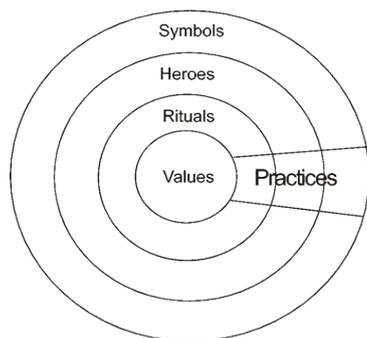


In their onion, Hofstede & Hofstede (2005) place 'heroes' in the second layer. Heroes are described as persons, alive or dead, or imaginary, who are idolised, iconised, used as role models, or very highly respected in a society or culture.

'Rituals', in the next layer of the Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) onion, are collective activities within a culture that are considered socially essential, or accepted or desired "ways of doing things" (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 8). There are many rituals. These include greetings and farewells, establishing social networks, social and religious ceremonies, rituals associated with eating, and rituals associated with business and political activities. In the Hofstede & Hofstede model, the symbols, heroes and rituals layers are grouped into the term 'practices' and dictate the way in-group members act. While they are visible to an outside observer, their cultural meaning remains invisible to the observer. They are constructed from a culture's values.

Values is placed at the core of the Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) onion, and are described as the "broad tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others" (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 8). These values are acquired early in a child's life and are the "mental programming" (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 2) acquired from the family and from cultural and social environments through enculturation, even though these may alter later in life.

Figure 4: Hofstede's and Hofstede's (2005, p. 7) 'onion': Manifestations of culture at different levels of depth



To illustrate the difference between symbols, rituals and underlying values Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1998. See also Shaules, 2007) use the example of the Japanese custom of greeting by bowing. Bowing is an explicit **symbol** of Japanese culture. The **ritual** of bowing follows certain cultural protocols, and can be observed and is therefore explicit. But what is the implicit, symbolic meaning of bowing? If one asks **why** Japanese people bow, one might receive the answer that it is 'customary' and to show respect (Shaules, 2007). However, there is an even deeper, culturally symbolic meaning underlying the customary act and protocols of bowing. To answer the above question, one must examine a deeper layer of culture: the culture's **values**. The rules associated with the depth to which one bows depends upon the status of the person to whom one is bowing (Shaules, 2007; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). One acknowledges the higher status of the other when one bows lower.

Summary of the onion metaphor models

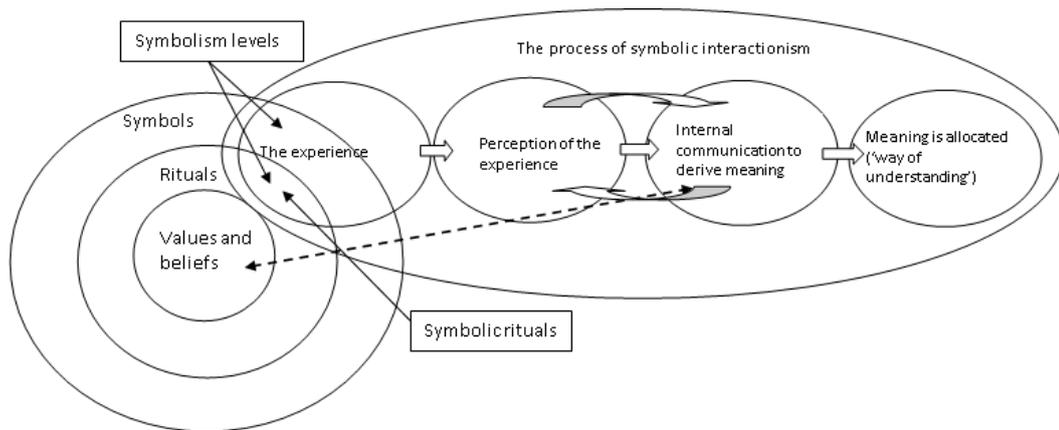
Hofstede and Hofstede's (2005) onion differs from the Trompenaars' and Hampden-Turner's (1998) in that Trompenaars' and Hampden-Turner's model does not include 'heroes'. The view that is taken in this thesis is that 'heroes' are symbolic of a culture, and are thus included in the symbols layer. In the Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner model, norms (rituals) and values are placed together, with the implicit, hidden cultural assumptions being at a deeper level (see Figure 3). Hofstede and Hofstede reason, however, that while norms, including rituals, are visible to the observer, values are not. Acknowledged, however, is Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's deeper layer of cultural assumptions, and Hall's (1976/1981, p. 12) "cultural undercurrents": the cultural conditioning that shapes our lives.

Reconciling their own values with and adjusting to different values introduces a deeper level of complexity to the adaptation demands of a sojourner. Study-abroad sojourners live with local families, and as a result are expected to adapt to everyday family life and activities that are guided by that family's underlying values and beliefs: their cultural conditioning. In the next section, cultural values are examined.

SI and layers of culture

People interact with the symbols and rituals layers of culture. Figure 5 is a diagrammatic representation of SI in relation to these layers of the cultural onion. This illustration depicts that people interact with the symbolic representations of a culture: its explicit symbols and rituals. Interaction does not occur directly with values and beliefs, but with the symbolic expression of those values and beliefs. One does not interact directly with, for example, individualism or collectivism, but rather with the symbolic representation or manifestation of those values. However, people draw on their own conceptions of values and beliefs to form meaning from and understanding of the interaction.

Figure 5: SI and layers of culture



Cultural values and cultural dimensions

Values give a culture a sense of unity and consistency and help a culture's members make choices, indicating to them what is good and right and what is not: "what should be done" (Triandis, 2004a, p. xv) and what should not be done (Condon, 1974; House & Javidan, 2004; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). Values are socially constructed within **cultural dimensions**. The cultural dimensions included here are based on the works of Geert Hofstede (see Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005. See also Bergiel, Bergiel & Upson, 2012) and of Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1998) and include 'individualism'/collectivism', 'power distance', 'assertiveness'/modesty', 'uncertainty avoidance'/tolerance of ambiguity', 'universalism'/particularism', 'long-term/short-term orientation', 'specific'/diffuse', 'neutral'/affective, 'achievement'/ascription', and 'time orientation'.

Cultural dimensions describe **socially-constructed differences** in basic cultural assumptions and the values upon which a culture constructs its practices (rituals), and thus do not remain fixed (Bergiel et al., 2012; Hofstede, 2011; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; House & Javidan, 2004; Triandis, 2004a; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). Study-abroad sojourners must learn to understand values differences within these cultural dimensions in order to successfully adapt to living in a cultural dimension different from their own.

It must be emphasised here that in practice no society is either all one thing or the other, but rather is oriented towards one set of values more than the other by varying degrees. The literature is unanimous on this point (see for example Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998; Triandis & Gelfland, 1998). For example, the traits of individualism and collectivism are not mutually exclusive (Green, Deschamps & Páez, 2005; Triandis, 1995). Indeed, individuals can be both individualist and collectivist at the same time (Green et al., 2005). Following is my compilation and review of cultural dimensions from the various sources as identified.

Individualism versus collectivism (individual needs versus group needs)

Many theorists and researchers make a distinction between 'individualist' societies and 'collectivist' societies (see references in the discussion below). For example, the USA is said to be highly individualist, and some Latin American countries highly collectivist (see Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Hofstede's country rankings and level of analysis, however, have been questioned (Oyserman & Uskul, 2015), and the theory expressed that collectivist societies become more individualist as levels of modernity, urbanism, higher education and personal and societal wealth increases (Oyserman & Uskul, 2015; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). Nevertheless, there remain robust differences between so-called individualist societies and so-called collectivist societies as described below. Indeed, according to Oyserman & Uskul it was not Hofstede's intention that his rankings, for this or his other identified cultural dimensions, be regarded as 'fixed'. This cultural dimension has also been described as autonomy versus conservatism (Schwartz, 1994).

At the heart of the differences between individualism and collectivism is the fundamental issue of the role of the individual versus the role of the group (Biddle, 2012; Green et al., 2005; G. Hofstede, 2001, 2011; G. J. Hofstede, 2009; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Lustig & Coster, 1999; Ting-Toomey, 2009; Triandis, 1995, 2004b; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998; Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2009; Zaharna, 2009). Individualist-oriented societies embrace practices relating to **individual** needs and achievement, while collectivist-oriented societies are **group**-centric.

In collectivist societies, ties between people are integrated and strong, with cohesive in-groups. Society is seen as an holistic organism rather than a collection of individuals, with decision-making, physical conditions and the use of skills being focused towards group needs rather than individual needs (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005. See also Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). In collectivist cultures, the word 'no' is rarely used, as this is confrontational. Similarly, the word 'yes' does not necessarily mean agreement or approval, but can also mean 'yes, I understand', or 'yes, I heard you', thus maintaining the line of communication (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). In families, family members are expected to give greater priority to family needs and matters than to individual wants and needs.

On the other hand, in individualist-oriented societies ties between individuals are loose, and each looks after oneself. Personal time, individual freedom, and individual challenge are the underlying cultural assumptions. Relationships with others are not prearranged but are voluntary and need to be carefully fostered. In individualist cultures, speaking one's mind or saying exactly how one feels is the norm, with a clash of opinions "leading to a higher truth" (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 86). Individualism has been said to encourage individual freedom, independence, personal autonomy, and individual achievement and responsibility (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998; Trumbull, Rothstein-Fisch & Hernandez, 2003).

A concept particular to collectivist-oriented societies is that of 'face'. Face refers to the honour or prestige that one carries or is accorded as a member of society. Losing face thus refers to actions, either their own, or of others close to them, that diminishes that status or prestige, or humiliates them. The expression originates from the Chinese: there is no equivalent expression in English (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005. See also Qi, 2011).

Power distance (degrees of inequality)

In all societies there are degrees of inequality, as some people are accorded more status than others. This is generally referred to as power distance (Carl, Gupta & Javidan, 2004; G. Hofstede, 2001, 2011; G. J. Hofstede, 2009; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Javidan, House & Dorfman, 2004; Ting-Toomey, 2009). It has also been referred to as authority ranking relationships (Fiske, 1992).

The power distance cultural dimension, therefore, represents the level of dependence upon higher authority that people in a given society have as opposed to the levels of interdependence. Cultures with high levels of dependence tend to accept more authoritarian-style leadership from those of higher status or authority. On the other hand, in more consultative-oriented cultures individuals will more readily approach and contradict their superiors (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). However a society accords status to its members, cultures also have to deal with the inequality that results from such allocation of status in different ways, as people in influential positions are able to dictate the behaviour of others and wield more power. Inequality is also visible in higher power distance cultures in the form of more clearly defined upper, middle and lower classes, which differ in their access to the advantages of society, including education (Carl et al., 2004; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005).

Assertiveness versus modesty

The assertiveness/modesty cultural dimension describes cultures that show traits of assertiveness (Den Hartog, 2004), toughness and focus on material success as opposed to those with a more modest orientation. Also referred to as the 'masculinity index' (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005), the opposing traits are modesty and placing a greater degree of importance on the quality of life (Hofstede, 2009; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Assertiveness can, of course, be a personality trait. Hall (1959/1981) argued that behaviour exhibited by males in some

cultures is considered by other cultures to be so called 'female' traits (for example, embracing and holding hands, sensitivity and well-developed intuition, and openly showing emotions). And, on the other hand, women in some cultures are sometimes seen as being coldly practical, which in some cultures are considered 'masculine' traits (Hall, 1959/1981).

Uncertainty avoidance versus tolerance of ambiguity

Ways of handling uncertainty are common to all societies and institutions, with every cultural system constructing practices for easing tensions associated with uncertainty. Such ways become the subject of laws, religion and technology (Hofstede, 2009; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). This orientation has also been described as the degree to which a society prefers rigid structure over relative flexibility, and the degree of risk taking versus risk aversion (Bennett, 2009; Fukuyama, 1995; Ting-Toomey, 2009).

Cultures that are oriented towards uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; House, 2004; Javidan et al., 2004) tend to construct more formal laws and legal structures, more formal and informal rules controlling rights and duties of people and more internal regulations. In high uncertainty avoidance cultures, feelings are more intense, with both positive and negative sentiments being expressed more emotionally. On the other hand, cultures that tolerate ambiguity (de Luque, 2004; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005) tend to show an aversion to formal rules, think that rules should only apply if absolutely necessary, and consider that many problems can be sorted out without formal rules (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). An example was described by a research participant who commented that in his country there are no rules about the use of cellphones in class as students simply do not use their cellphone during classtime.

Universalism versus particularism (rules versus relationships)

Universalists focus on application of the rule or process, while particularists focus on the feelings of the person (Trompenaars & Hampton-Turner, 1998). In a universalistic approach, 'what is good and right' always applies and must be followed. On the other hand, in a culture oriented to particularism, greater attention is given to obligations, and relationships, with less attention being given to societal protocols and rules.

An example used by Trompenaars and Hampton-Turner (1998) is that of a contract. A universalist would regard a "contract as a contract" and "meaning precisely what the terms say" with a focus on the drawing up of the contract (Trompenaars & Hampton-Turner, 1998, p. 47). A particularist on the other hand would regard a contract as "symbolising the underlying relationship" and "being an honest statement of the original intent" which can be readily modified (Trompenaars & Hampton-Turner, 1998, p. 48).

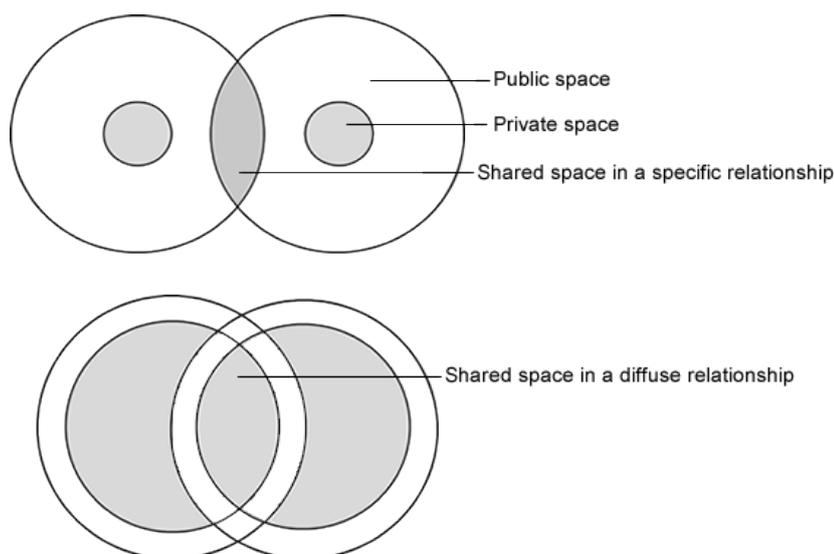
Long-term orientation versus short-term goals

Long-term orientation is manifested by perseverance and sustained effort toward longer-term results whereas short-term orientation dictates that effort should produce quick results and a concern with social status and obligations (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Long-term orientation manifests in thrift, being sparing with resources, concern for personal adaptiveness, and willingness to subordinate oneself for a purpose. This cultural dimension has also been described as Confucian dynamism (Hofstede and Bond, 1988). Countries oriented toward Confucianism values of perseverance, thrift, and ordering relationships by status tend toward a longer-term inclination (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005).

Specific versus diffuse (the range of involvement)

Specific-oriented cultures tend to put the specifics of a task ahead of relationships; that is, the segregation of the task-in-hand from relationships with the individuals involved. On the other hand, diffuse-oriented cultures place a higher value on relationships over task specifics (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). Specific-oriented cultures tend to keep their 'private spaces' private, while diffuse-oriented cultures tend to share private things with friends, associates, and even strangers, thus turning them into 'public spaces' (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). The concept of spaces includes physical objects and settings, such as private dwellings, private cars, furniture, and even food in refrigerators (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). The degree to which this occurs is related to the degree of specificity or 'diffuse-ness' that is the cultural tendency. Lewin (1936) describes this using the concept of 'openness', while Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner used the term 'life spaces'. Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner illustrate using an adaptation of 'Lewin's Circles' (Figure 6):

Figure 6: The concepts of 'openness' (Lewin, 1936), and 'life spaces'. Adaptation of Lewin's Circles as cited in Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1998)



Neutral versus affective (the range of feelings expressed)

Some cultures have a tendency to openly display their feelings, while others tend toward a more emotionally neutral orientation. In neutral-oriented cultures, formal relationships are typically about achieving goals or objectives, with emotions being held in check so as to not confuse issues. On the other hand, in affective-oriented cultures the whole gambit of emotions are culturally appropriate, including banging fists on the table, loud laughter, even storming out of an interaction in anger (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). People tending toward a more neutral orientation are often accused by expressive cultures of being 'cold' or having 'no heart', while the converse is to accuse highly affective-oriented people of being highly emotional, out-of-control, and inconsistent (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998).

Achievement versus ascription (how status is accorded)

Achievement means that status is accorded based on what one has accomplished, while ascription means that one's status is ascribed by birth, kinship, age, personal connections, or, in some cultures, gender (Carl et al., 2004; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). Achievement-oriented cultures justify their established hierarchies by rationalising that more highly respected individuals have achieved more, regardless of age or family or social connections. On the other hand, in ascriptive cultures one's status simply 'is' and requires no rational justification: it is as natural as one's birth (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). Status accordance such as having a higher level of respect for males, or for older men or women from 'respected' families or with greater social connections, are never normally justified or defended, but rather is just the way of things. Ascription-oriented hierarchies are justified by having the "power to get things done" (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998, p. 115). This cultural dimension has also been referred to as merit-based versus relationship-based values (Newman, Summer & Warren, 1977).

Time orientation

Some cultures structure and use time very differently compared to others. Some structure individual time very tightly, while others view keeping time as less important than other matters, especially relationships. Even so, as Hall (1959/1981) pointed out, time is so thoroughly embedded into our existence that we are hardly aware of the degree to which it dominates our lives.

Time-orientation has been described in various ways. **Monochronic** ('M-time') (Hall, 1959/1981), or **sequential** (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998) time means everything according to a fixed, linear time (Lewis, 2006) schedule. M-time is characterised by scheduling, by doing one task at a time. It permits only a limited number of events in a given time span with important things being done first, and 'unimportant' things done last, or not at all if time runs out. On the other hand **polychronic** ('P-time') (Hall, 1959/1981) or **synchronic** (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998) time stresses the completion of tasks rather than strict adherence to

schedules. In P-time-oriented markets and stores, one customer is surrounded by other customers demanding attention, with no apparent order for who is served next. The same pattern occurs in governmental agencies, even medical emergency rooms. With M-time on the other hand, everyone waits in queues or waiting rooms until it is 'their turn' to be attended to (Hall, 1959/1981).

For a sequential thinker everything is in sequence, with time being seen as a limited resource which is constantly being used up. Thus, scheduling tends to be more rigid, with a greater emphasis on promptness. This perspective is oriented to the future (Hall, 1959/1981), and is described as future orientation (Ashkanasy, Gupta, Mayfield & Trevor-Roberts, 2004). For a synchronic thinker (P-time) on the other hand, time is multi-active (Lewis, 2006), requiring people to track various activities in parallel (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). Often many activities are juggled simultaneously.

Time is seen by yet other cultures as recurring, or cyclic, with promptness not considered to be important. In cyclic time orientation, time is not wasted as could be contended in sequential time orientation (Lewis, 2006). Cyclic time thinkers do things as they naturally occur, or 'when it feels right'.

Use of time, therefore, is socially constructed, being interwoven into the way we interact with daily life. We use time interpretively, with our subjective views of past, present, and future influencing our decisions and actions (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). For example, how long is a 'long time'; a few weeks, a few months, a few years? While any of these may be a reasonable response for some cultures, a few thousand years may be a reasonable response from others (Hall, 1959/1981). Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner cited the example of a Japanese bid to purchase the management rights to Yosemite National Park in California: A 250-year business plan was submitted, which also indicates a long-term orientation.

Conceptualising and defining Intercultural Competence (IcC)

The SAGE Encyclopedia of Intercultural Competence (Bennett, 2015) refers to IcC as a set of characteristics and behavioural skills that support effective interaction in different cultural contexts. IcC is described in the encyclopedia as requiring the knowledge, skills and motivation to accomplish effective interaction while respecting the particular cultural norms.

This section reviews four often cited models and definitions of IcC. The elements of knowledge, skills and attitudes are common to all four models and definitions reviewed. Awareness appears as a distinct element in Fantini's (2000) model, included in the education element in Byram's (1997) model, in the knowledge and comprehension elements of Deardorff's (2006) model, and as a requisite requirement in Sercu's (2005a, 2005b) model. Sojourner predisposition and requisite attitudes feature in two of the models. The purpose of this section is to identify the commonly theorised elements of IcC that will help develop the tools required for the learning of IcC and successful adaptation during a study-abroad sojourn.

For successful day-to-day living in their host community, a study-abroad sojourner must learn to adapt to unfamiliar culture-based symbols, such as the sights and sounds of their environment, and to interact with unfamiliar symbolic rituals: the culturally based practices of everyday life. They learn and develop the IcC necessary to successfully live and interact with people who are living their lives according to different values that come from different underlying cultural dimensions. IcC can thus be broadly defined as the knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness required to successfully live and effect action in a community different from one's own.

Michael Byram's (1997, 2003) model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

Byram's (1997) model of Intercultural Communicative Competence remains widely cited in the literature, and posits a comprehensive model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) in which he shows IcC (intercultural competence) as a subset (Byram, 1997). Byram adapted the elements that he has included in his model from van Ek (1986). The model contains a number of issues important to my research.

Byram (1997) proposed his model for teaching and assessing ICC, including its subset IcC. The model depicts four factors of intercultural communication: Knowledge (*savoirs*); Skills (*savoir comprendre and savoir apprendre, and savoir faire*); and Attitudes (*savoir être*). Within each of these, he defines IcC in terms of objectives:

- **Knowledge** (*savoirs*) of social groups and their products and practices, and of general processes of societal and individual reaction;
- **Skills of interpreting and relating** (*savoir comprendre*) an event or document from another culture, to explain it and relate it to one's own culture;
- **Skills of discovery and interaction** (*savoir apprendre, and savoir faire*): An ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and its practices, and skills and attitudes under constraints of time and interaction; and
- **Attitudes** (*savoir être*): Curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures, and willingness to relinquish one's own ethnocentric attitudes (Byram, 1997, p. 49-54).

Also included in the model is Education. Byram (1997) described the context of education (*savoir s'engager*) as political and critical cultural awareness. Byram's knowledge, skills, attitudes and education sets are illustrated in Figure 7 (below). A core learning objective of Byram's model is reflexivity, as signaled in the words (above) 'readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and willingness to relinquish your own ethnocentric attitudes' (see also Blasco, 2012). Byram's schema of factors (Figure 7) is then applied to each subset in his model of ICC: linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and intercultural competence (IcC) (Byram, 1997).

Figure 7: Byram’s schema of factors in intercultural communication (Byram, 1997, p. 34)

	Skills interpret and relate <i>(savoir comprendre)</i>	
Knowledge of self and other; of individual and societal interaction <i>(saviors)</i>	Education political education critical cultural awareness <i>(savoir s’engager)</i>	Attitudes revitalising self valuing other <i>(savoir etre)</i>
	Skills discover and/or interact <i>(savoir apprendre, and savoir faire)</i>	

Byram’s focus in his earlier literature was the inclusion of IcC in foreign language teaching, and the value of a “cultural or intercultural dimension in language teaching” (Byram, 2014, p. 209), which has become widely recognised. “Through the development of linguistic and intercultural competence”, Byram said, language and culture teaching produces “alternative conceptions of the world and contributes to the education... of the individual in society” (Byram 2012, p. 5). Byram’s later focus is on the criticality of language awareness and cultural awareness and its relationship to ‘citizenship education’. The result of citizenship education, he stated, is active engagement in the world and in our own society (Byram, 2012). The focus has increasingly moved to education for intercultural citizenship, described as “the development of competences to engage with others in political activity across linguistic and cultural boundaries both within and across state frontiers” (Byram, 2011, para. 24. See also Byram, 2014). This notion was expressed earlier in Chapter One (p. 6). My research focuses on the IcC dimension, albeit with some sojourners developing linguistic competence in a second language learned as a result of their sojourn.

Alvino Fantini’s (2000, 2006, 2012) definition of IcC

Fantini (2000, 2006, 2012) contended that IcC has variable elements in a continuum from the interpersonal level to the intercultural level within three domain areas:

1. The ability to develop and maintain relationships;
2. The ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with minimal distortion; and
3. The ability to attain agreement and obtain cooperation.

IcC, he argued, is constructed of behavioural traits including “respect, empathy, flexibility, patience, interest, curiosity, openness, motivation, a sense of humor, tolerance for ambiguity, and a willingness to suspend judgment” (Fantini, 2000, p. 28). ICC, Fantini (2012) suggested, has the dimensions of knowledge, attitudes/affect, skills and awareness (IcC), and includes host language proficiency, and degrees of attainment. His ‘degrees of attainment’ are listed as:

- Level I: educational traveller;
- Level II: sojourner;

- Level III: a professional working in intercultural or multicultural contexts; and
- Level IV: a specialist engaged in education, training or consulting (Fantini, 2012, p. 273).

Fantini's (2006) research findings are analogous to those found in other models and definitions of IcC. Fantini argued that:

1. IcC involves a complex set of abilities;
2. Learning the host language affects IcC development in positive ways;
3. Intercultural experiences are life-altering, and people are changed as a result;
4. Sojourner choices produce certain intercultural consequences;
5. All parties in the intercultural contact are affected to some degree and in various ways; and that
6. Some returned sojourners tend toward specific life choices and values as a result of their experiences, and often engage in activities that benefit others.

Lies Sercu's (2005) model

In another model, Sercu (2005a) highlighted culture-specific and culture-general knowledge, knowledge of self and others, knowledge of societal and individual interaction, and insight into the ways in which culture affects communication. The elements of cultural skills are listed as being the ability to interpret and relate, to discover and interact, and to acquire and operate new knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction (Sercu, 2005b). Sercu did not define awareness specifically, but listed requisite qualities of awareness: self-awareness and the ability to look at one's self from 'the outside', the ability to see the worldview of others and to evaluate this view, and an understanding that individuals cannot be reduced to collective identities. The ability to look at one's self from the outside and to self-reflect is an important concept in symbolic interactionism as discussed in Chapter Two. Reflexivity is also core to Byram's model as mentioned above.

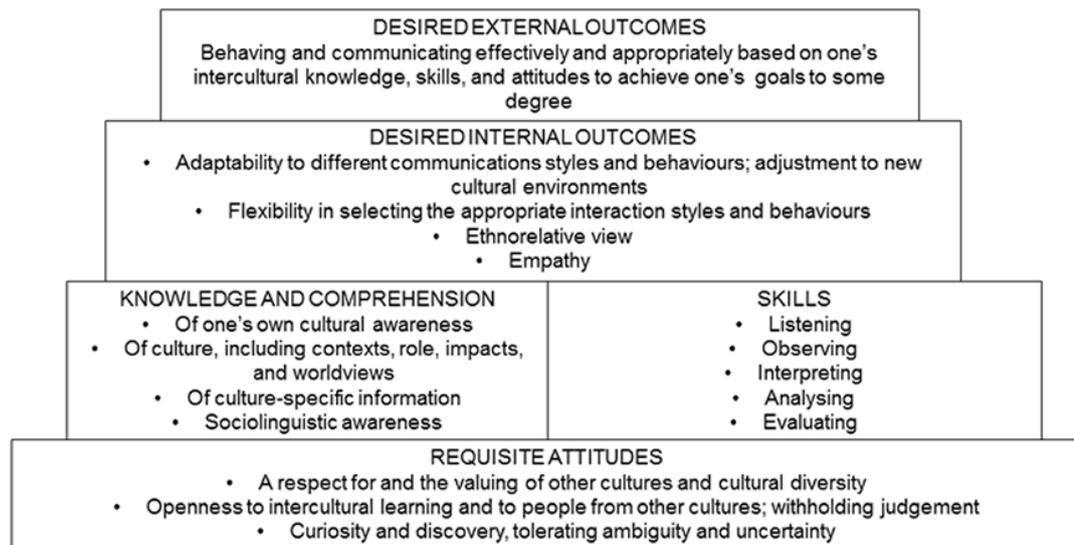
Darla Deardorff's (2006) pyramid model

A model that introduces additional elements of IcC, requisite attitudes and desired outcomes, is Deardorff's (2006) pyramid model. Deardorff's model has been described as the result of one of the relatively few efforts to identify a set of research-based components of IcC utilising both deductive and inductive processes (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). Using a grounded theory approach, 23 intercultural experts provided their own conceptual perspectives and theories.

The resulting model illustrates how requisite attitudes enhance knowledge, comprehension and skills, which in turn enhance desired internal and external outcomes (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). The inclusion of requisite attitudes in Deardorff's model supports Sercu's (2005a)

assertion of the requisite qualities that a sojourner must possess (awareness, self-awareness, and reflexivity) in order to develop to advanced levels of IcC. Similarly, prerequisite qualities (described as 'predisposition') are included in Kim's (2001) theory of cross-cultural adaptation model, which is discussed in the following chapter. Deardorff's model (Figure 8) also takes cognisance of the desired **outcomes** of learning IcC. While her model is not an IcC development model it attempts to further quantify the outcomes of IcC development models discussed in this chapter.

Figure 8: Deardorff's (2006, p. 254) pyramid model of Intercultural Competence



Consolidating the theoretical framing of IcC in this thesis

Context (IcC and ICC)

Byram (1997) and Fantini (2012) believe that IcC is a subset of ICC. Yashima (2009), on the other hand, states that ICC has a somewhat narrower focus than IcC, and that ICC is part of IcC or interchangeable with it. Statements such as this, however, serve to confuse understandings of IcC and of ICC, just as the wide variations in views and definitions pertaining to the understanding of the term 'culture' can easily confuse.

A possible distinction between IcC and the term 'cultural competence' has been offered by Risager (2005). The former, she said, is the knowledge, skills and attitudes that interface between several cultural areas, including the student's own culture and language; whereas the latter is knowledge, skills, and attitudes concerning a specific cultural area. The development of IcC, Risager (p. viii) stated:

... is thus seen as a process that includes students' experiences and competencies from their own cultural backgrounds, a process that allows them to reflect on their own cultural assumptions as an integral part of the further development of their skills and knowledge of the world.

In the case of this research, IcC is regarded as the knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness required to live and effect action in a different cultural system, and this **includes** the interaction competencies that are required to communicate effectively. Just as ‘culture’ must be understood within a context, so must IcC and ICC be regarded in context. In the context of language and intercultural communications learning (Byram’s context), and within the wider context of globalisation where communications is paramount, IcC is indeed a subset of a wider set of competencies. However, within the context of the competencies required for living and interacting effectively in another cultural system, which is the context of this research, IcC becomes paramount, with interaction competencies (language proficiency) being a subset. As each has its own specific contextual frame of reference as described here, it is therefore incorrect to suggest that the terms IcC and ICC are interchangeable.

The elements of IcC

IcC has often been defined and conceptualised, and there is relative agreement on the elements and sub-elements that make up IcC. The top-level elements can be summarised as knowledge/understanding, skills, attitudes and awareness, including awareness through learning and reflexivity (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006; Fantini, 2000, 2006, 2012; Howard-Hamilton, Richardson & Shuford, 1998; Sercu, 2005a).

In Table 1, I have consolidated the sub-elements of IcC into top-level elements. Further, the sub-elements have been categorised with application to IcC learning during a study-abroad sojourn: requisites, during-sojourn learning, and longer-term capabilities.

Table 1: The researcher’s categorisation of the elements and sub-elements of IcC pertaining to study-abroad sojourners’ learning of IcC

<i>Commonly cited element</i>	<i>Sub-elements</i>	<i>Implication for study-abroad sojourner</i>
Knowledge/ understanding of	Social rituals, and of individual reaction (Byram, 1997). Self as it relates to one’s cultural identity, and of the similarities and differences across cultures (Howard-Hamilton, et al., 1998), and of one’s own cultural awareness (Deardorff, 2006). The contrasts between important aspects of host and one’s primary language; of techniques and strategies to aid learning of host language and adjustment to the host culture; of interactive behaviours common in the host culture in social and professional areas and contrasting these with one’s own cultural behaviours in important areas; of the signs of adaptation stress and of strategies to overcome it; and of the essential norms and taboos of the host culture (Fantini, 2006).	Likely to be learned during sojourn to aid adaptation
	An event or document from another culture, an ability to explain it and relate it to one’s own culture (Byram, 1997). What devalues intercultural relationships, such as discrimination and ethnocentric assumptions (Howard-Hamilton et al., 1998). Cultural contexts, roles, impacts, worldviews, and culture-specific and culture-general knowledge and information (Deardorff, 2006; Sercu, 2005a); knowledge of self and others, knowledge of societal and individual interaction, and insight regarding the ways in which culture affects language communication (Sercu, 2005a).	Longer-term capabilities

<i>Commonly cited element</i>	<i>Sub-elements</i>	<i>Implication for study-abroad sojourner</i>
	<p>Elements involved in social change, and the effects of cultural difference on communication; of oppressions, and intersecting oppressions within race, gender, class, religion; of how to take multiple perspectives, and understand differences in multiple contexts; of how to challenge discriminatory acts and to communicate across cultures (Howard-Hamilton et al., 1998).</p> <p>Important historical and socio-political factors that shape the host and one's own culture; of culture and its components, and a model of cross-cultural adjustment stages (Fantini, 2006).</p>	
Skills	<p>The ability to develop and maintain relationships; the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with minimal distortion; and the ability to attain compliance and obtain cooperation (Fantini, 2000, 2006).</p>	Requisite skills
	<p>The ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and its practices, and its skills and attitudes under constraints of time and interaction (Byram, 1997).</p> <p>The ability to engage in self-reflection, and to identify and articulate cultural similarities and differences (Howard-Hamilton et al., 1998).</p> <p>Listening, observing, interpreting, analysing, evaluating, relating (Deardorff, 2006).</p> <p>Flexibility in interactions with a capacity for appropriate interaction in a variety of social situations and to use culture-specific information to improve one's style and personal interaction; adjustment of behaviour, dress, etc. to avoid offence; the ability to contrast the host culture with one's own; the ability to adopt strategies for learning the host culture and its language; and the ability to use appropriate strategies for adapting to the host culture and to reduce cultural stress (Fantini, 2006).</p>	Likely to be learned during sojourn to aid adaptation
	<p>Behaving and communicating effectively and appropriately based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes to achieve one's goals (Deardorff, 2006).</p> <p>The ability to interpret and relate, to discover and interact, and to acquire and to operate new knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction; the ability to look at one's self from 'the outside'; the ability to see the worldview of others and to evaluate this view and an understanding that individuals cannot be reduced to collective identities (Sercu, 2005a).</p> <p>The ability to use appropriate tactics to help resolve cross-cultural conflicts and misunderstandings (Fantini, 2006).</p> <p>Adaptability to different communication styles and behaviours; adjustment to new cultural environments; and flexibility in selecting the appropriate interaction styles and behaviours (Deardorff, 2006).</p>	Longer-term capabilities
Attitudes	<p>Curiosity, openness, a sense of discovery, tolerance of ambiguity and uncertainty, and readiness to suspend judgement and disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own (ethnocentric attitudes); openness to intercultural learning and to people from other cultures (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006).</p> <p>A respect for and the valuing of other cultures and cultural diversity (Deardorff, 2006).</p>	Requisite attitudes
	<p>Adapting behaviour according to communication and interactions with the host culture in appropriate ways including perceiving and expressing; interest in learning about and from the host culture; the ability to deal with emotional aspects of the host culture and to adopt appropriate situational roles; and reflection on the impacts</p>	Likely to be learned during sojourn to aid adaptation

<i>Commonly cited element</i>	<i>Sub-elements</i>	<i>Implication for study-abroad sojourner</i>
	and consequences of personal decisions and choices (Fantini, 2006).	
	Valuing one's own cultural group and the basic equality of groups; and appreciation of values and the life-enhancing role of cross-cultural interactions (Howard-Hamilton et al., 1998). Understanding of differences in behaviours, values, attitudes and styles (Fantini, 2006). An empathetic and ethnorelative viewpoint (Deardorff, 2006).	Longer-term capabilities
Awareness (through IcC learning and education)	Self-awareness (Sercu, 2005a). Political and critical cultural awareness (Byram, 1997). A multi-cultural perspective evaluation of perceptions and practices, and the identification of criteria needed for such evaluation (Byram, 1997; Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). Of self as it relates to one's cultural identity and of the similarities and differences across cultures (Howard-Hamilton et al., 1998). Of similarities and differences in language; of how various situations require modification of interactions; of how one is viewed in the host culture and why; of one's own cultural conditioning, personal everyday practices and preferences, choices and consequences, personal values that affect one's approach to cultural dilemmas and their resolution, and how one's own everyday practices and values are reflected in specific situations; of the diversity within the host culture's society and the dangers of generalising; of the hosts' reactions to one's self that reflect their cultural values; of how one perceives one's self as a communicator, facilitator and mediator in an intercultural situation, and of one's own level of IcC development (Fantini, 2006). Sociolinguistic awareness (Deardorff, 2006:).	Likely to be learned during sojourn: awareness development

As can be seen in the table, the competences that make up the sub-elements of IcC are extensive. Knowledge can in part be learned prior to embarking on a study-abroad sojourn; however, unless there is significant pre-departure education, skills and the development of attitudes and awareness are in the main learned experientially during a sojourn along with the stages of adaptation.

Experiential learning can be likened to discovery-based learning, and the pre-departure preparation to 'scaffolding'. Discovery-based learning takes place in problem solving situations in which the learner draws on experiences and existing knowledge to learn new things (Bruner, 1961; Alfieri, Brooks, Aldrich, & Tenenbaum, 2011). Scaffolding is the temporary supporting of learners so that they can carry out learning successfully (Gibbons, 2015). Unsupported discovery learning is much criticised in literature, with many authors advocating supported discovery learning (see for example Alfieri et al., 2011; Clark, Yates, Early & Moulton, 2010) including scaffolding (see Choo, Rotgans, Yew, & Schmidt, 2011). Thus, I advocate both scaffolding and supported discovery learning for study-abroad sojourners.

The IcC experiential learning and development life-cycle

This section reviews two models that attempt to reflect the process of IcC development that a sojourner goes through over time to reach a state of adaptation (or integration) to another

culture's way of living. As the sojourners progress through these stages, their understanding of the cultural symbols and rituals that they interact with day-to-day increases in a non-linear and recursive fashion. As a consequence, their knowledge increases, their attitudes change and their awareness increases. As they progress through the stages of adaptation, they learn the skills needed to become interculturally competent. The models reviewed here are:

1. Milton Bennett's (1993, 2003) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity: purported to map the development of what Bennett terms 'ethnorelativity' in an individual, this model is an approach to learning IcC that emphasises the development of "increasing sophistication in dealing with cultural difference" (Bennett, 1993, p. 22); and
2. Joseph Shaules' (2007) 'Deep Culture' Model of Intercultural Learning: this model draws from Shaules' study of Edward T. Hall's works, the 'cultural onion', the DMIS, and Shaules' own research findings. The model has a vertical as well as horizontal development plane thus allowing for sojourners to be in what Shaules terms 'mixed states'.

Milton Bennett's (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)

The model most commonly cited in the literature and which appears to be the most widely used commercially (see below), is Milton Bennett's (1993, 2003) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). Bennett's model assumes that as one's experience of cultural difference becomes more complex, one's IcC increases in stages, and that each stage indicates particular mental processes that are expressed in certain attitudes towards cultural differences (Bennett & Hammer, 1998). It is based on the central issue of the sojourner's need to develop intercultural sensitivity, and so move from an ethnocentric worldview to an ethnorelative worldview. The model focuses on the sojourner's subjective experiences of cultural difference, not just their objective behaviour. Bennett's model, therefore, is developed from lived experiences of how the phenomenon of intercultural sensitivity is developed (Burnett & Gardner, 2006).

The first three DMIS stages (Bennett, 1993) are described as 'ethnocentric', meaning that one's own culture is the central reality. Ethnocentric stages are:

1. **Denial** of cultural differences as one regards one's own culture is the only real one. This is expressed by disinterest in cultural difference, or aggressive elimination of difference if it impinges on them;
2. **Defence** against cultural difference, where one's own culture is the only good one. This is expressed as an 'us and them' division, where 'us' is superior, and 'them' is inferior. Feeling threatened by cultural difference leads to high levels of criticism of the different culture; and
3. **Minimisation** of cultural difference where one's own cultural worldview is the universal one. This is expressed by trivialising or romanticising the other culture, and correction of the other behaviour to match expectations.

The second three DMIS stages (Bennett, 1997) are 'ethnorelative', meaning that "one's own culture is experienced in the context of the other cultures" (Bennett & Hammer, 1998, para. 7).

Ethnorelative stages are:

1. **Acceptance** of cultural difference where one's own culture is experienced as just one of a number of equally complex worldviews. While not meaning **agreement**, it is not ethnocentric, but rather is expressed as curiousness and respectfulness toward cultural difference;
2. **Adaptation** to cultural difference where experience of another culture results in behaviour appropriate to that culture. One's worldview is expanded to include the worldview of the other culture/s; and
3. **Integration**; a state where one moves freely in and out of different cultural worldviews. While not necessarily **better** than adaptation, Bennett and Hammer suggested that it is common among long-term expatriates and 'global nomads'.

Bennett (1993) claimed that his model is an approach to learning that emphasises deeper-level IcC rather than cultural understanding at a surface level. He describes his term 'ethnorelativism' as being an appropriate complement to ethnocentrism, a term coined by William G. Sumner in 1906 (Hammond & Axelrod, 2006).

The DMIS and the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory)

The DMIS comes with a proprietary assessment instrument, the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), which was created using the six DMIS categories. It was developed by Dr Mitchell Hammer and is used in his, and Bennett's, consulting and training work. It is available only for those who have been trained in its use (Shaules, 2007), which includes organisations such as AFS (Hansel, personal communication, April, 2007).

The DMIS and IDI have been the subject of a number of studies. Shaules (2007) reported that these studies indicate that rather than six categories, subjects' responses were grouped into five categories (see Figure 9 below). Shaules said that 'denial' and 'defence' seemed like one category, with a new category, 'reversal', seeming to express a different experience to defence. Similarly in Burnett and Gardner's (2006) research on study-abroad sojourners, the 'denial' stage did not appear to be an appropriate categorisation. It seemed, rather, that coming into contact with a different culture caused sojourners to become aware of their own cultural perspectives. Burnett and Gardner also questioned that the generalised, ethnocentric statements of their participants were not so much evidence of defence of their own culture, but simply evidence of trying to apply a worldview developed in one culture to a different culture. Acceptance and adaptation seemed similar and are merged into one category, **encapsulated marginality**, which signifies the integration stage of the DMIS whereby one sits on the margins between two cultures, freely moving from one to the other (Shaules, 2007). A subsequent

revised IDI study validated these five elements (Shaules, 2007). Figure 9 illustrates the original DMIS in comparison with the revised IDI:

Figure 9: DMIS categories cf. validated IDI (Shaules, 2007, p. 122)

Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity					
Denial	Defence	Minimization	Acceptance	Adaptation	Integration
<i>Ethnocentrism</i>		Ethnocentric	Ethnorelative	<i>Ethnorelativism</i>	
←————— —————→					
Categories validated by IDI studies (Hammer, et al.. 2003)					
Denial/ Defence	Reversal	Minimization	Acceptance/ Adaption	Encapsulated Marginality	

Burnett and Gardner’s (2006) study found definite evidence of adaptation, including an attempt to understand by imagining or comprehending the other’s perspective (Bennett, 1993; Burnett & Gardner, 2006). Burnett and Gardner considered Bennett’s final DMIS stage, integration, where the individual develops an identity that sits on the margin of two or more cultures, to be implicitly individualist, thereby limiting the model’s explanatory power for individuals from collectivist-oriented cultures.

This is an arguable point, as in the adaptation process the individual surely first develops an appreciation of, for example, the values orientation relative to the culture that they are immersed in, then accepts that orientation, adapts to it and even integrates into the different cultural worldview. Furthermore, it appears to contradict their conclusion, discussed earlier, where they state that “it was apparent that the cultural outlook of some of the students had changed from a primarily ... collectivistic approach to ... a more individualistic way of dealing with life” (Burnett & Gardner, 2006, p. 75).

Burnett and Gardner’s (2006) research, however, corroborated Bennett’s ethnocentric/ethnorelative continuum. Research participant comments, they argued, clearly demonstrated “increased levels of intercultural sensitivity and ethnorelativism ...” (Burnett & Gardner, 2006, p. 90). Their research found some evidence of minimisation in their research participants, and they concurred with Bennett (1993) that their research participants passed through the minimisation stage quickly. Burnett and Gardner argued, however, that while some comments that may be associated with the minimisation of the host culture were merely a realisation of the commonalities that they found existed, a definite development of an ethnorelative outlook was observed in the research participants. Although they do not specifically label the first observation of ethnorelativity in their subjects as acceptance, they do not challenge Bennett’s description of this DMIS first phase of developing an ethnorelative outlook. Burnett and Gardner acknowledged that the DMIS has value in that it stresses the

importance of constructing a personal identity in the face of cultural difference, and that its developmental approach is clearly appropriate for the process of acculturation.

Researchers, however, have pointed out other problems with the DMIS. Burnett and Gardner (2006) believed that the model does not accurately reflect their participants' experiences. Additionally, the model's linear approach is problematic. Adaptation is a progressive process that is likely to proceed in a recursive fashion; that is, with all stages of the process being revisited at different times as the sojourner encounters new experiences (Burnett & Gardner, 2006). This is in line with Shaules' (2007) analysis of the DMIS and with Shaules' own 'Deep Culture' model discussed later in this section.

Questions remain regarding the validity of the DMIS for cultures other than the US. Shaules (2007) pointed out that Bennett's educational background, training and experience are all US-centered. This does not, however, mean that he is unable to carry out unbiased research, or design a model that can be used multi-culturally. Shaules (2007) further pointed out, however, that in one interview-based study, 65% were US Americans or Europeans, and in the largest quantitative study done, 87% were from the US. In another qualitative study, Yamamoto (1998 as cited in Shaules, 2007), questions the validity of the minimisation stage of the model. Rather, his participants' descriptions of their experiences of the difference between Japan and the US were in terms of Japanese cultural values and perceptions, such as comfort and discomfort, rather than in terms of acceptance or otherwise. Yamamoto concluded that each stage of the DMIS may need modification to deal with a Japanese perception of similarities and differences (Shaules, 2007) because of the instrument's bias toward American/European orientation.

Similar questions have been raised regarding the efficacy of the IDI as an IcC development assessment tool. Kuchinke, Ardichvili and Lokkesmoe (2014, p. 2) reported "low and uneven levels of change in intercultural orientation", thus challenging the believed positive effectiveness of immersion programs. While this finding does not question the IDI, in another report of the same study; however, Lokkesmoe, Kuchinke and Ardichvili (2016) acknowledged that multiple measures of IcC exist, and it is possible that development occurred in areas not measured by the IDI, and, additionally, that IcC development might take longer, and thus may not be captured by a post-return assessment.

The Intercultural Development Continuum

A derivative of the DMIS is Hammer Consulting's (now Hammer Holdings, Inc) trade-marked Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC) (Hammer, 2009). The IDC describes a knowledge, skill and attitudes set, or orientations toward cultural difference, "arrayed along a continuum from the more monocultural mindsets of Denial and Polarization through the transitional orientation of Minimization to the intercultural or global mindsets of Acceptance and Adaptation" (Hammer Holdings, 2018). The above phrase is also used to describe the IDI (see Hammer, 2012). Apart from literature from Hammer himself, I found few other scholarly literature specifically directed

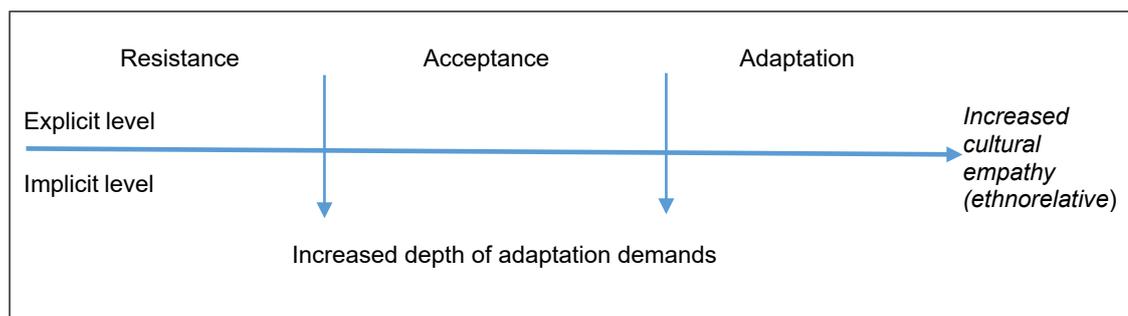
to the IDC, with most information being found on commercial consulting web sites. Kruse, Didion, and Perzynski (2014) referred to the IDI as being based on the IDC.

Joseph Shaules' (2007) 'Deep Culture' Model of Intercultural Learning

Drawing from his study of Hall's works, the 'cultural onion', the DMIS, as well as his own research findings, Joseph Shaules in 2007 developed his 'Deep Culture' Model of Intercultural Learning. Shaules' 'Deep Culture' (Shaules, 2007) is described by Hall as a "culture's undercurrent" (Hall, 1976/1981, p. 12). Rather than Bennett's six DMIS categories, Shaules uses three categories: resistance (being ethnocentric), acceptance and adaptation (being degrees of ethnorelativity). Similar to the DMIS, a sojourner becomes more interculturally competent as he or she passes from the resistance phase, to acceptance, and finally to adaptation.

However, Shaules' (2007) model also has a vertical continuum, representing a sojourner's advancement into deeper levels of adaptation demands: deeper than the explicit layers of culture. Shaules' model is illustrated in Figure 10:

Figure 10: Shaules' (2007) 'Deep Culture' model of cultural learning



Shaules (2007) used the cultural onion model to argue that at any one point in time, a sojourner may be in what he calls mixed states; that is, to be at different stages on the ethnocentric–ethnorelative continuum for the explicit, subjective level of symbols and rituals, and for the implicit level of cultural values and deeper cultural assumptions. For example, a sojourner may be in the **acceptance** stage for the explicit level, and the **resistance** stage for the implicit level. Using the DMIS intercultural sensitivity continuum, they are at **different** points on the continuum for each of these cultural layers **at the one point in time**. A sojourner, for example, may be at the DMIS appreciation level (ethnorelative stage 1) for the outer, explicit cultural layer, and at the DMIS defence level (ethnocentric stage 2) for the cultural norms and values layer. These mixed states, Shaules argued, make the DMIS less useful in describing an **individual's** reactions to specific experiences and their IcC development. Shaules model, therefore, unlike the DMIS, allows sojourners to be in 'mixed states'.

Even within one cultural level, however, sojourners may **accept**, even **appreciate** certain explicit realities, norms and values, but remain resistant to others. Additionally, they may have differing, even contradictory, reactions to and perceptions of **the same** experiences. Shaules assumed a

generalised stance, that while a sojourner may indeed appreciate some cultural realities, norms and values, the sojourner advances to the acceptance category when they do not unfairly criticise or denigrate anything about the host culture. In other words, once the sojourner advances past the resistance stage they begin to speak in **neutral** terms when describing viewpoints about, or experiences of, aspects of culture even when they feel negative reactions. This, Shaules argued, is normal (Shaules, 2007).

Usefulness of these models in relation to this study

The models reviewed in this chapter provide a theoretical basis for some aspects of IcC learning and development and associated cultural adaptation. However, some models appeared more useful than others for this study in terms of assessing the research participants' cultural adaptation and IcC learning. Bennett's (1993) DMIS is useful in assisting with data analysis with its continuum from an ethnocentric viewpoint through the various stages that a sojourner goes through to reach the state of ethnorelativity. The researcher, however, found that only the model's continuum structure was of use in providing a basis for evaluating the research participants' progress in the learning and development of IcC **for each given category of adaptation experience**. Shaules' (2007) 'Deep Culture' model is more useful in that the model includes what Shaules (2007) termed 'mixed states': that is, a sojourner may have accepted, or even adapted to, some aspects of the host culture but be in a state of resistance to other aspects.

Some useful elements regarding adaptation were provided by Kim's (2001) model of cross-cultural adaptation; for example, the sojourners' predisposition towards the sojourn, and the receptiveness of the host community, which appear in the findings of this research. Adaptation to another cultural system requires more than an awareness of the knowledge, skills and attitude elements. Kim's model is discussed in the following chapter.

As was stated earlier, the sojourner, from each of his or her intercultural experiences and through adapting to life in the host community, may gradually learn the required IcC. Also as previously stated, cultural learning is better as a specific element of the sojourn programme. Effective learning of IcC should include not only looking outward at other cultural worldviews, but also reflexivity: looking inwards and examining one's own cultural viewpoint in order to better understand our own cultural perspective and worldview, and thus expanding awareness.

Summary

In this chapter I have discussed Symbolic Interactionism (SI), an interpretivist, explanatory theory that posits how an individual develops perceptions of experiences in their many interactions with the symbols and rituals of daily life, and then allocates meaning to what they have experienced. The aim is to explain and understand the world of lived experiences through the perspective of SI, and to gain an understanding of the meanings that are allocated by people to things in the world.

SI is a perspective developed from the philosophy of pragmatism (Charon, 1998; Stryker & Vryan, 2003. See also Blumer 1969/1986). People pragmatically interact and communicate through symbols, and act by using such symbols. Human survival is based on such communication (Stryker & Vryan, 2003). Individuals communicate and interact as human agents, and meaning is allocated by individuals through a process of interpretation (Blumer, 1969/1986). People develop meanings from their interactions. They respond to themselves reflexively, figuratively stepping outside of their selves and communicating with themselves in order to react to other persons or things, anticipate others' responses and potential action and to construct responses (Stryker & Vryan, 2003).

SI theory has been examined in terms of its ontology, epistemology and methodology. SI's ontology is social construction (Furlong & Marsh, 1995/2010). People acting as human agents actively socially construct the world's realities. These realities are local and specific, and they are meaningful, shaped by social, political and cultural dynamics (Furlong & Marsh, 1995/2010). Through these dynamics, people interpret and organise their identities, relationships and environment (Parsons, 2010). Pragmatism involves an examination of human beings' relationships with their environment, and tries to explain what knowledge is for them and how they notice things in the environment (Charon, 1998, See also Blumer 1969/1986).

The epistemological position is interpretivism, which contends that social (or cultural) phenomena cannot be understood independently of our interpretations of them (Furlong & Marsh, 1995/2010). Meaning is an interactive process emerging out of interactions with society's symbols (Cohen & Manion, 1994; Plummer, 2000) and rituals. As people interpret experiences and their contexts, they confer meanings and then react (Cohen & Manion, 1994).

The process of interpretation is aided by the ability to imaginatively rehearse alternative actions before we act, and by the ability to think about and react to our own actions. Interactions with symbols and rituals enable individuals to interpret situations, to "develop a sense of self, become socialised, participate in society, and understand the roles and significance of other people" (Claxton & Murray, 1994, p. 422).

The methodological position of SI is qualitative (Furlong & Marsh, 1995/2010). The methodological approach taken for this research is phenomenography, a qualitative approach that seeks to study and interpret the interactions of a group of study-abroad sojourners as they learn to adapt to another socio-cultural system.

'Culture' was also examined in this chapter. Culture is a term designating cultural/social clusters or communities of common, shared symbols, rituals and values (Brumann, 1999), and a shared system of meanings to make sense of the world (Inda & Rosaldo, 2001). This research was grounded in Edward T. Hall's concept that culture is "not one thing, but many" (Hall, 1959/1981, p. 186); that culture is an unconscious framework that makes communication possible but some

intercultural conflict inevitable due to differences in the way diverse cultural communities think, thereby creating barriers to understanding (Shaules 2007).

Culture can be described, metaphorically, as having 'layers', and symbolised with a 'cultural onion' metaphor (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Shaules, 2007; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). The outer and visible layer consists of the immediately observable things that are symbolic or representative of a culture. The next layer, rituals, while observable, require interaction and must be experienced interactively in order to understand them and allocate meaning. The inner layer, values, are the less visible and implicit elements of a cultural community and are based on the culture's basic assumptions and beliefs about life. Values are the drivers for the culture's rituals and the basis of their symbols. People interact with the symbols and rituals layers of culture. Symbols and rituals are explicit manifestation of implicit values and beliefs.

Values derive from cultural dimensions (Hofstede, 2011; House & Javidan, 2004; Triandis, 2004a). Cultural dimensions include: individualism/collectivism (individual needs versus group needs), power distance (degrees of inequality), assertiveness/modesty, uncertainty avoidance/tolerance of ambiguity, universalism/particularism (rules versus relationships), long-term/short-term orientation, specific/diffuse (the range of involvement), neutral/affective (the range of feelings expressed), achievement/ascription (how status is accorded), and time orientation (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998).

In this chapter I have presented and discussed four common models and definitions of IcC. Included in all models reviewed are the elements of knowledge (coupled with understanding), skills and attitudes, with the element of awareness appearing in three of the four models and definitions. Requisite skills and attitudes (also referred to as predisposition) are also essential elements of IcC. These elements therefore, along with learning (Byram's element of education) are adopted in this thesis as being the basis of IcC.

From the literature I have developed a table of the elements and sub-elements of IcC (Table 1, p. 34). This table shows the expected requisite qualities, the sub-elements that would reasonably be expected to be learned during a sojourn, and the sub-elements that would be expected to be the outcome of longer-term reflection and analysis. It is acknowledged, however, that IcC involves a complex set of abilities requiring a holistic approach to the individual's reflection and analysis.

Also in this chapter, models of IcC learning and development (albeit labeled with differing titles) were examined. While Bennett's (1993) DMIS ethnocentric–ethnorelative stages continuum proved somewhat useful for this study, Shaules' (2007) 'Deep Culture' model proved more useful. Other models and definitions reviewed usefully informed my research, including Deardorff's (2006) pyramid model of intercultural competence.

Study-abroad sojourners, in the main, adopt experiential learning of IcC through interaction with and subsequent interpretation of their interactions in the environment. The element of reflexivity adopting ethnorelative thinking aids the development of the IcC necessary for adaptation to the different cultural environment. Supported learning of IcC during study abroad sojourns with scaffolding prior to departure is advocated.

Chapter Three: Literature review: Study-abroad and cultural adaptation

Introduction

This chapter historically contextualises and examines relevant literature in the fields of cultural-immersion study-abroad programmes and cultural adaptation, including culture shock (Church, 1982; Oberg, 1960). The literature addressing adaptation demands that study-abroad sojourners face is also examined. Considered is research into the outcomes and the longer-term effects of cultural-immersion study-abroad. Research shows that considerable personal growth and other benefits accrue to those sojourners who have successful study-abroad experiences, including the development of competencies that become useful in cross-cultural and intercultural interactions in the sojourners' subsequent lives

Study-abroad sojourners, when entering a community different from their own, need to learn to effectively adapt to the symbols and rituals of that different culture and thereby orientate to their values. Therefore, elements of the adaptation process and its stages are examined, along with adaptation stresses that inevitably occur. In particular, the necessary building of social networks, partaking of local food and rituals associated with food, and adapting to the host language are examined. Other aspects of adaptation also reviewed in this chapter are the predisposition qualities a sojourner should possess, environmental factors that affect adaptation, and the sojourners' readiness and preparedness for 'intercultural transformation' (Kim, 2001). Pre-sojourn preparation is also reviewed.

Study-abroad programmes and intercultural experiences

Research undertaken into cultural-immersion study-abroad programmes has consistently shown that significant education and personal benefits accrue to participants. A study by AFS between 1978 and 1985 into personal growth resulting from high school student exchange programmes found 17 growth categories, which were identified by the returned students themselves (Hansel & Grove, 1985). In all 17 categories, students showed significant pre-departure to post-return increases in personal growth, compared to a control group that did not participate in an exchange programme. Hansel and Grove stated that the primary goal of AFS programmes (during the period 1978-1985) was experiential learning. They argued that, according to the results of their study, exposure to a new culture has a greater effect on a student's adaptability than exposure to new experiences within their own culture. Participants attributed the changes in themselves to their AFS experience (Hansel, 1988). Furthermore, the impact of the cultural-immersion experience continued after the student arrived home, with participants incorporating what they had learned into their lives (Hansel, 1988). Hansel and Grove (1986, p. 90) pointed out that "scientists studying the learning process have discovered that in situations of high stimulation such as an intercultural homestay, the hormonal and neurological systems actually improve the brain's capacity to learn and remember [source not cited]".

Similar research was undertaken by Hammer Consulting between September 2002 and July 2003 for AFS Intercultural Programs. The Hammer Consulting research collected data from a sample group of AFS high school exchange students regarding their experiences over a three-year period, both during and following their exchange. This data was compared with data collected from a control group that did not participate, and who were student friends of the sample group (Hammer, n.d.). The major finding of the study clearly supported the positive impacts of AFS study-abroad. These effects remained with the students long after they returned home. Further, these effects were not found in the ordinary educational experience of students in their home countries. Compared to the control group, AFS students, among other outcomes, had significantly:

- Increased intercultural awareness and effectiveness;
- Less anxiety in interacting with people from different cultures; and
- Wider intercultural networks (Hammer, n.d., p. 3).

Dr Bettina Hansel, former AFS International Director of Intercultural Education and Research, in her report on that research, added the further outcomes:

- Stronger positive feelings about desirability of living in a multiracial area or neighbourhood;
- Lower levels of concerns about travelling abroad;
- Higher occurrence of study-abroad at university level; and
- Greater likelihood of obtaining a job that requires frequent interaction with people from other cultures (Hansel, 2008, p. 12).

Research undertaken in Europe produced similar findings. The European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL) (2003) (the federation of AFS affiliates in Europe) stated that there was an emerging awareness that individual school exchange students acquired a number of competencies. These competencies included the language skills, personal growth, global awareness and adaptability necessary to make them more effective intercultural citizens.

Sojourn experiences, however, vary widely from one individual to another. Even an extensive period abroad does not in itself guarantee acquisition of IcC (Sercu, 2005a), as experience alone is not sufficient, albeit a necessary element in acquiring IcC (Alred, Byram & Fleming, 2003). Alred et al. argued that there must also be reflection, analysis and action, and as these do not automatically flow from the sojourn experience, a role for education and educators is suggested. They added that there is no such thing as a 'complete' or 'finished' intercultural experience: it requires a post-sojourn re-consideration of the assumptions that are developed through enculturation (adaptation to living in another culture).

Reflection and analysis certainly do not automatically flow from experiences alone. To develop the skills required for interculturally competent action, the sojourner must incorporate elements of reflection and analysis into their sojourn, as well as into the subsequent years following their sojourn. This may require some explicit IcC learning being incorporated into the sojourn programme.

One approach to learning IcC has been suggested by Alvino Fantini (2000). Fantini stressed, that to transcend one's inherent worldview requires the concurrent development of IcC. To do this requires a "reconfiguring [of] one's original worldview" (Fantini, 2000, p. 11), by transcending and transforming it. One's natural cultural system, he said, becomes fairly well established around puberty, and it becomes increasingly difficult to see things any other way. An intercultural sojourn provides an opportunity to expand, enhance, or even reconstruct one's worldview. Fantini argued that IcC gives "cross-cultural awareness, global competitive[ness] ..., cultural competence, cultural sensitivity, ethno-relativity, international competence, intercultural interaction, biculturalism, and multiculturalism" (Fantini, 2000, p. 11). "From our long involvement in the field of intercultural communication", he added, "we knew that most existing terms, definitions, and concepts do not adequately cover all that occurs during intercultural contact" (Fantini, 2000, p. 11).

Research further shows that sojourners who do learn IcC during a sojourn abroad tend to use what they have learned in their subsequent activities. Alred and Byram (2006) stated that there is often strong evidence of the significance of the study year abroad in the lives of sojourners in subsequent years. For example, those sojourners who enjoyed the year abroad tended to follow careers with an intercultural focus (Alred & Byram, 2006). Conversely, a difficult sojourn sometimes can lead to rejection of the study abroad experience, and a tendency to follow careers that do not require a high degree of cultural competence. When circumstances demand, however, the sojourners' year abroad became a reference point to which they turned. Alred & Byram reported that their research demonstrated that the study year abroad became:

a lens through which [sojourners] consider later experience, a force which leads someone in an unexpected direction, and which creates an awareness of otherness and how one relates to it. ... It can also confirm a sense of belonging "at home" rather than among others and 'otherness' (Alred & Byram, pp. 230-231).

Alred and Byram (2006) argued, however, that the effect of opening one's mind to cultural differences will dominate in the long-term. In general, Alred's and Byram's research findings support those of Hansel and Grove many years earlier in 1985 and their subsequent research, as well as supporting the research findings of the EFIL in 2003.

Later studies continue to report on the positive benefits of study abroad. Fantini (2012) discussed the two-way nature of study abroad, stating that many returned sojourners commented that they learned as much about themselves as they did about their host culture. "Intercultural experiences", he said are "typically transformative, resulting in a profound paradigm shift" (Fantini, 2012, p. 277). More recent studies tend to focus on tools and techniques of improving

the study abroad experience, such as the necessity for pre-departure cultural education (see for example Goldoni [2013], referred to later in this chapter). Ballestas and Roller (2013), while noting that few articles described the outcomes of a study abroad strategy for learning what they termed 'cultural competence', their own research showed that a study abroad experiential learning programme can increase such competence for nursing students.

To successfully adapt to and integrate into the host community, sojourners must come to know and understand the host culture, and adopt tools to adapt to living in the host culture. It is important, therefore, to understand what 'culture' is, to understand both implicit and explicit aspects of culture, and how different cultural dimensions influence how people live their lives and interact with others. Culture, dimensions of culture and cultural values were examined in the previous chapter. It is also important to know and learn cultural adaptation strategies: strategies that will reduce culture distance and aid the learning of the IcC necessary to successfully adapt. The following section explores cultural adaptation.

Cultural adaptation

Adaptation, and the stresses associated with adaptation, begin immediately upon arrival at the host community. Even the greeting ritual that occurs when the sojourner meets the local representatives of their study-abroad organisation, or meets their host family, may cause feelings of invasion of personal space if the greeting involves a higher level of touching than the sojourner is familiar with. Conversely, feelings of the host being 'cold' may arise if there is no touching at all in the greeting. Visual symbols that the sojourner sees as they travel to their host family's home may cause feelings of shock, even revulsion. On the other hand, the sojourner may feel awestruck by what they see. Or they may feel a mix of both emotions.

The sojourner thus enters the process of cultural adaptation. This process may be short if the perceived culture distance is close, or may be quite lengthy if the perceived culture distance is further apart. This does not infer that the sojourner will, or must, **fully** adapt to such cultural symbols and rituals, but rather they should accept that these are a 'norm' in that culture and "just another way of living" (Oberg, 1960, p. 179).

Culture distance and adaptation

Perceptions of culture distance arise from differences in values within the cultural dimensions (Hofstede, 2001; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). For example, people from cultures that are highly collectivist-oriented will feel a greater culture distance with cultures that are highly individualist-oriented (Rientiesa & Tempelaar, 2013), whereas people from cultures that have a similar orientation will not feel such a difference between them. In my research, culture distance, as examined by the researcher and experienced by the sojourner, had a significant effect on the sojourners' adaptation. When there seemed to be a greater culture distance in any given cultural dimension, sojourners had a lengthier and more difficult adaptation than when such culture distance was narrower or non-existent. This is borne out in the journal of research participant

Milly, whose descriptions of her feelings suggest a highly individualist orientation, while she was living with a highly collectivist-oriented host family (see Appendix C1). Research participant Phillips similarly indicated a high culture distance in some cultural dimensions. Adjusting to widely different cultural values was identified in the research as being the most difficult and lengthy aspect of the cultural adaptation demands for the research subjects.

Almost immediately upon entry into the sojourners' host community, learning to adapt to the symbols (the products and visible elements of a culture [Shaules, 2007]) and rituals (the ways of doing things), and adjusting to the values required for successful day-to-day life in the local culture begins, and adaptation stresses (commonly known as culture shock) start to occur. The next sub-section examines culture shock, and how adaptation stresses affected two research participants in particular.

Culture shock

Culture shock is commonly viewed as a normal cultural adaptation process, and involves such stress symptoms as anxiety, feelings of helplessness, irritability and a longing for a more familiar environment (Church, 1982; Oberg, 1960). Kalvero Oberg is generally credited with the term 'culture shock' (Church, 1982).

Culture shock has various stages. First, Oberg (1960) stated that the sojourn environment is **rejected**, and second, the sojourner **regresses**, with the home environment becoming tremendously important. This, Oberg said, grows out of a genuine difficulty with day-to-day experiences, such as with the language, transportation, school, finding friends, the food and other adaptation demands. Then, as he pointed out, "if you overcome it, you stay, if you don't, you leave" (Oberg, 1960, p. 179). If the visitor succeeds and stays, they may then take a **superior attitude** towards the host culture. At that point, Oberg said, the visitor is "on the way to recovery", with the final stage being that the visitor now **accepts** the cultural systems, and that this is "just another way of living" (Oberg, 1960, p. 179). Oberg's culture shock stages can be likened to the DMIS (Bennett, 1993) (discussed in the previous chapter, pp. 37-38) ethnocentric stages of **denial** (Oberg's hostile and aggressive attitude) and **defence** (Oberg's superior attitude). Oberg's regression stage of culture shock appears to correspond to the IDI's (Shaules, 2007) (discussed on p. 39) 'reversal' category.

Individuals differ greatly in the degree to which they are affected by culture shock, and culture shock can manifest itself in many different ways. Oberg (1960) listed some common symptoms of culture shock: excessive washing of hands, excessive concern over drinking water and food, absent-mindedness and a 'far-away' stare, a feeling of helplessness and a desire for dependence on one's own national group, a delay in learning the language, fits of anger over minor delays and frustrations, excessive fear of being cheated and robbed, concern over minor pain and health issues, and a terrible longing to be back home. Some of these symptoms (in particular, absent-mindedness, feelings of helplessness and a desire for dependence on one's

own national group, a delay in learning the language and fits of anger over minor delays and frustrations) were exhibited by research participant Milly in her protracted reconciliation to different cultural values. Other research participants, to a greater or lesser degree, also reflected some of the above symptoms in their descriptions of their reactions to experiences.

It is commonly believed (indeed this concept is included in AFS pre-departure preparation sessions) that soon after arrival in their host community the sojourner enters a **honeymoon** stage when everything is fresh, new and exciting, where the cross-cultural experience is very pleasant, however, after that culture shock sets in. Culture shock is an integral element of discussion in AFS pre-departure sessions, with the honeymoon stage **preceding** the culture shock stage as in Oberg's (1960) model described above. Oberg argued that the sojourner first enters this honeymoon stage. However, once the sojourner has to cope with the unfamiliar conditions of life (adaptation), the sojourner begins to experience culture shock. There then comes a period of resistance, sometimes manifesting as a hostile and aggressive attitude towards the host country.

Other research, however, has contradicted the notion of the honeymoon stage. Sojourners, according to the research of Ward, Bochner, and Furnham (2001), suffered the most severe adjustment problems in the **initial** stages of their sojourn, "when the number of life changes are at the highest and the coping resources are likely to be at the lowest" (Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001, p. 81). A study of Japanese students in New Zealand verified that the level of depression among them was highest during the entry period (Ward, Okura, Kennedy, & Kojima, 1998). These findings were similar to earlier research where 68% of students described their initial entry period in exclusively negative terms (Ward & Kennedy, 1996; Ward et al., 2001). My research concurs with these studies, as there appeared to be no clear preceding 'honeymoon stage' reflected in the research participants' journals.

Moreover, the culture shock model is normally hypothesised as a U-curve depicting the entry period honeymoon stage falling away to Oberg's (1960) rejection/regression stages, then 'rising' again as a result of gradual cultural adaptation (i.e. climbing back up the curve). Again, an alternative viewpoint was argued by Ward et al. (2001). The U-curve model, they argued, appears to be "largely atheoretical" and derived from a "combination of post-hoc explanation and armchair speculation" (Ward et al., 2001, p. 80). Kim's (1998) literature-based research also concurs that the U-curve is atheoretical and not supported in empirical research.

Ward et al.'s (2001) argument seems a more accurate representation of the sojourners who were the subject of this research and who experienced more severe and extended episodes of culture shock. Moreover, the reader is referred to an illustration by research participant Kirby (Figure 34, p. 216. Also see Appendix C2) of the 'ups' and 'downs' of adaptation during his sojourn. This can be likened more to a wave with multiple peaks rather than to a U-curve. While such adaptation stress-mapping has not been a focus within this research, Kirby's 'wave' describes, albeit generally, the ups and downs of adaptation demands described by the research

participants and of those sojourner stories personally encountered by the researcher. As has been said, adaptation stresses are highly individual, and can be generated by any of a vast range of causes, whether they be internal or external to the individual sojourner. The researcher believes that should a number of individual sojourns be mapped for adaptation stress, each would produce a different wave, with a wide variation between both the number of peaks and troughs, and the height and depth of those peaks and troughs.

Young Yun Kim (2001, pp. 52, 56) introduced a “stress-adaptation-growth dynamic” factor in meeting the demands of the host environment. With a similarity to Oberg’s (1960) regression stage and Bennett’s (1993) Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) reversal category (discussed in the previous chapter), Kim argued that sojourners responded to stressful experiences by withdrawing. This, she said, activates “adaptation energy” that helped the sojourner “re-organise themselves” and take a “leap forward” (Kim, 2001, p. 57). As long as there are environmental challenges, Kim contended, this process continues, with diminishing severity, resulting in adaptation and intercultural transformation growth over time. It could be argued that Kim’s stress-adaptation-growth dynamic can also be likened to the stress/adaptation wave model posited by Ward et al. (2001) rather than the commonly used U-curve model. This also aligns with research participant Kirby’s wave illustration mentioned above and the experiences described in his journal (Appendix C2). Kim’s model is illustrated in Figure 12 p. 57.

Perceived culture distance between the sojourner’s own culture and the host culture can also be a source of culture shock. Suanet and van de Vijer (2008) found that that students with a greater perceived culture distance experienced more adaptation stress and homesickness (a symptom of culture shock) than those with a lesser perceived culture distance (Suanet & van de Vijer, 2008). Kim (2001) also regards culture distance (which Kim refers to as ‘ethnic proximity’) as being a major factor affecting adaptation. This is certainly indicative of the research participants mentioned earlier and will be discussed further in the outcome space chapter. If a sojourner understands that culture shock will occur, how culture shock manifests itself and is prepared with some strategies, they are already on the way to coping with it.

Adaptation stress and developing IcC

Adaptation stresses can present opportunities for learning, and developing IcC. In another adaptation stress model, Weaver (1993) insightfully included a conceptualisation for intercultural learning. Weaver argued that cross-cultural adjustment stress inevitably occurs during a sojourn due to loss of familiar cues, a breakdown of interpersonal communication, and an identity crisis (Weaver, 1993). Weaver said that when a sojourner successfully overcame culture shock, genuine psychological growth occurred. As a result, the sojourner moved to a deeper level of cultural understanding and, as a consequence, behaviour, actions and reactions became interculturally competent (Weaver, 1993). Research by Shaules (2007), however, seemed to indicate that only one in four long-term sojourners achieved Weaver’s deeper level of cultural adjustment. Shaules posited that two further elements could be added to Weaver’s

conceptualisation: (1) the concept of seeking and responding to adaptation demands rather than remaining 'sheltered', and (2) the sojourner's willingness to **accept** cultural difference and to allow themselves to change accordingly. Adaptation demands, discussed later in this section, support Shaules' view. Shaules' view also supports my assertions in this thesis that some directed IcC learning should be included in a study-abroad programme. While this study did not focus specifically on adaptation stress, the models reviewed proved helpful in that the researcher was able to recognise such adaptation stresses in the research participant journals and interview statements.

Other key elements of the cultural adaptation process

There is, of course, much more to cultural adaptation and the subsequent learning of IcC than overcoming culture shock. Adaptation requires an understanding of cultural symbols, the products and visible elements of a culture (Shaules, 2007), as well as a knowledge of and active participation in rituals (the ways of doing things) and thus developing skills. While no two sets of adaptation experiences are the same, there are common features to the adaptation process. Pearson-Evans (2006, citing Church, 1982), pointed out that there is so much variation in experiences, and also in the timing and duration of the adaptation stages, that it seems "more useful to investigate the causes of such variations in individual patterns than merely describing the stages themselves" (Pearson-Evans, 2006. p. 54). This comment describes a phenomenographic approach: the study of experiences and the variations in perceptions and understanding of those experiences. This is indeed the approach taken in my research.

Three important adaptation demands identified in the literature (Pearson-Evans, 2006) are the need to build social networks within the host community, adapt to local food and participate in rituals associated with food, and to learn and use the local language. Pearson-Evans examined the dynamics of cross-cultural adjustment in case studies of six Irish university students living and working in Japan for a year. Her research highlighted the individual and complex nature of the adjustment process and focused on the three themes: social networks, food, and language. Within each, dynamic tension between home culture, host culture and other foreigners was revealed. Pearson-Evans (2006, p. 53) stated that:

cross-cultural adjustment [is] a process of growing familiarity and deepening involvement between the individual ... and [their] host culture. In this dynamic process of interaction, no two individuals' characteristics and **no two host culture contexts are exactly the same** (emphasis added).

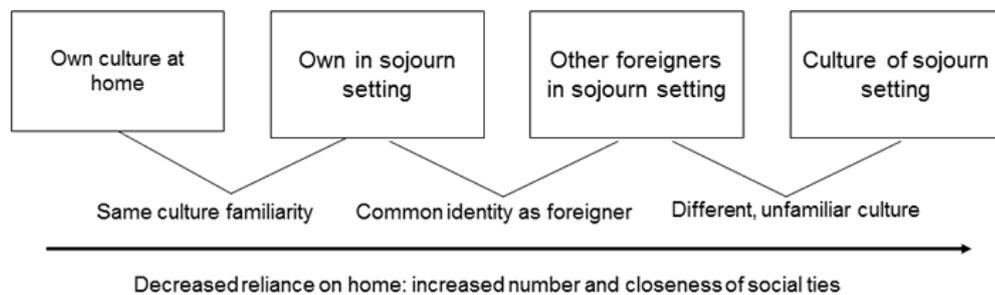
Reflecting the Pearson-Evans research, food and food-associated rituals and, particularly, building social networks and learning the local language were adaptation issues regularly mentioned by the research participants in my research.

Social networks

To successfully adapt to life in their new community, a sojourner must build local social networks consisting of friends, associates, and their host extended family members. Social networks play

a major role in determining how a person interprets and responds to their environment in a cross-cultural context (Pearson-Evans, 2006) and draws social support from their network (Pinter, 2010). Bochner, Hutnick, and Furnham (1985. See also Pearson-Evans, 2006) identified three possible network types that are developed by sojourners in their host culture: (1), monocultural (within their own culture), (2), bicultural (within their host culture) and (3), multicultural (within the host culture plus other foreigners). Pearson-Evans' research identified a fourth network; monocultural (among home friends and family). These networks are illustrated in her Four Social Networks model (Figure 11). Movement from left to right across the networks represents a cross-cultural adjustment away from the student's reliance on home and an increased number and closeness of host culture ties (Pearson-Evans, 2006. See also Kim, 1998).

Figure 11: Four social networks (adapted from Pearson-Evans [2006])



A move away from home ties to local social ties implies motivation on the part of the sojourner to adapt and integrate into the host community. Indeed, willingness to accept the changes in relationships as illustrated in this model is essential for adjustment to a foreign culture (Kim, 1988; Pearson-Evans, 2006). Relationships formed within the culture of sojourner networks result in the sojourner feeling part of the host culture (Pearson-Evans, 2006). For cross-cultural relationships to be successful and for the avoidance of developing negative attitudes towards the host culture, relationships must develop beyond the superficial level, be of equal status, satisfy the needs of individuals and be free from discrimination (Pearson-Evans, 2006).

A later study corroborated Pearson-Evans (2006) work. According to Geeraert, Demoulin and Demes' (2014) study of the influence of social contact abroad on study abroad exchange students' cultural adjustment, good quality social contact was a source of higher levels of cultural adjustment, and with less stress. Geeraert et al. pointed out that who the sojourners have contact with mattered, especially among their three most frequent contacts and especially in the later stages of the sojourn. Contacts from the local (host) community, they said, resulted in higher levels of adjustment and less stress than did contacts with co-nationals. In my research, developing social networks of local friends became one of ten critical adaptation foci (categories of description). While the level of granularity for this particular adaptation focus did not differentiate between host nationals and co-nationals, nevertheless a network of **local** friends contributed greatly to the research participants' overall cultural adaptation. Baker-Smemoe, Dewey, Bown and Martinsen (2014) found that local (host language-based) social networks greatly contributed to development of local language skills. Furthermore, according to Siisiäinen

(2000), building social networks has been described as the successful accumulation of 'social capital', and well-functioning social networks create trust.

Food

Just as developing local social networks is essential for adaptation, so is adaptation to local food and participation in food rituals. Food has been shown to be of central importance in developing and maintaining social relations within and between cultures (Bourdieu, 1986; Fischler, 1988; Pearson-Evans, 2006). Fischler argued that "food not only nourishes but also signifies" and that humans "share representations" through food (Fischler, 1988, p. 275). Food and its associated rituals embody a culture's values and taboos, including religious values and taboos (Douglas, 1966/2001). The student's reactions to food and food rituals often indicate to what extent they understand and appreciate their host culture's core values, thus becoming an important aspect of participating in the host culture. Rejection of the local culture's food is like rejection of the local culture (Pearson-Evans, 2006).

Language

Language is central to human communication and many sojourners must use a language other than their own primary language. Adaptation, therefore, often involves learning and speaking another language, which may present challenges to a person's sense of self (Alred, 2003). As Harder (1980, p. 269 cited in Alred, 2003, p. 22) observed;

...in order to be a wit in a foreign language you have to go through the stage of being a half-wit – there is no other way. If the problem is not addressed explicitly, learners may be just aware of it as a constant resistance against opening their mouths.

Proficiency in the host language is assumed to be one of the most important determinants of successful learning of the host culture (Pearson-Evans, 2006) and, thus, inclusion in the host community. Competence in the host language has also been found to be a source of status and power for foreign sojourners (Kim, 1988. See also Pearson-Evans, 2006). Kim (1998) considered that adaptation to language was crucial to the bonding process between individuals and their social groups. This is certainly true between sojourners and their host family members. Pearson-Evans' research corroborated the other studies referred to here, with her research subjects seeing their choice of language as an act of identity. Students with low host culture language skills, but who expected to speak it, interpreted unwillingness on the part of the hosts to do so as exclusion from the local culture (Pearson-Evans, 2006).

Intercultural sensitivity includes recognition that a different language can attach a different meaning to terms. Indeed, Harder's remark above falls flat when repeated to someone for whom English is not their primary language. When I repeated this remark to an associate from a different culture, he first required an explanation of the term 'half-wit'. Then, upon comprehending the term, the quote itself became offensive to him owing to the perceived demeaning of someone with an intellectual handicap (Berglund, personal communication, October, 2007). Bochner (1982, p.63) argued that language "is one of the most important

differences between cultures, and one of its greatest barriers". Even a person who has learned the language quite well, Bochner pointed out, will still make mistakes. A person involved in acquiring an intercultural perspective is "drawn into contact with the interactive nature of language and culture", going beyond structure and grammatical rules (Ryan, 2003, p. 132). One is learning, Ryan said, "to unravel meaning of language to discover the inner resources that lead to refining ... [and] extending one's knowledge" (Ryan, 2003, p. 132). Di Silvio, Donovan and Malone (2014) found a significant relationship between satisfaction with language learning and positive and close host family relationships (see also Shiri, 2015).

Notwithstanding the obvious significance of the adaptation demands of language as an important element of attaining IcC, IcC can certainly be attained without it. Learning IcC need not include the corresponding learning of a foreign language for those who do not have a second language component in their sojourn (Zarate, 2003). If an additional language were a prerequisite to gaining IcC, a sojourner would never achieve IcC if their sojourn was in a culture that spoke the same language. However, different societies that speak the same language may be substantially different culturally; for example, Spain and Spanish-speaking Latin American countries; New Zealand/Australia and English-speaking North America. Notwithstanding same language sojourns, the AFS programme recognises the importance of language, as the goals for individual students include the development of foreign language skills (Hansel, 2009).

The effect of predisposition, environmental and other factors affecting adaptation

Other adaptation issues such as the sojourner's predisposition to the sojourn and environmental factors also have an effect on sojourner adaptation. Predisposition is described as being the sojourner's openness to adaptation and to "intercultural transformation" (Kim, 2001, p. 87). Environmental factors include the host community's receptiveness to the sojourner and their differences (Kim, 2001).

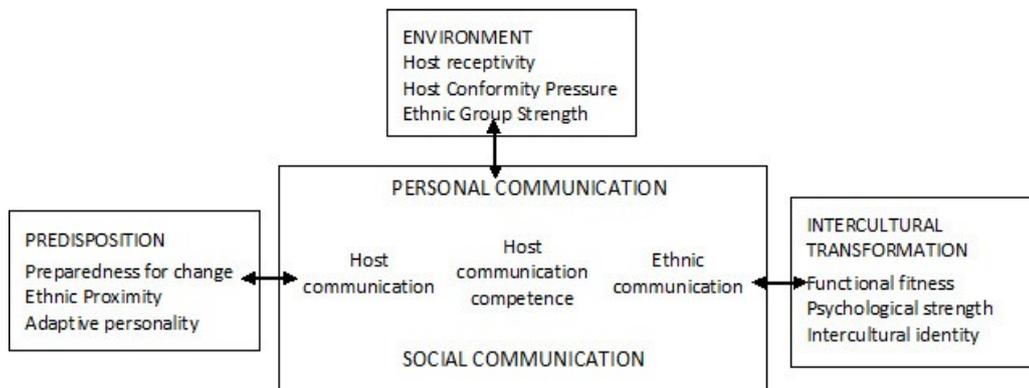
Other than Shaules' (2007) 'Deep Culture' model (see p.41), Young Yun Kim's (2001) theoretical model of cross-cultural adaptation more closely mirrors findings from this research than do other models discussed in this and the previous chapter. In her model, Kim posited certain predispositions that a sojourner must possess in order to develop the higher levels of IcC necessary for successful adaptation. These qualities include preparedness for change, an adaptive personality and the culture distance perception that the sojourner has of their host (see also Sercu, 2005b). While Kim did not assert, as Sercu did, that a sojourner must already possess a number of intercultural competencies, Kim nevertheless argued that a level of positive pre-disposition towards cultural adaptation must be present in the sojourner in order to become, as she termed it, 'intercultural'.

'Disposition', or predisposition as used above, has been defined as how people are disposed to, or likely to use their abilities rather than what abilities they have (Schussler, 2006. See also Clear, 2017). Clear (2017, p. 20) asked the question: "can a disposition be taught?" As stated

earlier, the researcher has experienced a long association with AFS including involvement in the selection of potential exchange students and in their pre-departure orientation. The disposition and pre-disposition described here is a quality that is sought, or perceived to be able to be developed.

Specific predisposition elements include the sojourner's functional and psychological fitness to engage in the adaptation process. Functional fitness means that when strangers are in an unfamiliar environment they take the necessary initiatives to get to know their way around (Kim, 2001). According to Kim, as a person's functional fitness increases it is accompanied by an increase in psychological health; the state in which one's cognitive, affective and psychomotor (operational) skills begin to work in harmony. This comment is remarkably similar to the statement in Hansel and Grove's (1986) research report cited earlier in this chapter that the learning processes in high stimulation situations improve the brain's capacity to learn and remember (in Hansel and Grove, 1986; original source not cited). Kim argued that once these elements are functional, a new intercultural identity begins to emerge within the individual. This acquired identity has been constructed through the person's initial enculturation process, and re-constructed through the interaction experiences within a new cultural environment. Kim's model is illustrated in Figure 12:

Figure 12: Factors influencing cross-cultural adaptation (Kim, 2001, p. 87)



An element of acceptance of other cultural systems, along with a willingness to adapt to another system, must indeed be present in the sojourner's personal worldview for the sojourn to be successful. If the element is not present, the sojourner may never be prepared to make the required efforts to adapt to living in the host cultural system, or never have made the decision to undertake a cultural-immersion sojourn. Yashima (2009) stated that the qualities of IcC identified by researchers include "knowledge, skills, attitudes and **motivation** (emphasis added)" (Yashima, 2009, p. 269).

Motivation and a willingness to adapt appears to be the case with the research participant sojourners in my research. This is demonstrated in the following indicative research participant responses to a question in their individual end-of-sojourn interview. The question asked was: 'How open were you before you went away, to adapting to another culture?' (sojourner predisposition).

- Interviewer: *So from what you are saying you pretty much came here feeling positive and wanting to rip into it?*
- Al: *Yeah, I did*
- Interviewer: *Before you went, did you have any negative feelings about going?*
- Felicity: *You hear a lot about ... the dodgy things [in this country] ... but I also trusted myself and, um, the people I was going with*
- I: *Did you go there expecting to adapt to the culture or did you go there expecting not to?*
- F: *Oh, definitely I expected to adapt, yep, ... I went there, like, wanting to learn about their culture*

Even with a level of positive predisposition and motivation, however, sojourners upon their arrival experienced strong feelings of **resistance** to many of the host culture's greeting rituals and sights and sounds of the community environment.

Another significant part of Kim's (2001) model is the host community itself. Kim listed the following factors regarding the host community: The host culture's receptiveness to the stranger being in their midst, that is their openness and the willingness of the host community to accept strangers; the degree to which the host community exerts pressure on the stranger to conform to the local socio/cultural norms and values; and the dominance of the ethnic group, that is the power and prestige of the group which enables it to apply such receptiveness and pressure. Kim's first two points were evident in the data of my research and is included in the data analysis presented in the outcome space chapter. However, the third point was less obvious.

The significance of preparation

As was seen earlier, according to some adaptation models, specifically Kim (2001) and also as asserted by Sercu (2005a), adequate preparation and positive pre-disposition are advantageous in adapting to effective living in the host culture community. Alred (2003) similarly emphasised the significance of the 'before' stage in ensuring a successful 'during' stage. Drawing on work of Coleman (1997), Alred identified several components that give 'life' to a successful residence abroad for language study over a period of time: motivation (to learn the language), a positive attitude, self-awareness, IcC, and appropriate learning strategies (Alred, 2003; Coleman, 1997). Alred (2003) drawing also on work by Hall and Toll (1999) who identified similar components of preparation, adding that the preparation stage needs to draw upon the participant's prior experience and current knowledge, feelings and attitudes. Goldini (2013) recommended sojourn pre-departure experiences to assist student awareness of their "sociocultural identities, cultural values, learning goals, and program expectations" (Goldini, 2013, p. 359). These experiences include linguistic preparation and cultural preparation.

This suggests that participants selected for an intercultural-immersion experience should have developed some elements of IcC even before they depart from their own country. It is argued here, therefore, that the competencies that are given to them during the preparation will give life

to **further** competencies, and ultimately to more highly developed IcC. Indeed a report by Holmes, Bavieri, and Ganassin (2015) confirm that the use of prepared pre-departure materials (IEREST – Intercultural Educational Resources for Erasmus Students and their Teachers) helped study abroad students’ understanding of intercultural issues and encounters. The report’s findings indicated “that intercultural learning is possible in a pre-departure programme” (Holmes et al., 2015, p. 27. See also Gutiérrez-Almarza, Durán-Martínez & Beltrán Llavador, 2015). **This**, then, in the words of Hall and Toll (1999, p. 9; also cited in Alred 2003, p. 19), “should offer students insights into the processes involved in adapting to change and, ultimately, being ‘intercultural people’”.

Knowing when adaptation and integration into the host community is occurring

Another model that proved useful in this research was John Berry’s (1980) acculturation model. According to Ward (2008), Berry has pioneered, if not defined, contemporary approaches to acculturation over the past four decades. Berry argued that two important questions arise from intercultural contact. Berry’s questions are:

- Is it important to maintain one’s original cultural origin?, and;
- Is it important to engage in intercultural contact with others, including the dominant cultural group? (see also Ward, 2008).

In cross-cultural interaction, Berry (1980, 1990) reasoned, a sojourner must face these two major issues: the degree to which they maintain their own cultural distinctiveness, and the extent to which they form relationships with the host society (Berry, 1980, 1990; Burnett & Gardner, 2006). Berry argued that there are four possible acculturation outcomes in respect of these two factors: Integration, Assimilation, Separation, and Marginalisation. Berry’s model is illustrated in Figure 13:

Figure 13: Berry’s acculturation model (Berry, 1980, p. 14, 1990, p. 245; Burnett & Gardner, 2006, p. 68)

		Q: Is it considered to be of value to maintain cultural identity and characteristics?	
		Yes	No
Q: Is it considered to be of value to maintain relations with larger society?	Yes	Integration	Assimilation
	No	Separation	Marginalisation

The ‘Berry boxes’ (above) (Ward, 2008) model the resulting status from the given answer: Integration means that the individual adapts to or acquires the host culture while maintaining their own cultural identity; Assimilation is when the individual adopts the host culture and rejects their own; Separation means that the individual rejects the host culture while retaining their own; and Marginalisation is when an individual rejects both the host and their own culture thereby forming a new cultural identity (Ward, 2008. See also Schwartz & Zamboanga, 2008).

The Berry boxes model has its critics. From their research, Burnett and Gardner (2006) presented several issues regarding Berry's model. They found the model to be less adequate in explaining the acculturation issues that their research participants went through, in particular the binary 'yes' or 'no' response that is required, and the suggestion that sojourners make a conscious choice. Indeed, this model does not take one through the stages of adaptation or measure the development of IcC.

Ward (2008), however, took a more positive stance. Ward cited a large body of research on Berry's models of acculturation that confirmed that:

1. The two dimensions of acculturation are independent;
2. That **Integration** is the strategy most preferred by sojourners; and
3. Integration is associated with the most positive adaptation outcomes (Ward, 2008, p. 106).

In a position that can be described as somewhere in between these two viewpoints, research by Schwartz and Zamboanga (2008) found six states rather than Berry's four, suggesting that Berry's states may have multiple variants. For example, they likened Berry's 'Integration' to biculturalism. They also argued that, based on evidence in the literature, marginalisation does not exist, but rather that state is an **undifferentiated** cluster whereby individuals experience cultural identity confusion. Schwartz and Zamboanga also found some mixing of separation, biculturalism and assimilation, also referring to evidence from the literature. Schwartz and Zamboanga's findings are consistent with the Shaules (2007) 'mixed states' model discussed later in this chapter.

The Berry model predicts an outcome from an attitudinal approach determined by the two questions. It is a snapshot, depending upon the yes or no answer combination, of whether an individual has integrated, separated, been marginalised, or assimilated. Taking Ward's (2008) findings that **Integration** (adaptation) is the preferred state, then this model can be applied at various stages of a sojourn to test for sojourner adaptation (see also Ward et al., 2001). My research is concerned with the learning and development, over time, of IcC through learning to adapt to another culture. While Berry's model is not developmental I used it to ascertain what stage of adaptation participants had reached.

IcC and education

An interculturally competent person will interact in such a way that participants in the interaction feel understood and respected. This notion is supported in research carried out in Germany, which found that growing globalisation was challenging the German educational system to cope with cultural diversity and IcC learning (Bender-Szymanski, 2000). As has been stated, learning IcC is not normally a specific element of many study-abroad programmes and, as has also been previously suggested, some supported learning of IcC should be an element of study-abroad.

However, teachers of IcC, similarly, need to be interculturally competent themselves. According to The Standing Conference of Ministers of Education in Germany 1996, intercultural education in schools required a change in perspective so as to deal with the perception and acceptance of difference (Bender-Szymanski, 2000). Bender-Szymanski pointed out that appropriate models which specified the characteristics of an interculturally competent teacher did not exist. Culturally based conflict situations between new teachers and their culturally diverse students were studied and analysed. Results indicated that culturally based conflict provided a platform for teachers to acquire specific knowledge about why people of different cultures behave differently, and that such behaviour must be evaluated in the cultural context of the person being evaluated, not of the evaluator. Reason and emotion must be segregated, and that knowing why a person of a different culture acts as they do requires an understanding of one's own actions (Bender-Szymanski, 2000). Teachers who failed to understand or accept their own cultural position, the report states, lead to "deficit explanations" (Bender-Szymanski, 2000, p. 242), that is, the belief that conflicts and poor performance are caused by deficits in students from foreign cultures. Bender-Szymanski's report describes this as coping with conflict in an **ethno-oriented** way and concludes that such teachers had failed in their ambitions of IcC, whereas teachers who coped with conflict in what Bender-Szymanski terms a "**synergy-oriented**" way (emphasis added) (Bender-Szymanski, 2000, p. 236) succeeded. Synergy-oriented teachers analysed both the unexpected behaviour of students and their own failure in attempting to achieve desired behaviour by constructively questioning their own world viewpoints (Bender-Szymanski, 2000).

Similar findings came to light in a case study of Danish upper-secondary business school students' short-term stays in England/Wales, France, Ireland, Scotland and Spain (Tarp, 2006). The concern of the Danish school system was that students were not achieving sufficient intercultural understanding and competence in the classroom, hence the initiative of short-term stays abroad. The focus of Tarp's study was to find out how students experienced these initiatives. Her findings showed that when students participate in an exchange they are not passive recipients, but rather they make active decisions both about what is on the programme and what is not, and make judgments about the right thing to do (Tarp, 2006). Tarp found that conditions relating to the student's age, gender, former travel experience and whether they have relatives living abroad can be facilitating or constraining, depending on the individual, and that students use different strategies to fulfill their expectations. The outcome for the student depends on their expectations relative to the causal, contextual and intervening conditions (Tarp, 2006). Tarp concluded that inclusive expectations supported by inclusive conditions are the key to a deeper and more collaborative student involvement with the host culture. The findings, Tarp argued, illustrate the diversity in student agendas and the importance of inclusion in the exchange curriculum for successful exchanges.

Alred (2003), however, posed a challenge to learning IcC. He raised the question of "how to give direction and purpose to the learning that occurs when living interculturally, so that it contributes to intercultural competence and not intercultural incompetence" (Alred, 2003, p. 27). Van

Deurzen (1998, as cited in Alred, 2003), herself with considerable intercultural experience, expressed the payoff: “[We] can become better strangers to each other and thus better known to each other and ourselves” (Alred, 2003, p. 27). To become interculturally competent, Weber (2003) proposed three processes: knowledge acquisition (via different learning approaches), adaptation processes, and negotiation processes (initiated via ‘social-cultural’ learning for developing a common understanding and meaning). According to Weber, “the interculturally competent person will interact in such a way that all participants feel understood, respected, and supported” (p. 199). Weber’s remark is certainly borne out in my research. This is particularly the case with my research participant Milly, as will be seen. I propose a fourth learning process: a SI/phenomenographic process of reflexivity and knowledge, skills, ethnorelative attitude and awareness development. This will be presented in Chapter Six.

lcC learning, adaptation and cultural dimensions research

In 2013, Rientiesa and Tempelaar (2013) observed that there was limited research that addressed how social adaptation affected academic performance, and that the common belief was that international students were simply insufficiently adjusted to education in their host country. Their research, however, found that some groups of international students experienced considerable adaptation issues, while others were able to adjust fairly straightforwardly. Students from Confucian Asia (collectivist-oriented) cultures had higher levels of adaptation and integration difficulties in individualism-oriented communities than their individualist-oriented peers (Rientiesa & Tempelaar, 2013. See also Kang & Chang, 2016). The cultural dimensions of Hofstede, they argue, are significant predictors of adaptation and academic adjustment, in particular “power–distance (negative), masculinity [assertiveness/modesty cultural dimension], and uncertainty avoidance (both positive)” (Rientiesa & Tempelaar, 2013, p. 188). Furthermore, Amster and Böhm (2016, p. 5) argued that while it is widely agreed that cultural values and beliefs manifest in a person’s behavior, it is the values and beliefs systems that “have been and continue to be the focal point in research, although in practice people react to behaviours”.

Watson, Siska and Wolfel (2013) claimed that “while numerous studies have investigated the language gain associated with study abroad, researchers are now beginning to look also at potential gains in the areas of cross-cultural competence”. Further, Anderson and Lawton (2015, p. 49) claimed that “research on intercultural development is at a relatively early stage”. In this regard, my research is notable, as it not only adds to the body of literature on the effect of cultural dimensions in lcC learning but also is based on the behavioural differences that manifest from cultural values and beliefs systems.

A characteristic of my research is that, in most cases, the sojourner perceptions and understanding of interaction experiences that were examined were recorded by the participants immediately or as soon as possible after an experience event occurred. While this data collection technique is not unique (see D’Souza, Singaraju, Halimi & Mort, 2016; Pearson-Evans, 2006), my research is nevertheless noteworthy in this regard. Indeed Shao and Crook (2015)

advocated the advantages of online blogs for cultural and second language learning among international students.

Inbound versus outbound sojourns

Notwithstanding the above arguments and observations, much of the literature on study abroad appears to focus on either one nationality group inbound, a single nationality group to one destination, or two different nationality groups inbound from and outbound to each other. I use the term 'appears to focus' as in many cases it is not made clear. A notable exception is Starr-Glass (2016) who also argues that inbound and outbound students should not be fragmented or treated differently as this results in problems for students.

My research is both one nationality group, New Zealanders, outbound to a diverse range of destination cultures, as well as a diverse range of nationalities inbound to New Zealand. My findings indicate that there is no difference from the adaptation demands encountered by any group of sojourners, but rather there are vast differences not only in the symbolic form of the adaptation demands each group encountered, but also in the underlying values system that manifested those symbolic forms.

Recognition of cultural difference through symbols

Cultural differences can be recognised through differences in cultural symbols (Pan'kova & Pavlyuk, 2014), as culture has been identified as having a symbolic system (Kessing, 1974; Kramsch, 2010) and symbolic artefacts (French & Bell, 1979). Aneas and Sandin (2009) stated that SI theory can support communication during a cross-cultural interaction by helping in the coding and decoding of information transmitted in the form of symbols. SI theory, Aneas and Sandin went on to say, places emphasis on the need for compromise in an interaction as differences in culture are recognised and meaning placed on such differences. It is through such symbolic-based cross-cultural interaction experiences that IcC learning can occur. As was pointed out in Chapter Two (p. 13), personal agency is central to a symbolic interactionist approach (Fine, 1993). Covert's (2014, p. 162) research findings suggested that "personal agency played an important role in participants' development of [IcC, which] occurred when participants made intentional and purposeful changes" to fit local cultural norms. Study abroad programmes, she said, "can support students to build their self-efficacy and agency in intercultural interactions" (Covert, 2014, p. 162)

It is in the recognition of cultural difference through symbols area that there is a dearth of literature. While Bennett (2015) referred to symbolic interactionism as one of many complex theories through which sociologists study institutions of culture, none of these purported studies are referenced. This thesis, thus, is noteworthy as a contribution to the literature in that regard. In the Discussions, contributions and recommendations chapter (Chapter Six) I will argue that by figuratively standing outside the symbolic interaction space and using ethnorelative reasoning to determine the meaning of cultural symbols assists in the learning of IcC. This is reflected in

my integrated SI theory/phenomenography process model for experiential learning of IcC; Figure 38, p. 225.

The research gaps and the research questions

The previous sections highlight research gaps in the areas of the potential gains in cross-cultural competence during study abroad and the recognition of cultural difference through symbols. It is the first of the these two research gaps that particularly relates to the research questions. To remind the reader, the research question is:

- To what extent is the IcC required for cultural adaptation learned by a sojourner during a cultural-immersion study-abroad programme? (RQ1).

The secondary questions are:

- What ways of understanding adaptation experiences enhance or detract from learning IcC? (RQ2); and
- What are the phenomenographic dimensions of variation that give life to IcC? (RQ3).

While these questions related to a practical gap when I initially determined them, following the literature review I found that they also related to the theoretical gaps in the literature. Therefore, the answers to above questions have been discovered, in the main, by the empirical research rather than within the literature. It was never intended that RQ3 be discovered in the literature but rather by the empirical research. The second research gap mentioned above is addressed in the discussion, contributions and recommendations chapter (Chapter Six).

A further research gap identified in the literature itself is that there is limited research that addressed how social adaptation affected academic performance (Rienties & Tempelaar, 2013). While my research does not specifically address this gap, it is in part covered in Category of Description 9, Learning to adjust to the education and schooling system (see Table 9: The phenomenographic categories of description and the hierarchy, p. 99). The outputs of my research therefore will contribute to the literature gap in that regard.

Summary

Outcomes of study-abroad can result in increased IcC, an increased interest in international affairs, increased interpersonal communication skills, the ability to work collaboratively especially with people of other cultures, and self-efficacy. The sojourner, from each informal learning situation (their intercultural experiences), must gradually construct a new cultural worldview. They can do this by adapting, over time, to the different cultural system that they find themselves in. This includes learning the local language, building social networks, and adapting to the cultural symbols (the visible elements) and rituals (practices) of daily life. During-sojourn reflection and analysis is a necessary element in the acquisition of IcC, and post-sojourn reflection and analysis ensures longer-term benefits.

Adaptation to symbols, rituals and values, however, causes adaptation stresses, including 'culture shock', and occurs as soon as the sojourner enters a different cultural community. These stresses are brought about by loss of familiarity with the symbols, rituals and values of their own culture. The stress/adaptation pathway includes opportunities for IcC learning (Weaver, 1993), and indeed is synonymous with developing IcC.

Learning the local language has a positive effect on adaptation, as does building local social networks and partaking in local food and food rituals. These three factors are indeed of central importance in successful adaptation to the local community and its culture (see Pearson-Evans, 2006). Other adaptation elements identified include predisposition, environmental factors, and the sojourner's preparedness and 'fitness' to cope with the intercultural transformation brought about by adaptation (Kim, 1998). While Berry's (1980, 1990) seminal acculturation model was not helpful in depicting the adaptation process, it proved useful in determining if a sojourner was adapted, or was not.

Literature gaps discovered from the literature review include the potential intercultural competence gains during study abroad, and the recognition of cultural difference through symbols. The first of the above gaps relates to the research questions while the second is addressed in the discussion, contributions and recommendations chapter (Chapter Six).

Chapter Four: Methodology and Methods

Introduction

In this chapter the methodological approach chosen for my research, phenomenography and variation theory, is introduced and outlined, along with how this approach was applied to my research. As described in Chapter Two, the theoretical perspective of this research, SI, is qualitative and interpretivist. The methodological approach that was chosen was therefore a qualitative, interpretive approach as the research required a focus on the research participants' day-to-day experiences in a culture different from their own, their perceptions and ways of understanding those experiences.

Phenomenographic research specifically examines the **experiences** of the research subjects. Analysis of experiences is in terms of the **variations** in the perceptions and subsequent ways of understanding of those experiences as a result of variations in the form and context of the experience (Berglund, 2005; Cope, 2004; Larsson & Holmström, 2007; Marton & Booth, 1997; Pang, 2003). What was learned and how it was learned can be thus determined as the perception and way of understanding changes over time. Also in this chapter, an **experience** is explained in terms of its 'structural' and 'referential' aspects (Marton & Booth, 1997). Further, within the structural aspect, the 'internal horizon of focus' and the 'external horizon of context' are explained.

Phenomenography's categories of description, and how a phenomenographic study is viewed in terms of the **what** and the **how** aspects of learning from the experience (Marton & Booth, 1997), along with the dimensions of variation (variation theory [Pang, 2003]), are also explained in this chapter. These various aspects are explained in terms of phenomenography's outcome space, which is built into a framework for the presentation of the findings of this research.

Credibility and validity in phenomenographic research is examined, including credibility of phenomenographic categories and the issue of replicability of phenomenographic research. The sampling procedure is outlined, as well as the process for data collection. Additionally, the research participants (the study-abroad sojourners who form the research sample) are profiled. The methods and process of the data analysis are also described. The analysis of data collected was supported by following the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), and the continuous refinement process of categorising and coding data advocated by Wellington (2000), which is also explained.

Phenomenography and variation theory

Background and overview of phenomenography

Phenomenography was developed as a method of empirical research into learning in the 1970s at Göteborg University, Sweden (Berglund, 2005. See also Pang, 2003). 'Learning' is

understood in the very broad sense as “gaining knowledge about the world” (Marton & Booth, 1997, p. 110). Phenomenography involves the study of learning experiences, and the learners’ perceptions and ways of understanding these experiences. Data is collected and sorted into ‘categories of description’ (Larsson & Holmström, 2007; Marton & Booth, 1997). The outcome is to determine what the learner has learned, and how they learned what they learned (Berglund, 2005; Marton & Booth, 1997). These are referred to as the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ aspects of learning.

The findings of phenomenographic data analysis are presented in the form of a set of categories of description of the phenomenon (Cope, 2004), summarising the key concepts arising from the data. These concepts constitute the research participants’ ways of understanding their perceptions of their experiences. ‘Ways of understanding’ (Berglund, 2005; Berglund, personal communication, April, 2014) is often referred to in phenomenographic circles as the ‘conceptions’ of the research participants (Harris, 2011; Marton, 1981; Stoodley, 2009). Others refer to ‘ways of seeing’ (Bruce, Pham & Stoodley, 2002; Pang, 2003), with these three terms being used interchangeably. I have used the term ‘ways of understanding’.

Phenomenography takes a second-order perspective (described below), with the focus of this research being on the experiences of the research subjects during adaptation to living in another culture and the learning that results. There were a number of qualitatively different adaptation experiences, which were sorted into 10 categories of description. The object of study in this research, which thus frames the research questions, is learning the IcC necessary for adaptation to everyday life in another culture.

One salient point about phenomenographic research is that the researcher stands in a similar relationship to the object of study as the research participants (Berglund, 2005; Marton & Booth, 1997). This is because it is assumed that the researcher has some knowledge and experience of the object of study, and is not totally indifferent to it, therefore, the researcher’s viewpoint in the findings is inevitable (Sin, 2010).

A second-order perspective and non-dualism

Frequently referred to in phenomenographic literature as a second-order perspective, the phenomenographic researcher studies and describes perceptions and understandings of phenomena in the world through the experiences of the phenomenon which is the focus of a study. This differs from a first-order perspective, where the researcher describes the essence of the phenomena themselves, albeit through experiences as is the case with phenomenology (Hov, 2007; Larsson & Holmström, 2007; Marton, 1981; Strandmark & Hedelin, 2002, as cited in Larsson & Holmström, 2007).

Phenomenography’s second-order perspective means that phenomenographers investigate and make statements about the **perceptions and understandings** of experiences, and taking account of the qualitatively different ways individuals perceive and understand the experiences

of the same phenomenon (Cope, 2004; Hasselgren & Beach, 2006; Marton & Booth, 1997; Richardson, 1999; Stoodley, 2009). Phenomenographers make statements about the way the world is understood, not about the world itself (Barnard, McKosker & Gerber, 1999; Marton, 1986).

Phenomenography's ontological assumptions are non-dualist, meaning that there is no dividing line between person (internal) and world (external) (Box, 2012; Marton & Booth, 1997). The view in phenomenography is that there is only one world, one that people experience in many different ways (Åkerlind, 2005; Bowden, 2005; Marton & Booth, 1997; Searle, 1983/2002; Uljens, 1996). In phenomenography, therefore, there is no distinction between the external objective 'world' and the internal subjective 'world' (as is also the case with phenomenology [Walker, 1998]). Rather, the internal subjective 'world' is the perceptions and understandings of a person's experiences in the world. This means that object and subject are not separate and independent of each other. Walker (1998. See also Ornek, 2008) presented the example of someone who is reading a textbook. We cannot assume the textbook in itself (the object) and the reader's perceptions (the subject) are separate things. The textbook, once read, Walker posited, will always have meaning to someone and therefore is not independent from the reader. This is in the sense that the book itself and the meaning that is derived from it are the totality. Additionally, the same textbook when read by someone else may vary in meaning. Similarly, in this study, the cultural interaction experiences of the research participants are not independent of the perceptions and understandings that are derived from those interaction experiences, and there may be variation in those understandings.

Another example of the object/subject relationship from Ornek (2008) is if children were asked how the number 7 could be obtained. One child might perceive it as $5+2$, but another one may perceive $6+1$ or $4+3$. Their ways of understanding the experience of the number 7, in all cases has variation, but within the sum of two pairs. Therefore, Ornek said that, "we simply cannot deal with an object without experiencing or conceptualising it in some way. In this sense, the subject (children) and object (numbers) are not independent" (Ornek, 2008, p.3). Yates, Partridge & Bruce (2012, p.98) added that:

Phenomenography is also considered to be a relational approach to research because the object (the phenomenon under investigation) and the research subjects (the people experiencing the phenomenon) are not viewed or treated separately.

The object of study in the case of this research, therefore, includes both the participants' experiences of the object of study as well as the relations formed between the participants and aspects of the phenomenon because of their understandings of their experiences (see Bowden, 2000).

The object of learning

In a phenomenographic study, the object of study has a certain specific content which is referred to as the 'object of learning' (Ho, 2017). According to Marton and Booth (1997), learning must

result in a qualitative change in the way of understanding something. Lo and Marton (2011) stated that “a learner seeing something in a new way likely understands and deals with it differently... The something at which learning is directed is called the object of learning” (Lo & Marton, 2011, p. 9). The overall object of learning in the case of this research is ‘learning the IcC necessary for adaptation to everyday life in another culture’.

The analysed categories of description which become the outcome space, are the qualitative different ways that learners (in this case the research participants) understand the object of learning (Ho, 2017). Since the phenomenon is divided into 10 categories of description, each category has its own object of learning which becomes phenomenography’s ‘internal horizon of focus’. The internal horizon of focus along with phenomenography’s ‘external horizon of context’ is explained later in this section.

Variation theory

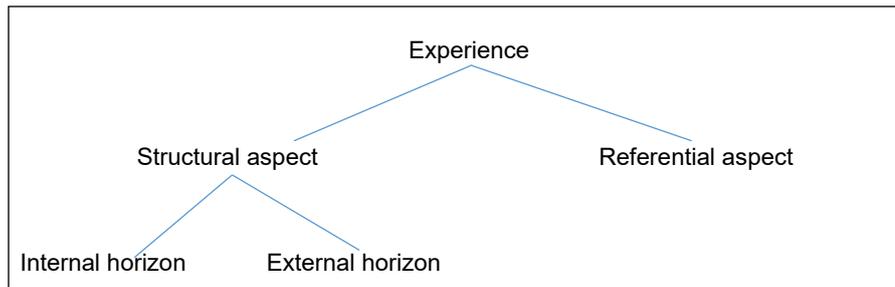
Variation theory, phenomenography’s supplementary theory of variation, studies how people construe similar experiences in different ways. As has been stated above, phenomenography is a qualitative research methodology within the interpretivist paradigm and is the study of human experiences.

In variation theory the focus is on the variation in both the perceptions of the phenomenon as experienced by the research participant, and in their **ways of seeing** (Bruce et al., 2002; Pang, 2003), or, in other words, their **ways of understanding** (Berglund, 2005; Berglund, personal communication, April, 2014) their experiences as described by the researcher (Larsson & Holmström, 2007; Stoodley, 2009). The phenomenographic approach aims for a **collective** view of a number of individual experiences (Åkerlind, 2005) and the variation in these experiences as related to a phenomenon (Wihlborg, 2005).

An experience

An experience has two aspects or component elements: the **structural** aspect and the **referential** aspect (Marton & Booth, 1997; Stoodley, 2009). The structural aspect is alternatively referred to by some phenomenographers as the “structure of awareness” (Cope, 2004, p. 12) and is described in more detail below. The referential aspect is alternatively referred to as the meaning aspect. The referential aspect was described by Stoodley (2009, p. 61) as “the element of description of the experience intimately related to the structural aspect” which accounts for the “significance of the experience in the awareness of the experiencer”. Figure 14 (following page) is the diagrammatic representation of the structure of an experience.

Figure 14: The structure of an experience (Marton & Booth, 1997, p. 88)



The phenomenographic researcher, when focusing on the experience, has an internal horizon of focus and an external horizon of context (Marton & Booth, 1997; Pang, 2003). The internal horizon is the direct focus of the study: the interaction and subsequent perception that produces the way of understanding and overall meaning (Pang, 2003). The external horizon is the way in which the experiences are discerned, or distinguished from their at-the-moment context, and their relationships to a wider context (Marton & Booth, 1997). Pang (2003, p. 148) pointed out that:

... to experience something in a particular way, a person must discern the whole from the context, and at the same time understand its relationship to the context as well as other contexts.

Eckerdal (2005, p. 146) observed that:

According to the phenomenographic tradition, the learning process is a question of **discerning** new aspects of phenomena. A specific aspect cannot, however, be discerned without experiencing **variation** in a 'dimension' corresponding to that aspect. These dimensions are characteristic for the specific aspects, and the variations make central features of these aspects visible.

Marton and Booth (1997) illustrated this using the example of a deer in the forest. The internal horizon comprises the deer itself: its parts, its stance, and its structural presence. The external horizon comprises the forest against which the deer is recognised by the observer, along with other experiences that the observer has of seeing a deer and a forest: a deer in a zoo, a walk in a forest.

Relevant to this research, and taking one cross-cultural experience from the researcher's own experiences, is the greeting ritual of hugging. The **internal** horizon of focus is the act of hugging itself, with the focus on the perception of the experience of hugging. The **external** horizon is the context within which the phenomenon takes place, including the environmental setting, and the cultural background of the participants. Both these aspects of context cause dimensions of variation within the **internal** horizon of focus of the same experience. For a person from a culture in which hugging in public does not normally take place, further variation is experienced in the environmental setting: various levels of discomfort are experienced depending upon the 'publicness' of the setting in which the experience occurs. On the other hand, a person who comes from a culture where hugging in public is a common occurrence feels no discomfort. As this same experience continues and repeats, further variation in perception is experienced by the person from the culture in which hugging in public does not normally take place, as the person

begins to accept that hugging in public is normal to the person with whom they are interacting, and the feelings of discomfort begin to abate.

Each of the categories of description in this research has an internal horizon of focus and external horizons of context. The variation in each category of description's internal horizon of focus, thus, is the qualitatively different way that the form or observed nature of the phenomenon is experienced in a different cultural context from the form or observed nature of the same phenomenon in one's own cultural context (being the external horizon of context). Bruce et al. (2003, p. 19) pointed out that students learning programming, for example, focus "simultaneously on the task and the understanding of the concepts". As Lo and Marton (2011) stated:

To see or experience an object of learning in a certain way requires the learner to be aware of its certain aspects, and to be able to discern these aspects at the same time. In other words, what the learner discerns simultaneously and how the discerned aspects are related determine how the learner sees, experiences, or understands the object. Because such aspects are critical to the intended way of seeing the object, we call these critical aspects.

An example from this research is the greeting ritual act (the task) which takes different forms in different cultures according to the higher-touch or lower-touch orientation of the culture (Ward et al., 2001). For a sojourner, this difference, or variation, becomes the critical aspect in perceiving and forming their way of understanding the greeting ritual. What they are learning changes over time as the perceptions change due to the learning of IcC, and thus their ways of understanding change.

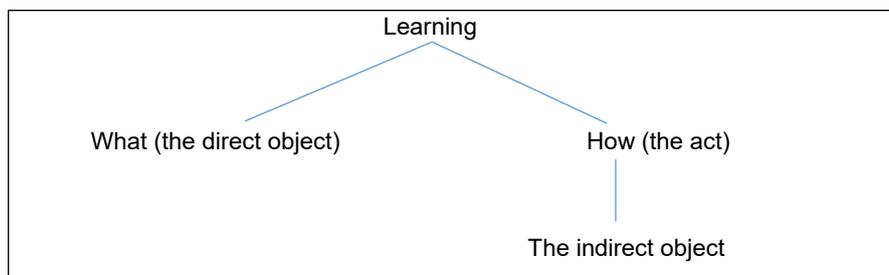
The experience of learning

'Learning' is commonly viewed as the acquisition of knowledge about, or acquiring the skills to do, something new or different. The learner discovers something about the world that they have not previously known (Marton & Booth, 1997), or have been unable to do. In a phenomenographic study, this discovery is commonly viewed in terms of the what and the how aspects of the experiences of learning something (Berglund, 2005. See also Marton & Booth, 1997). In the early years of phenomenography, researchers at Göteborg University carried out empirical studies about the learning experiences of university students there. Rather than their original research question, 'How much was learned?', the research question became 'What was being learned and how was it learned?' (Box, 2012; Berglund, 2005. See also Marton & Booth, 1997). The research focus thus came to regard learning as the acquisition of "an understanding of something in the world" (Box, 2012, p. 14. See also: Dall'Alba, 2000; Svensson, 1997).

The 'what aspect' refers to **what** content is being learned from the interaction experience: It is the direct object of learning from the experience (Marton & Booth, 1997; Stoodley, 2009). In the case of my research, the 'what' aspect is that the sojourner has learned the competencies necessary to tolerate, accept, or adapt sufficiently to the cultural symbols, rituals and values of a culture that is different from their own, and that they have enough competencies to be able to live and interact in that culture in an ethnorelative way. The 'how aspect' refers to how the learner

goes about the learning (Berglund, 2005). This includes both the act of learning, and the second level of the how aspect, the ‘indirect object of learning; the intention or motive that lies behind the action taken that results in learning (Berglund, 2005; Marton & Booth, 1997; Stoodley, 2009). The indirect object has also been described as the “capability the learner is trying to master and also as the quality of the act” (Harris, 2011). Figure 15 illustrates the what and how aspects of learning:

Figure 15: The what and how aspects of learning (adapted from Marton & Booth, 1997, p. 85)



To illustrate the ‘what’ and ‘how’ aspects using the previous example, **what** is the person from the culture in which hugging in public does not normally take place learning? They are learning that hugging in public is ‘normal’ in a different context and that there is little need for feelings of discomfort. And **how** is the person learning this? Through symbolic interaction with the ritual of hugging: Through a process of interpretation of repetitions of the same experience the person learns and adapts, thus a new way of understanding hugging in public is constructed within this individual (or is not if resistance to the ritual continues).

Categories of description

A phenomenographic data analysis sorts the research participants’ experiences and perceptions of a phenomenon, which emerge from the data collected, into specific ‘categories of description’ (Åkerlind, 2005; Marton, 1981, 1986; Uljens, 1996). These categories and their underlying structure, described in this section, are the primary outcomes of phenomenographic research (Marton, 1986; Uljens, 1996). They are instrumental in characterising how people experience the world (Pang, 2003). These categories become the basis of the ‘outcome space’ of phenomenographic research (Stoodley, 2009). Categories of description are always logically related, and are usually arranged hierarchically from the least to the most complex (Stoodley, 2009).

Conceptions of, or ways of understanding an experience, and how this relates to the categories of description “have often been confused in phenomenographic work and are a point of frequent criticism” (Yates et al., 2012, p. 104). Categories of description, Yates et al. further pointed out, are not identical with conceptions, but rather are the formation of categories based on the distinctive features that differentiate different ways of experiencing the phenomenon (see also Bowden, 2000). They stated that:

when we talk about 'categories of description' we usually do so in terms of qualitatively different ways a phenomenon may appear...[and that] each category should reveal something distinct about a way of experiencing a phenomenon (Yates et al., 2012, p. 104).

Each category of description, Yates, et al. said, details the referential and structural aspects of the experience, which involves describing the differences in conceptions in terms of the internal horizon of focus of each experience, as well as the differences in the structure of awareness. Further, each category of description will carry a description of the category along with illustrative quotes from the data collected (see also: Bruce, 1997; Cope, 2006). My formulation of categories of description and their content in the 'outcome space' is compatible with the above description.

The outcome space

Phenomenography's outcome space is the presentation of the findings of phenomenographic research. It represents the critical collective experiences, the perceptions and ways of understanding of the research participants broken down into their constituent parts: the interrelated categories of description (Berglund, 2005; Stoodley, 2009) and the variations within these categories. The outcome space is typically presented in a structured format, and different researchers present their outcome space in different ways (Harris, 2011).

The outcome space of phenomenographic analysis is the diagrammatic representation of the categories of description and of their logical relationships (Barnard et al., 1999; Bruce, 1994; Cope, 2004). The outcome space constitutes the results of phenomenographic research (Pang, 2003). In the outcome space of Berglund's (2005) study, sets of qualitatively different categories of description are presented that describe how the students related to their learning in the learning environment. When synthesised, these categories "describe the whole of the students' experience..." (Berglund, 2005, Abstract, para. 4). These outcome categories can then be further explored in relation to recommendations for improvements in a similar learning context.

Describing the outcome space

One way of comprehensively describing the outcome space outlined by Cope (2004) is in terms of the structure of awareness. In other examples outlined later in this section, the outcome space is alternatively described in terms of a referential/structural framework (Harris, 2011). A framework is used to describe the internal and the external horizons (the structural aspect), the what and how aspects, as well as the referential aspect: the way of understanding the experience and the meaning that is thus derived. Further, the dimensions of variation present in the internal horizon should be described, as well as the existence and the nature of the relationship between the dimensions of variation, and the nature of the boundary between the internal and external horizons (Cope, 2004). Cope suggested the following outcome space as a way of describing phenomenographic data (Figure 16):

Figure 16: A way of describing the outcome space for phenomenographic data analysis (adapted from Cope, 2004)

Category	Structural aspect		Referential aspect (way of understanding)
	Internal horizon	External horizon	
Cat. #	Dimensions of variation	Broader context detail	

Harris (2011) presented a comprehensive table of 36 phenomenographic studies using the what and how and/or the structure of awareness. Some examples from that table are presented here (Table 2).

Table 2: Phenomenographic studies using the what/how and/or referential/structural frameworks (taken from Harris, 2011).

<i>Author</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Uses of the frameworks</i>	<i>Definitions (taken from the source)</i>
Berglund (2005)	University student perceptions of learning computer systems.	What/how, referential, and structural aspects used to analyse data.	The what aspect relates to the content that is learned (the direct object), the how aspect can be further analysed by introducing a distinction between the act of learning and the motive (the indirect object) as well as in its referential and structural aspect.
Bruce (1996)	Higher educators' perceptions of information literacy.	Referential and structural aspect (divided into internal and external horizons) used to analyse data.	The perception is described in terms of a referential (or meaning) element and a structural element. The former identifies what information literacy is perceived as and the latter identifies how it is perceived.
Cope (2000)	Undergraduate students' perceptions of learning about information systems.	What and how aspects, direct and indirect objects, the action, referential and structural (divided into internal and external horizons) used to analyse data.	The what aspect of a learning experience concerns the individual's way of experiencing the phenomenon being learned about and is known as the direct object of learning. A structure of awareness has a structural aspect consisting of an internal horizon and an external horizon, and also a referential aspect (the meaning attributed to the phenomenon). An individual's approach to learning about the phenomenon is the how aspect of the learning experience and can be described in terms of an indirect object of learning.
Eckerdal (2006)	Tertiary students' perceptions of learning object-oriented programming.	What and how aspects analysed with their action, direct and indirect objects identified. Referential and structural aspects analysed within the what aspects.	The what aspect relates to the content of what is being learned, commonly referred to as the direct object. The how aspect refers to the learners' approach to their task, or how the learning is accomplished. From the focus of awareness, or the structural aspect, its parts and their relationship and surroundings, a

<i>Author</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Uses of the frameworks</i>	<i>Definitions (taken from the source)</i>
			certain meaning is discerned, and is referred to as the referential aspect.
McKenzie (2003)	University teachers' ways of experiencing teaching and changes in teaching.	What and how aspects, the action, direct and indirect objects, referential and structural aspects used to analyse data with some internal and external horizons specified.	The what aspects are what is taught. The how aspects include the acts that the teacher uses in teaching and the indirect object that the teacher uses to achieve results. The way in which aspects are discerned and related to each other are described as the internal horizon, and the way in which a phenomenon is separated from but related to its context is the external horizon.

This thesis uses the what and how aspects, the structural aspect, and the referential aspect following the format provided by the above tables to analyse the data, and as the structural framework of the outcome space. It is referred to in this thesis as the 'outcome space structural framework', and is illustrated in Table 3:

Table 3: How this research uses the what/how aspects, the structural aspect, and referential aspect in the outcome space: the outcome space structural framework

<i>Uses of the frameworks</i>	<i>Definitions</i>
What and how aspects, the act (experience aspect) itself, the structural aspect and the referential aspect used to analyse and present data.	The what aspects are what the sojourner learns during interaction with the symbols, rituals and values of the host culture. The how aspect is how the sojourner learns what they learn. The structural aspect is the variations discerned within the internal horizon and the influence of the context present in the external horizon. The referential aspect is the way of understanding and subsequent meaning that the sojourner constructs through many experiences with the same phenomenon.

Structure of the outcome space in this thesis

To determine the structure of the outcome space chapter, I reviewed the outcome space in five doctoral theses of studies using a phenomenographic approach (Berglund, 2005; Box, 2012; Eckerdal, 2009; Stoodley, 2009; Wihlborg, 2005). I reviewed doctoral theses particularly as only in such extended and well elaborated pieces of research are the processes of phenomenography explained in depth. This revealed a wide variation in the way the outcome space was presented, particularly regarding the categories of description and the dimensions of variation within the categories. Considering the wide variation as a licence to design a structure suitable to one's own work, I have structured the outcome space as is described in the following paragraphs and modelled in Figure 17 below.

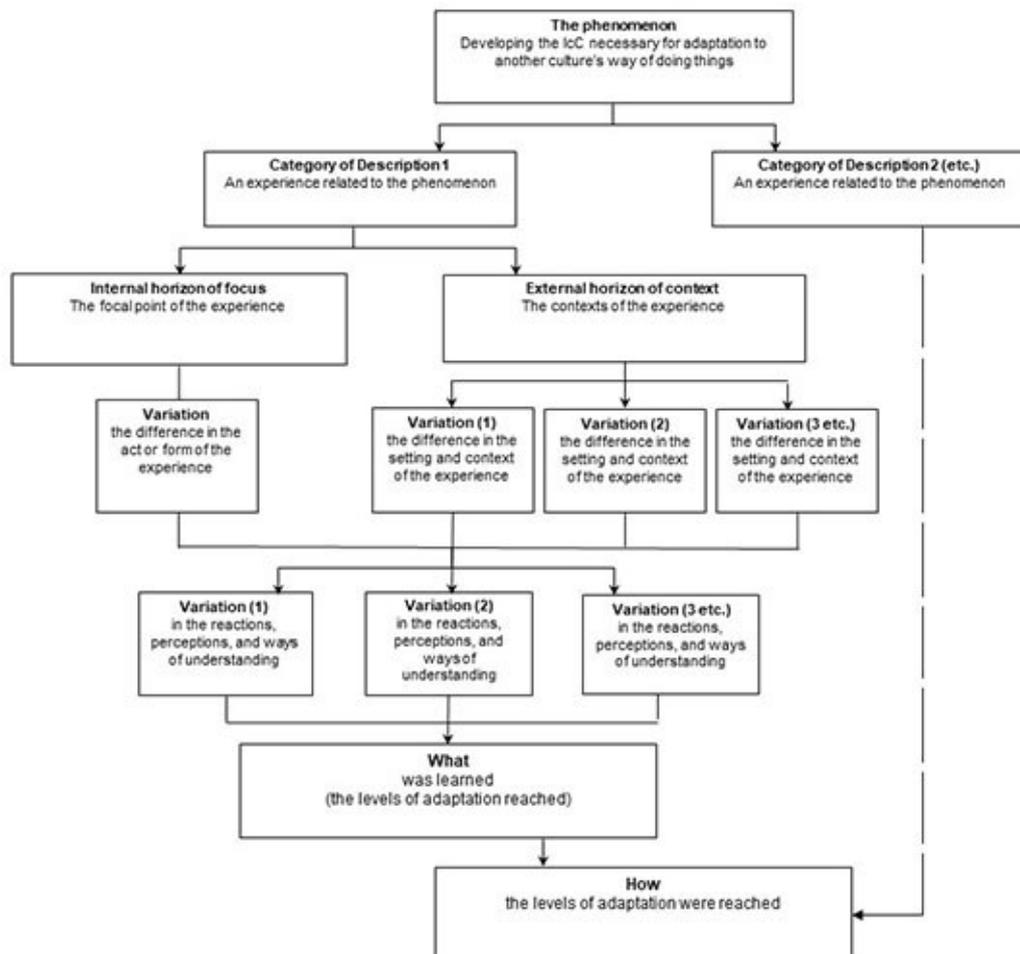
Each category related to the phenomenon and the category's label are sub-section headings in the outcome space chapter and are followed by a description of the category. The internal horizon of focus, being the focal point of the experience is then described. This is followed by a

description of the external horizon of context along with its variations, and supported by indicative research participant comments.

The variations in the research participants' reactions, perceptions and subsequent understanding of the experience are then described, along with the analysed quote from the participant's journal or interview transcript (which I refer to hereinafter as a 'stanza': see later discussion pp. 86-87) supporting the variation. The what aspect is then identified. In the case of this research, the what aspect is the level of adaptation reached by the research participants.

The how aspect, in the case of this research, is how the research participants reached their level of adaptation. The how aspect is identified and described for the combined set of categories of description. The Outcome Space structure in this thesis is illustrated in Figure 17:

Figure 17: The structure of the outcome space in this thesis



Credibility in phenomenographic research

Because phenomenography is a qualitative research methodology, phenomenographic researchers “are still traditionally expected to address issues of ... validity and reliability ...” (Åkerlind, 2005, p. 329). During the research process, the researcher must be aware of his or her interpretations and demonstrate how the interpretation process has been controlled and checked (Cope, 2004). Cope contended that the task of ensuring validity and reliability becomes straightforward when all aspects of the research have been underpinned by a structure of awareness framework. Ways of seeing and understanding particular aspects of the world may differ, even when identical responses to quantitative research questions are posed. In interviews, for example, researchers need to listen closely to what a participant is saying across a number of aspects of the phenomenon at hand if they are to comprehend the understanding that the participant has of a particular phenomenon (see Bowden, 2000). Cope further argued that strategies should be incorporated into a study’s method to identify and correct process and interpretation problems that are likely to impact on rigour. Cope recommended that:

- The researcher’s background is acknowledged (see also Burns, 1994) and their knowledge of the phenomenon is highlighted, thus allowing the researcher to be placed into the context of the research and in the external horizon of focus;
- The choice of the sample is justified;
- The interview design and questions are justified;
- The data collection is unbiased;
- The data analysis method is detailed;
- The data analysis is unbiased;
- There are processes for control and checking of interpretations throughout the analysis; and
- The results are presented in a manner that permits informed scrutiny.

While the above can be described as ideals, it behooves the researcher to follow these ideals to the highest level possible and to record any inadequacies or diversions. I have subscribed to these ideals and have used them as my guide to establish rigour and credibility. With regard to my background, as was mentioned in Chapter One, I have had many years associated with the AFS organisation. This association was at local Chapter level, and at the National level serving on the AFS New Zealand Board. My family hosted eight AFS students from various countries, and have two daughters, both of whom completed a one-year AFS sojourn.

One criticism of the rigour of findings in phenomenography is that the approach relies heavily on interviewing, so there can be possible misconstruing of meaning by the researcher, and a lack of clarity in the transcribing instructions given to the transcriber (Sin, 2010). A misconstruing of meaning is particularly the case with cross-cultural communication, and more so when the

subject is not using their primary language. Thus, the use of journals as the primary data collection method enhanced the robustness of the data collected.

To a large extent, rigour in phenomenography lies in the strength of the outcome space. Uljens (1996) argued that validity in phenomenographic research concerns how well the research outcomes correspond to the human experience of the phenomenon rather than how well the outcomes correspond to the phenomenon as it exists (see also Sin, 2010). This highlights a significant difference between phenomenography and phenomenology. The former corresponds to the human experience of the phenomenon and the way of understanding it (a second-order perspective), whereas the latter corresponds to experiences of the object of the experience itself (a first order perspective).

The issue of credibility is the relationship between the data obtained and the categories describing the outcome (Ornek, 2008). Emphasis is placed on the researcher's ability to argue for multiple legitimate interpretations of the same phenomenon rather than seeking like interpretations from multiple interviewees (Åkerlind, 2005). Booth (1992, as cited in Cope, 2004) described the validity of phenomenographic research as the researcher's ability to justify the outcome space. Justification, therefore, is based on a full and open account of the study's methods and findings.

Credibility of phenomenographic categories

A phenomenographic analysis considers relationships between the different ways of experiencing a phenomenon (Cope, 2004). Categories must be logically related to one another, typically by way of hierarchically inclusive relationships (Marton & Booth, 1997. See also Åkerlind, 2005). The researcher can then build a set of different meanings in a logically inclusive, hierarchically structured set relating the different meanings and representing different ways of experiencing something. The researcher thus provides a way of looking at collective human experience of the phenomenon, despite the fact that the same phenomenon may be perceived differently by different people and under different circumstances. The outcomes, then, can represent the full range of possible ways of experiencing the phenomenon in question (Åkerlind, 2005) as reported by the research participants. To enhance credibility, Booth (1992, as cited in Cope, 2004) argued that categories of description should be fully described and adequately illustrated with quotes from research participants. Strategies for verification of categories are described by Bruce (1994). Along with how these strategies were considered and/or applied in this research they are:

- The possibility of describing learning. The categories of description in this research describe the research participants' cultural adaptation experiences which lead to the learning and development of IcC; and
- Comparison with other studies. The researcher takes this to mean comparison with categories in other studies of the same object of study. While there is a plethora of

studies in the education, computer science and medical fields using a phenomenographic approach, the researcher found fourteen examples of phenomenography-based studies specifically related to IcC, cross-cultural adaptation, and/or ICC. These are listed in Table 4:

Table 4: Intercultural or cross-cultural studies using phenomenographic methods

Chen and Partington (2004)	A study of the understanding of the different ways in which people conceive aspects of their cultural life and how that relates to the primary importance of relationships in construction project management work and the implications for practice.
Jokikoko (2005)	Research data on inter-culturally trained newly qualified Finnish teachers' conceptions of diversity and intercultural competence in a Finnish context.
Larzén (2005)	A thesis that outlines research into the educational purpose of foreign language teaching and the shift in emphasis from linguistic competence over communicative competence to intercultural competence, and a growing emphasis on cultural issues over the previous 20-30 years.
Wang (2008)	An investigation of the perceived consequences of an Australian offshore graduate course on Chinese educators' conceptions of learning and teaching, with a focus on the intercultural learning experiences of Chinese students and the implications of intercultural dialogue and understanding for teachers in transnational education settings.
Qian (2009)	Research into the use of host mass media showed how it enabled a group of Chinese ESL students to acquire host communicative competence and cross-cultural adaptation.
Hitchcock, Vu, and Tran (2010)	A study of the experiences of a New Zealand and a Vietnamese negotiating teams' cultural differences showed how IcC played a role in helping with cross-cultural understanding during the negotiations phase of cross-cultural collaborative partnership agreements in Viet Nam.
Willis and Allen (2011)	An investigation carried out in Northern Uganda into the "dynamics that exist between researchers from developed countries and participants from developing contexts", contending that "the integrity of cross-cultural research practices can significantly benefit from cultural humility on behalf of the researcher" (Willis & Allen, 2011: 111)
Eklund and Hansson (2012)	A thesis detailing phenomenographic-based research used to obtain knowledge about volunteers' conceptions of developing intercultural communication competence in an intercultural learning context in East Africa.
Thota and Berglund (2012)	A focus on Chinese students studying in an intercultural learning environment of a master programme in Sweden. An analysis of the variation in learning in the knowledge domain and using cultural competency theories to interpret the experience of learning in the intercultural context.
Linehan (2014)	A study of the career experiences and perspectives of Chinese Canadians working in a large financial institution in Toronto, Ontario and Vancouver, British Columbia, critically investigating power structures that determine senior intercultural leadership roles using a blended methodology of social scientific quantitative measures and phenomenography.
Berglund and Thota (2014)	An exploratory study using email interviews to investigate if understanding of computer science is culturally situated: A question that has surfaced at Uppsala University, Sweden, where many Chinese students study computer science together with the local students.
Moltote (2015)	Research on intercultural relations through adult education in Enewary and surrounding Communities of North Shewa zone of Amhara Regional State, investigating the role of adult education in intercultural relations of Enewary community and in improving the living condition of peoples within the district.
Thota and Berglund (2016)	Dimensions of variation in what Chinese students learn in Computer Science in higher education institutions through the discussion of the dimensions of

	variation in the experiences and the values within the dimensions opening the way for understanding the relational nature of learning in computing education.
Manasatchakun and Zaphiris (2017)	A phenomenographic investigation into the role of cultural values in perceptions of privacy, friendships, trust and motivations for using Facebook among Greek Cypriots.

While the number of phenomenographic studies relating to IcC is considerably less common than for education, computer science and medical research, the researcher believes that the above list supports a phenomenographic approach for this research. Furthermore, Willis (2017) concluded from her study of the efficacy of the phenomenographic methodology to manage cultural differences in participants, and that this approach gives primacy to participants' experiences due to its categories of description structure.

Replication of the research

In phenomenographic research, replicability of results refers to the replicability of the outcome space. This means that given a set of data, different researchers should report the same outcome (Burns, 1994; Cope, 2004). However, the general consensus in the phenomenographic literature is that this is not a reasonable requirement. As many phenomenographic specialists point out;

although broad methodological principles are adhered to, the open explorative nature of the data collection and the interpretive nature of the data analysis means that the intricacies of the method applied by different researchers will not be the same (Cope, 2004, p. 9).

Phenomenographic data analysis involves a relationship between the researcher and the data, and the researcher's unique background is an essential part of this relationship. If, therefore, individuals experience phenomena in different ways, then different researchers investigating the variation of the sets of experiences will experience the variation in different ways (Burns, 1994; Cope, 2004. See also Marton, 1986). Assumed replication of this phenomenographic research by a different researcher is therefore impracticable; however, a degree of similarity could be expected.

Research methods

Sampling

In this research, purposive sampling was adopted with the objective of selecting a small collection of individuals who were most likely to accurately record and illuminate their intercultural learning experiences (Neuman, 2003). A target sample of 30 people (15 females, 15 males) was approached, aiming for a minimum of 12 participants and 12 therefore completed sets of data. Thirty, thus, allowed for the possibility of participant non-completion owing to the data collection being carried out over a period of one and a half years (during the period January 2009–July 2010). In all, however, 21 participants completed sufficient aspects of the study to be included in the data that was collected.

Participants were drawn from various nationalities. However, the sample also had some degree of homogeneity owing to them all being exchange participants pre-selected by AFS using standard selection criteria. For example, all were English speakers, albeit some having English as a second language. The sample was also selected on the basis of practicability, and availability of time and resources. For selection of the sample, the aim was to divide prospective participants as equally as possible between New Zealanders going to culturally diverse destinations, and non-New Zealanders coming into New Zealand from diverse locations.

While a phenomenographic study is of a sample who share the same experiences, the objective of the selection of the sample should be to capture a diversity rather than a statistically balanced representation (Alsop & Thompsett, 2005), thus giving a wide variation in experiences. The wide diversity in countries of origin of the sample that came to New Zealand, as well as the diversity of destination countries of the New Zealand sojourners, provided the variation in representation suggested by Alsop and Thompsett.

My long association with the AFS organisation, and my observations of the developed maturity of returned sojourners, especially in terms of intercultural competency led to the topic of this doctoral thesis. My discussions with the AFS organisation, both in New Zealand and at their international research office in New York, laid the foundations for the data collection. Through the AFS international research office I obtained the necessary approvals and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to conduct research among their study-abroad students during 2009 and 2010 (the MoU is Appendix B). AFS International included this research as part of their 2009 research strategy.

Through the AFS New Zealand office, approvals were obtained to conduct research with New Zealand students, and I was introduced to departing student gatherings or to the selected students Coordinators of the four then Chapters in Auckland: Auckland East (including Central Auckland), North Shore, South Auckland Counties and Waitakere (West Auckland).

Ten departing students were subsequently recruited. These students were departing between February 2009 and July 2009 for five Latin American countries, two European countries, two Asian countries, and one country not identified to preserve participant confidentiality.

One further student was recruited upon their return from a Latin American country as that student had kept a journal of their initial cultural adaptation experiences. While this journal had not followed the exact format given to the other participants, it was sufficiently close to be appropriate for inclusion.

For the New Zealand-destined students, the AFS international research office obtained the necessary AFS-specific country approvals and, in some cases, those countries forwarded introductory information and agreements directly to possible participants and obtained parental approval (students outside the jurisdiction of AFS New Zealand fell under USA law and, as such,

all 16-18 year old participants required parental consent). The specific AFS countries that agreed their students could participate (in order of arrival into New Zealand) were: Argentina, Colombia, Finland, France, Japan, Peru, Sweden, Russia and USA.

These students were approached on their arrival into New Zealand at the January 2009 'Arrival Camp', and were spoken to in country groups. Some had been pre-approached and given some initial research project information. Thirteen students were subsequently recruited from: Finland (4), France (2), Japan (3), Argentina (2), and Sweden (2). Two students from Russia arrived at a later date owing to air travel problems. Both had pre-signed the required agreements: one was recruited. Another student from an Asian country was approached a few weeks into their study-abroad programme in New Zealand and agreed to participate.

A further student, upon their return home to the USA following a year in New Zealand during the same time period, volunteered their extensive and detailed journal that they had written throughout the year. While this journal had not been based on the guidelines given to all the other students, it was so well written and rich with information it was decided to include it in the data. This journal, in the main, did not follow either the prescribed format or the precise theme required for the research participants' journals; however, the sojourner's experiences and ways of understanding these experiences that could be identified were included in the data.

In total 24 students signed the consent forms to participate. One formally withdrew during the data collection period, and their data is not included. No reason was given for withdrawal. All participants were between the ages of 16 and 18 at the time of data collection. They signed the required AUT Ethics Committee (AUTEK) consent forms and, where appropriate, their parents signed the required AFS parental agreement (ethics approval documents are in Appendix A).

All participants' names are confidential to the researcher and his primary supervisor, with each participant nominating an alias. There is one exception where the participant elected to use their own name, as the journal submitted was already in the public domain. This participant is not identified specifically. Two aliases were simplified by the researcher to facilitate ease of use.

The following are the seven aliases for the New Zealand students who were in foreign countries and who provided data: Damon, Fantacee, Felicity, Meena, Milly, Phillips and Pippo. One participant was on the student teacher programme. The 14 aliases and one given name for the international students in New Zealand and provided data are: Achilles, Al, Angelica, Anna, Bart, Elisa, Gabe, JackieFoxy, Kai, Kirby, Masha, Noppa, Nova and Winrow.

This research was conducted under AUTEK Reference number 08/220 dated 24 October, 2008 (see Appendix A).

Data collection

Data was collected using two methods: The research participants kept journals recording their experiences, and an end-of-sojourn interview was held. While the classic phenomenographic data collection method is the interview (Åkerlind, 2005; Alsop & Thompsett, 2005; Booth, 1993, cited in Box, 2012; Marton, 1986), Marton and Booth (1997) point out that alternative approaches are acceptable. The additional data collection method using journals was adopted because it was not possible for the researcher to hold regular interviews with the research participants, as they were located in many different countries. Therefore, the approach taken was that whenever the sojourner felt shocked, surprised, upset, excited or thrilled owing to some cultural difference, or just felt that things were unfamiliar, they should note what had occurred and how they felt about it (their perceptions) in their journal as soon as possible. In other words, the research participant was noting the critical incidents (Flanagan, 1954; Hes, Williamson, & Lloyd, 2007. See also Spencer-Oatey, 2013) that occurred in their adaptation to living in another culture. They noted **what** occurred (the experience), and their **perception** and **way of understanding** what had just occurred. Research participants were given these instructions on the participant information sheet (see Appendix A).

The process of data collection was, thus, the recording of these experiences during the period of the sojourn. Research participants were given the choice of the following journal recording methods to record their experiences and subsequent perceptions of the experience **as soon as, or as soon as possible after** the experience occurred:

1. Written journal entries;
2. Electronic voice recording (self-recording); or
3. Online 'blog'.

No more than **one** of the above recording methods was employed per participant. The choice of recording method was the sojourner's preference. Data recorded included the research participants' perceptions arising from and their ways of understanding of their day-to-day experiences: from their extraordinary, unfamiliar and/or difficult experiences and their comparisons of these experiences to their own home culture.

Not all participants completed the data collection, and one submitted no data. Another student did not submit a journal, however, participated in the end-of-sojourn interview. Journals were received from participants in various levels of detail. Those who did not complete their journals cited, for example, that life had become normal; that nothing unusual, difficult, or different was happening to comment on. Not all students participated in the end-of-sojourn interview. In total, 20 journals were received, in various stages of completion as follows:

- 13 handwritten journals;

- Six contributions to an online blog that was active throughout the data collection and analysis phase; and
- One mp3 voice recording.

The participant who not submit a journal, however, undertook a comprehensive and informative interview.

Two journals (identified above) did not follow the prescribed format or theme, however, all other journals submitted followed a prescribed prompt sheet. Some journals followed the format strictly, while others were more free-flowing. There are four complete journals reproduced in Appendix C1-C4 as examples.

Further, an end-of-sojourn interview was held within one month upon the return of the New Zealand participants, and immediately prior to the departure for home of the overseas participants in New Zealand. This interview collected any remaining information and verified, confirmed and/or clarified any unclear points or statements made in the journals, voice recordings or blogs that I had read or listened to thus far. The interview also allowed the participants the opportunity to add any further comments that they, or the interviewer, felt may be significant. The interview was semi-structured (Galletta, 2013) using pre-set questions, but following a free-flowing format where the interviewee could lead towards their own subject matter. In total, fourteen post-sojourn interviews were completed: One was conducted by email and the remainder were conducted face-to-face and voice-recorded.

The journal prompt sheet and interview questions are included in Appendix A.

Data analysis

Method of analysis and development of the categories of description

A phenomenographic data analysis entails the process of continual reading and re-reading, and sorting and re-sorting of the data. The process of determining categories of description, as Åkerlind (2005, p. 324) pointed out, "is strongly iterative and comparative ... involving the continual sorting and resorting of data plus ongoing comparison between data and the developing categories of description, as well as between the categories themselves", until the whole set of categories and their variations become stabilised (see also Marton, 1986). The process is as follows:

1. Read the complete texts or transcripts enough times to get a familiarity with all the content;
2. Highlight significant words or phrases that identify an internal horizon of focus (such as an act of greeting) from each text or transcript;
3. Compare and contrast the phrases in order to find similarities and differences by reading and re-reading short passages of text related to an internal horizon of focus ('stanzas');

4. Within the stanza, seek and highlight phrases that capture the writer's perception of the experience event and their way of understanding it;
5. Remain conscious of the what and the how aspects, and that the stanza content indicates both (an explanation of a 'stanza' follows below);
6. Group the stanzas into categories; and
7. Formulate categories of description assign a name for each (adapted from Hov, 2007; Larsson & Holmström, 2007).

As well as the above process, a phenomenographic analysis can draw on other methods (Box, 2012) as a supplement. For example Eckerdal (2009) used a content analysis approach, and McKenzie (2003) incorporated what she describes as "relational thematic analysis" (McKenzie, 2003, p. 12). Box used the constant comparative method advocated by Glaser and Strauss (1967), and pointed out that a phenomenographic analysis is similar to the constant comparative method. Box's analysis process included a method of coding to help segregate categories.

Box (2012) observed that while conducting the initial data analysis and deriving her results, she "realised that [her] understanding of phenomenography and [her] approach to doing a phenomenographic study were in conflict" (Box, 2012, p. 330). I experienced similar conflict, because my research question was broad which necessitated the collection of a wide spectrum of data. The orthodox 'phenomenographic' method of data analysis therefore proved somewhat inadequate for the detailed data analysis that I required. Box "resolved this conflict by going beyond the orthodoxy of phenomenography" (p. 330). To supplement phenomenographic analysis the constant comparative analysis method was used (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The constant comparative analysis method "is an iterative and inductive process of reducing data through constant recoding" (Fram, 2013, p. 3). Thus, I utilised the constant comparative method to analyse the data in order to develop the categories of description. In addition, the continuous refinement process of categorising data advocated by Wellington (2000) supported the final refinement of the categories of description.

The first step in the analysis was to read and re-read completely all of the research participants' journals (including the transcripts of the audio journals) and interview transcripts to become familiar with the data as a whole (Sjöstrom & Dahlgren, 2002). The journals of the research participants whose primary language was not English were read again closely to understand the writer's style, use of words and phrases, and their ways of expressing their ideas.

The process in this first step was to look for frequency of words or phrases that appeared to capture key thoughts and thus enable grouping of experiences. For example, words such as 'greeted', and phrases such as 'driving through the streets', followed by a description of doing or seeing something, were key pointers. For the electronic journals and transcripts a keyword search was undertaken for such key words and phrases (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Kuckartz, 2002; Sjöstrom & Dahlgren, 2002). Words that were duplicated in a phrase, or words with a

strong affective meaning such as '*shocked*', proved to be good signposts to a possible grouping of experiences.

To assist in organising the keywords, and thus identify possible groupings of experiences, coding was employed. A 'code' in qualitative enquiry, according to Saldaña (2009, p. 3), is "most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing ... attribute for a portion of ... data". I used this definition to identify codes. To undertake coding, extensive use was made of handwritten notes using coloured stick-on labels commonly known as 'Post-It' notes for the hard copy material, or Microsoft's 'Sticky Notes' for electronic material. This phase produced an initial set of codes which indicated possible groupings of experiences.

The analysis continued with extracting short texts containing the coded keywords or phrases that described an experience (the internal horizon of focus; see Figure 14, p. 70) and that also identified a reaction, a perception and way of understanding the experience. These short texts I refer to as 'stanzas'. The identification of stanzas is borrowed from narrative analysis and breaks long texts into smaller ones. This enabled focus on the stanza rather than the longer narrative (Gee, 1986; Huberman & Miles, 2002; Riessman, 2007). A stanza, thus, became the unit of analysis. Once the stanzas (units of analysis) were identified, they were then constantly compared to begin to sort the groupings of experiences into categories of description. Stanzas were compiled from both the participants' journals and the end-of-sojourn interviews.

The stanzas were entered into the data analysis software tool NVivo (either electronically imported from soft copies, or copy-typed in from handwritten journals). NVivo is a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software tool. It provides the data analyst several different approaches for analysing data in order not to limit the identification of categories and relationships that might otherwise be overlooked (Leech & Onwuegbusie, 2011). Additionally, the use of computer-aided analysis has a number of important benefits: The analysis is considerably faster, and the results of the analysis are significantly more reliable, as computers considerably reduce ambiguity and uncertainty. Furthermore, searching for words and phrases is faster and easier (Kuckartz, 2002). Another important point made by Leech & Onwuegbusie, however, is that it is the researcher who is doing the analysis, not the NVivo software. Using NVivo, the data was sorted into the groupings that had emerged. Continual re-sorting and refinement took place using NVivo's content analysis and in-context capabilities (Leech & Onwuegbusie, 2011). I then reflected on the identified groupings, and the extrapolation of the codes used into possible descriptive names for each of the categories.

Analysing the stanzas accordingly also confirmed that:

1. An experience was being described;
2. Key indicator words, phrases, or ideas identified the category and there was subsequent confirmation within a category;
3. The internal horizon of focus could be identified;

4. A reaction to the experience was being stated and a perception was being formed; and
5. A way of understanding of the experience was being expressed.

If all the above points were present in the stanza, it was verified as valid data that could be used for analysis within the given category of description.

It is impractical to illustrate here how each of the stanzas were included in a particular category. Using the greeting ritual experience category as the example, Table 5 is representative of how research participant stanzas were analysed to determine each of the categories of description and their variation.

Table 5: A sample stanza relating to the greeting ritual experience category

<i>Stanza lines</i>	<i>Content of a stanza</i>	<i>Verification of validity</i>	<i>Codification for verification of category/category of description</i>
1	We were <u>greeted</u> at the airport...	Indicates an interaction. The internal horizon of focus	Contains keyword (underlined)
2	by an Argentine AFS volunteer...	Context	
3	and as I put my hand out to <u>greet</u> him...	An anticipated action in a context	Repeats keyword
4	like he had done with the boys...	Context	
5	he leant over to kiss me on the cheek...	Context. An action leading to an experience (internal horizon)	
6	taking me quite by surprise...	A reaction	
7	A deeply rooted sense of personal space was awakened at this point...	A perception and way of understanding arising from this experience	

The above stanza indicates an interaction experience, a context, an anticipated action, a reaction, a perception and a way of understanding. As is explained further below, the research participant is learning to adapt to the experience of the greeting ritual. The category of description therefore became 'Learning to adapt to greeting rituals'. Through the variations in the internal horizon of focus of each of the experiences and the techniques described above helped determine the final set of categories of description.

Throughout the analysis, a high degree of openness to possible meanings was required (Åkerlind, 2005). Even as categories were becoming obvious, I retained an open mind to all possibilities. Subsequent comparisons became more focused on specific categories, however, these were still within a framework of openness to new or different categories (Åkerlind, 2005). One example of the identification of an emerging category was the constant reference by research participants to the experiences of greeting their host families and people in their host community, their reactions to this ritual, and comparisons with their own cultural ways of greeting people. Another example was the varied descriptions of the sights and sounds that research participants experienced on arrival in their host community and their reactions to what they saw

and heard. A decision needed to be made, for example, whether the stanzas coded 'food' and those coded 'food rituals' constituted two categories, or one. Finally, there was a period of further reflection and review, and the consideration of whether there was any more relevant data.

The next step, thus, was to undertake continuous refinement of each of the categories of description. This was achieved by two methods: The first was to review the content of each category for coherence, and the second was to ensure that the naming of the category was appropriate for the contents. This continuous refinement, according to Wellington (2000), involves the merging, subdividing, and omitting of early discovered categories as new relationships and patterns are revealed. This method of analysis was employed in this step of category refinement.

The final step was further refinement and accuracy of categorisation, and the determination of variation in the external horizons of context. A comparison of experience-to-context, and context to context (Elliott & Jordan, 2010. See also Fram, 2013) ensured that the categorisation of the experience was appropriate, as the context must be relevant to the experience. Furthermore, the context had to be based on a cultural difference that triggered a reaction. Cultural difference (the external horizon of context) being varied among the sojourners thus brought to light variations in reactions to, perceptions and ways of understanding the experience. The overall process resulted in several loop-backs re-analysis, dividing up, and filtering the data to identify a final set of 10 categories of description.

The process I followed is illustrated in Figure 18. As mentioned, the process resulted in several loop-backs to step 3 as shown in the figure. In step 3, a sub-set of steps occurred to analyse, divide up, and filter the data to identify the final list of categories of description. The whole process followed Wellington's (2000) data analysis and data refinement models. Table 6 (following page) is a summary of the identified categories, the codification that identified the categories, and the final category of description. The categories are in the sequence in which they emerged from the research participant journals. These categories subsequently became the phenomenographic categories of description.

Figure 18: The data familiarisation and analysis phases: the ‘constant comparative method’ and ‘continuous refinement’ process of developing categories of description from the data (see Wellington 2000, pp. 137 & 141)

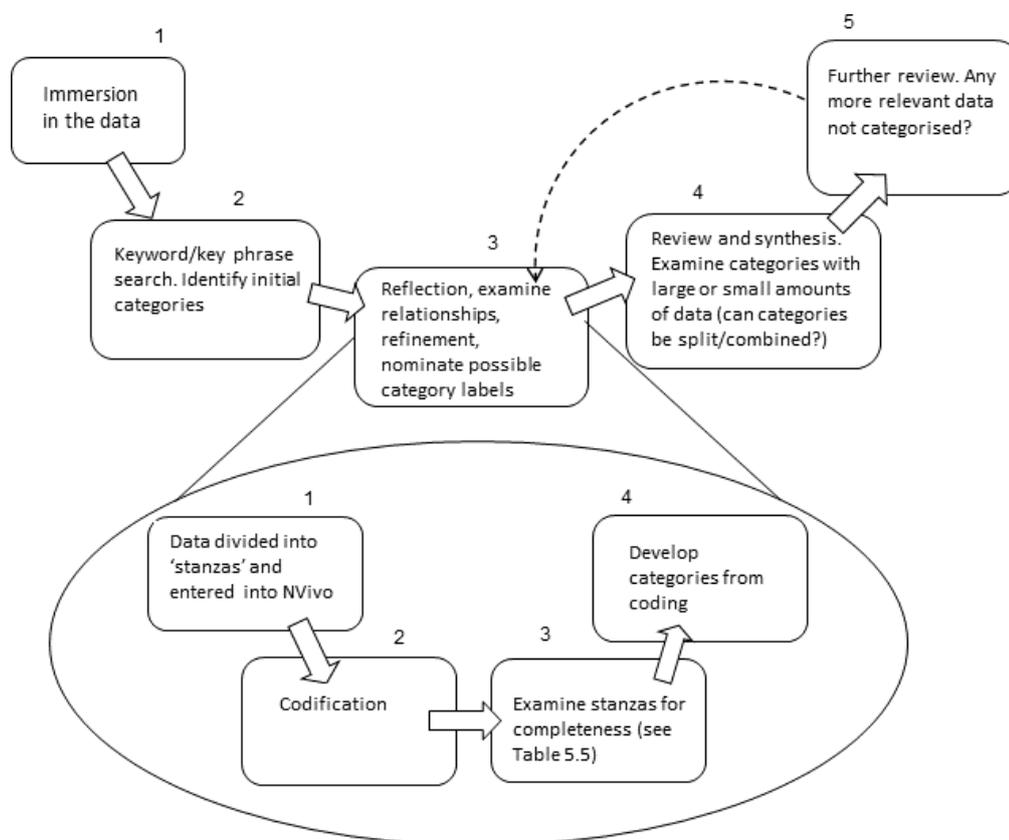


Table 6: Identified categories, the codification that identified the categories, and the subsequent category of description

<i>Experience category</i>	<i>Codification (triggered by an emotional response, a perception, or an understanding of something)</i>	<i>Category of description descriptive label.</i>
Experiences to do with greeting their host family and others	Lexical units: ‘greeted’; ‘greet’; any stanza line describing reactions to the interaction in a greeting (for example, ‘When you just say “hi” to someone you just touch with the hand.’).	Learning to adapt to greeting rituals
Experiences of the sights and sounds of life in the local community	Lexical units: ‘saw’; ‘noise’; any stanza line describing reactions to what was seen or heard (for example, ‘Rubbish was everywhere.’).	Learning to adapt to the community’s sights and sounds
Experiences of everyday life in the local community	Lexical units: any stanza line or lines describing reactions to aspects or experiences of everyday life (for example, ‘People use the drinking fountains at school.’).	Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices (‘everyday life’)
Experiences to do with food and rituals associated with	Lexical units: ‘food’; ‘eat/eating’; ‘meal’; ‘dining’; ‘drink/drinking’; any stanza line naming or	Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food and eating

<i>Experience category</i>	<i>Codification (triggered by an emotional response, a perception, or an understanding of something)</i>	<i>Category of description descriptive label.</i>
eating and sharing food or drink	describing food or drink and/or associated rituals (for example, '... we are going to have a barbeque...').	
Experiences to do with different orientations to time	Lexical units: 'time'; 'mealtime/eating time'; 'punctual'; any stanza line referring to the time of day or meeting time/s (for example, 'When you want to meet someone ... you just say "I'll meet you in the afternoon", like in general...').	Learning to adapt to differences in orientations to time
Experiences associated with learning and adapting to using the local language	Lexical units: 'language'; 'accent'; 'speaking/speak'; 'listen'; 'communicate'; or a reference to a language name, e.g. 'Spanish', 'English'; any stanza line referring to learning or using the host language (for example, 'When someone says "thanks" for something you say "de nada"...').	Learning to use the local language
Experiences associated with adjusting to going to school and the education system	Lexical units: 'school'; 'class'; 'teacher'; any stanza line referring to life at school, student activities or student behaviour, pedagogical matters (for example, 'We are doing this research in my history class and...').	Learning to adjust to the education and schooling system ('education' is defined as what they are being taught; 'schooling' is defined as how they are being taught and the teaching environment)
Experiences to do with building extended family social networks and social networks of friends	Lexical units: 'friends' in the context of establishing or making friends; any stanza line indicating the establishing of social networks (for example, 'It took five months to break into school and, yeah, be part of the family and everything.').	Learning to build and adapt to local social networks
Experiences to do with overcoming adaptation stresses	Lexical units: 'shock', 'frustration', 'homesick' in the context of feeling culture shock or adaptation stresses; any stanza line indicating culture shock or adaptation stresses (for example, 'I've ... felt so many times depressed and lost myself ...').	Learning to cope with adaptation stresses and overcome culture shock
Experiences associated with adapting to the overall way of life of the family and community at a more implicit level and maintaining relationships	Lexical units: Stanza lines that describe differences in approaches in the ways people react, interact, and do things (for example 'When I go back home I am going to miss the polite way people ask me to do.').	Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships

Sub-categories

For reasons of clarity of analysis where categories of description have distinct sub-sets, and for granularity, I have divided two categories into sub-categories. This technique was used by Törner and Pousette (2009) in an analysis that involved four researchers working independently to verify the categories of description and their contents. Professor John Bowden (see Bowden, 2000) also consulted during the work. The division of the two categories of description into subcategories is illustrated in Table 7:

Table 7 Categories of description divided into sub-categories.

<i>Category of Description</i>	<i>Sub-category</i>
Learning to adapt to differences in orientations to time	Temporality Concepts of punctuality and urgency
Learning to use the local language	New Zealand EPL (English as Primary Language) ESL (English as Second Language) in New Zealand (an English speaking setting)

Determining variations in the what and the how in the categories of description

Phenomenography's associated variation theory specifically studies the variation in perceptions of and the subsequent ways of understanding experiences (Berglund, personal communication, 2014; Pang, 2003). Thus, within the categories of description, the variation in the how and what aspects were determined using the same techniques as described above. For example, in the stanza line *'in Japan we only bow or say hello'* indicates variation in the form of the experience (the internal horizon), and in the cultural context of the experience (the external horizon). The stanza lines *'back home they will say 'hi' and you hug each other'* and *'girls and boys they kiss each other on the cheek'* also indicates variation in form and the context (cf. the previous stanza line). While the experience is always the same (the greeting ritual), the above examples determine the variation in the subsequent reaction, perception, and understanding.

As phenomenography has a learning focus, the commonality is the 'what aspect' that is, both research participants are beginning the process of **learning** the IcC necessary to adapt to a different greeting ritual. The experience itself suggests the what aspect, and the variation in reaction, perception and subsequent understanding formed suggests the 'how aspect': how the research participant is learning to adapt to the different greeting ritual. How the research participants learned to adapt to the greeting ritual is illustrated in the variation in the understanding of the experience. For example, the stanza lines *'to greet people ... it's different ... I was surprised'* and *'a deeply rooted sense of personal space was awakened at this point'* illustrate two variations in reactions, perception, and understanding. The stanza lines *'nah, it's just the way it is'* and *'but you just get used to it'* indicate not only variation in understanding, but also indicate the how aspect.

The categories of description hierarchy

As described earlier in this chapter, the categories of description are typically, but not always, presented in a hierarchical structure in order of complexity. The levels of complexity for the hierarchy that I have determined are loosely based on the layers of culture (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Shaules, 2007; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998) outlined in Chapter Two (pp. 20-22). They are further based on the researcher's understanding of, and his own experiences of, the level of difficulty of the adaptation processes using the elements of IcC from the literature (Byram, 1997, 2003; Deardorff 2006; Fantini, 2000; Howard-Hamilton et al., 1998) and from the data.

The lowest in the hierarchy, Category 1: Learning to adapt to the community's sights and sounds, and Category 2: Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices ('everyday life'), require the development of IcC elements of knowledge and attitudes. These two categories are at the symbols level on the cultural onion (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Shaules, 2007; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998).

Category 3: Learning to adapt to greeting rituals, Category 4: Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food and eating and Category 5: Learning about differences in orientations to time have been classed as 'medium-low' in the hierarchy. These three categories require not only the development of the IcC elements of knowledge and attitudes, but also the skills element. They are at the rituals level of the onion.

The next level in the hierarchy is labeled 'medium-high', requiring a higher level of skill than the previous level. This level includes Category 6: Learning to use the local language and Category 7: Learning to build and adapt to local social networks. They are at the symbols **and** rituals levels of the onion.

Category 8: Learning to cope with adaptation stresses and overcoming culture shock and Category 9: Learning to adjust to the education and schooling system are placed 'high' in the hierarchy. In these categories, awareness of adaptation stresses and how to cope with them needs to develop in the sojourner, as well as the required knowledge, attitude, and high level skills.

Highest is Category 10: Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships, thus requiring a more complex set of attitudes and awareness, as well as knowledge of cultural dimensions (House & Javidan, 2004; Hofstede, 2011; Triandis, 2004b), especially with regard to a range of the host community's values. The hierarchy of categories of description that have been labeled using the standard phenomenographic approach, is illustrated in Table 8:

Table 8: How the hierarchy was applied to the categories of description

<i>Hierarchy</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Cat. #</i>	<i>Sub-categories</i>	<i>IcC and cultural onion elements</i>
Lowest	Learning to adapt to the community's sights and sounds	1	None	Knowledge, attitude Symbols level
	Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices ('everyday life')	2	None	
Medium-low	Learning to adapt to greeting rituals	3	None	Knowledge, skills, attitude Rituals level
	Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food and eating	4	None	
	Learning to adapt to differences in orientations to time ¹	5	Temporality Concepts of punctuality and urgency	
Medium-high	Learning and adapting to using the local language	6	New Zealand EPL ESL in New Zealand	Knowledge, attitude, higher level skills Symbols, rituals Rituals driven by values
	Learning to build and adapt to local social networks	7	None	
High	Learning to cope with adaptation stresses and overcome culture shock	8	None	Knowledge, awareness, attitude, higher level skills Values and beliefs level
	Learning to adjust to the education and schooling system	9	None	
Highest	Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships	10	None	

¹ In a study by Clear & MacDonnell (2010), time orientation was found to be a more complex matter than my study suggests. Clear & MacDonnell report on time-based problems faced by groups of globally distributed project teams. However, my study concerns sojourners adapting to time-based issues in the locale of the different time orientation, which did not significantly affect adaptation to the extent that the higher level categories in my study did.

Describing 'adaptation' in the outcome space

Adaptation, in the context of this research, refers to learning the IcC required to live and effect action in a cultural system different from one's own. It involves many adaptation difficulties and stresses, as has been described in the previous chapter, including the possibility of having to overcome culture shock. As study abroad sojourners cross the divide between their home culture and their host culture, cross-cultural interaction experiences begin with the symbols and rituals of the host community's daily life. Two of the first that the sojourners face are the host culture's greeting rituals, and the sights and sounds of that cultural community. Both of these experiences can invoke reactions in a sojourner if the interactions and/or context of the experience are different from the sojourner's own way of interacting and their entrenched cultural context of such an experience. For example, Meena on her arrival commented on the way she was greeted:

We were greeted at the airport ... and as I put my hand out to greet him ... he leant over to kiss me on the cheek, taking me quite by surprise. A deeply rooted sense of personal space was awakened at this point...

Felicity on arrival in her host community commented that;

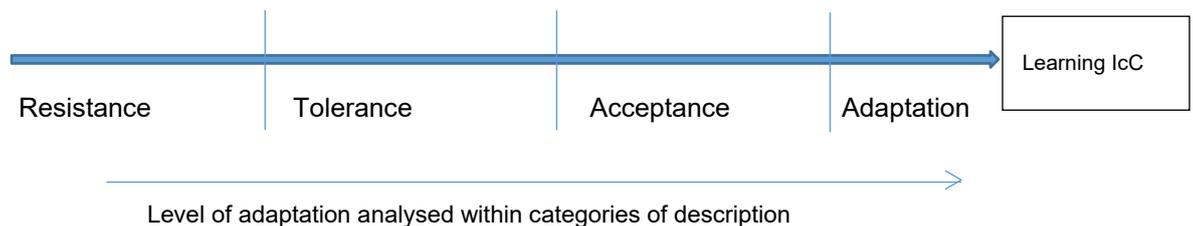
I arrived in my village and was shocked at the filthiness of the train station and the ... stray wild dogs ... running free. ... [!] wondered if people knew that animals were carriers of disease like rabies.

Following this, in the first few months of their sojourn, sojourners face numerous adaptation demands: demands such as learning and adapting to using the language, adapting to the local food and building their social networks, along with the stresses of such adaptation.

As will be illustrated in the outcome space, some research participants did not fully adapt to certain aspects of symbols, rituals, and ways of life. It can also be argued that some of these things were not fully **accepted** either, but, rather, were 'tolerated'. I have therefore distinguished between the words 'accept', and 'tolerate'. Tolerate is defined in most dictionaries as the ability or willingness to put up with something, in particular opinions or behaviour, that one does not necessarily agree with (see Cambridge Online Dictionary, n.d.). 'Accept', on the other hand, is generally defined as agreeing with or consenting to something as satisfactory (see Cambridge Online Dictionary, n.d.). The description of tolerance, thus, most fits the level of adaptation of those research participants who did not reach full acceptance on the adaptation continuum described immediately below.

Using tolerance as a description of the level of IcC that some research participants reached, I have placed tolerance as an additional element on an IcC development continuum adapted from Shaules (2007) Deep Culture model. The continuum illustrated in Figure 19 (below) can thus describe the level of adaptation reached by the research participants within a given category. I refer to this model as the adaptation continuum.

Figure 19: The continuum of research participants' levels of adaptation (adaptation continuum) (adapted from Shaules [2007])



This model is used to illustrate the levels of adaptation reached according to the variations in each category of description based on what IcC was learned for such adaptation. In the case 'Resistance', the researcher contends that insufficient IcC was learned to advance the participant's adaptation level beyond resistance. In the case of 'Tolerance', the participant learned to be tolerant of the cultural practice, value or values. In the case of 'Acceptance', the participant learned to accept the cultural practice, value or values. And in the case of

'Adaptation', the participant learned to adapt to the cultural practice and to follow the practice themselves or adapt to that value or values.

In many cases, the level of adaptation was determined by research participants' comments that they became **used to** seeing these things, or that they had stopped mentioning them in their journals. The researcher questioned the research participants regarding this latter point during the end-of-sojourn interviews, with the general response that these experiences no longer caused any reaction so they stopped recording them.

How stanzas (participant quotes/comments) are presented in the outcome space

As mentioned previously (p. 78), to enhance credibility, categories of description should be fully described and adequately illustrated with quotes from research participants (Booth, 1992, as cited in Cope, 2004). Within each individual category of description, stanzas from research participant journals are used to support the internal horizon of focus, the dimensions of variation in the research participants' reactions, perceptions and ways of understanding, and in some cases the what aspect of that category. Thus, duplication of quotes (referred to as comments) from stanzas previously cited is necessitated.

To reduce full duplication of quotes, and for clarity, stanzas used within the external horizon of context and the what aspect are edited and abridged, and participant names are not used unless it is for explaining context purposes. Editing principles followed in all edited stanzas are removal of ellipses and bracketing, and unclear abbreviations or slang replaced. Where a stanza line only is quoted, it is referred to as an 'expression'.

Not all participants made comments that related to every category. This was due to the participant not having any significant reaction to such aspects of adaptation and felt that no comment was needed, and verified at the end-of-sojourn interviews.

Comparison with United Nations (UN) categorisation of economies

A further variation in context that may have had an effect on adaptation, is the difference between the sojourner's home country economy with that of the country that the sojourner went to for their sojourn. While the economic circumstances of neither the sojourners' natural families nor of their host families was investigated, and while this comparison falls outside the phenomenon in focus (the learning of IcC that occurs from adaptation experiences during a cultural-immersion study-abroad sojourn) this is, nevertheless, valid. Cultural adaptation to the visible elements (symbols) of the culture that sojourners have just entered may be indicative of a country's economic situation.

The United Nations (UN) world economic situation report (United Nations, 2018) was used, therefore, for this analysis. The report lists countries according to the below categorisations,

which are listed relevant to the departure and destination countries of the research participant sojourners (however, to preserve confidentiality not all countries are identified):

- Major-developed economies (France, Japan, USA);
- Developed economies (Denmark, Finland, Sweden, New Zealand; plus one other;
- Economies in transition (Russia); and
- Developing economies (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Thailand; plus three others).

This analysis is considered within the external horizons of context of sojourners' experiences..

Summary

This study focuses on the learning that results from the cultural adaptation interaction experiences of a sample of study abroad cultural-immersion sojourners, and the learning of IcC that results. Phenomenography, a qualitative, interpretivist research methodology was chosen as the methodological approach for the research. Phenomenography was developed as a method of empirical research into learning, and involves the study of learning experiences and the learners' perceptions and ways of understanding these experiences. Findings are presented in what is referred to in phenomenography as an outcome space in the form of a set of hierarchical categories of description. These categories of description summarise the key experiences studied in the research and how these experiences are perceived and understood by the research participants.

Phenomenography, and its associated variation theory, specifically studies the variation in the perceptions of and the ways of understanding experiences (Berglund, 2005; Berglund, personal communication, 2014; Pang, 2003). The research focus is on the variation in the perceptions of the phenomenon as experienced by the person, and the person's ways of understanding something as described by the researcher. When focusing on the phenomenon, the researcher has an internal horizon of focus and an external horizon of context. The dimensions of variation are derived from the variations in the form or act of the phenomena which fall within the internal horizon of focus, and in the variations in the external horizon of context related to the phenomena in focus. Furthermore, a phenomenographic study is commonly viewed in terms of 'what' is being learned and 'how' that 'what' is being learned. In the case of this research the what is the level of adaptation to the cultural symbols, rituals and values of a culture that is different from that of the sojourner. The how is the cultural adaptation interactions of the research participants.

The researcher, using a 'second-order perspective' (Berglund, 2005; Marton & Booth, 1997), derives not only a set of variation in meanings derived from research participants' experiences, but also an inclusive structure relating to these variations. It provides a way of looking at collective human experience of phenomena regardless of the fact that the same phenomena may be perceived differently by other people. The outcomes represent the full range of possible ways of experiencing the phenomenon in focus as reported by the research participants.

To enhance rigour and credibility, the categories of description are fully described and extensively illustrated with quotes from the research participants. The quotes, referred to in this chapter as 'stanzas' and in the outcome space as comments or expressions, are included extensively to support the findings. Replicability, however, is unlikely because if individuals experience phenomena in different ways, then different researchers investigating the variation of the sets of experiences will experience and interpret the variation in different ways.

In this research, a purposive sample was recruited by selecting a small group of specific individuals most likely to accurately record and illuminate a suitably wide set of variations in the object of study. A target prospective sample of 30 were approached, aiming for a minimum of 12 completions, thus allowing for the possibility of participant non-completion due to the data collection being necessarily carried out over a period of one and a half years. The aim was to divide prospective participants as equally as possible between those New Zealanders going to diverse destinations, and non-New Zealanders coming in to New Zealand from diverse locations. The sojourners eventually recruited as the research sample represented seven students departing from four AFS chapters in the greater Auckland city area of New Zealand for sojourns to a variety of destination countries, and 14 students from eight different countries arriving for their sojourn in a number of locations in New Zealand.

Two methods of data collection were adopted. During the actual period of the sojourn, the research participant had the choice of one of written journal entries, electronic voice recording or an online 'blog' to record their experiences and the subsequent perceptions of the experience. Most chose the handwritten journal. Also, an end-of-sojourn interview was held upon their return in the case of the New Zealand participants, or in the case of the overseas participants in New Zealand, immediately prior to their departure for home. This interview collected any remaining data, verified, confirmed, and/or clarified any unclear points or statements made in the data collected during their sojourn, and gave the participant the opportunity to add any further comments that may be significant. There were 21 journal submissions and/or interviews that are included in the data.

Data was analysed using a phenomenographic data analysis approach, and the 'constant comparative method' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and 'continuous refinement' (Wellington, 2000) for determining categories. This involved reading and re-reading, then sorting and re-sorting the data first into broad groupings of experiences. These were then refined into phenomenographic categories of description using the narrative analysis technique of breaking the narratives into stanzas (Gee, 1986; Huberman & Miles, 2002; Riessman, 2007) as the unit of analysis. The unit of analysis was short passages of text referred to as stanzas.

The next step was to determine the dimensions of variation within each category. The same inductive process, constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and continuous refinement (Wellington, 2000) was used to determine and label the variations within both the

external horizon of context and in the research participants' reaction and subsequent perceptions.

For presentation in the outcome space, categories of description were ordered into a hierarchy, with Category 1 being the lowest complexity and Category 10 the highest. The outcome space, which is presented in the next chapter, represents the findings of this research. Within each category, the analysed variations in the internal horizon of focus and relating to the external horizon of context is described, along with the variations, over time, of the perceptions of and the ways of understanding the experiences in focus. The research participants' adaptation levels subsequently analysed are presented in the form of an adaptation continuum.

Chapter Five: The Outcome Space: what the sojourners learned, and how

Introduction

In this chapter, I present the findings of my research using the outcome space structure described in the previous chapter. The categories of description are described and extrapolated: The internal horizon of focus for each category is described, followed by the dimensions of variation in the internal horizon of focus, and are related to the external horizon of context. This is followed by the variations in the perceptions of and the ways of understanding the experience in the internal horizon. Both the variations in the internal horizon of focus and in the perceptions and ways of understanding are illustrated by indicative research participants' comments or expressions taken from the stanzas. This leads to the identification of **what** has been learned (the what aspect), which is then related to the levels of adaptation reached within that category.

Following the above, **how** the levels of adaptation were reached (the how aspect) is dissected for the combined set of 10 categories of description. The 10 categories of descriptions and the hierarchy are shown in Table 9 below:

Table 9: The phenomenographic categories of description and the hierarchy

<i>Cat.</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Hierarchy</i>	<i>Sub-categories</i>	<i>IcC and cultural onion elements</i>
1	Learning to adapt to the community's sights and sounds	Lowest	None	Knowledge, attitude Symbols level
2	Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices ('everyday life')		None	
3	Learning to adapt to greeting rituals	Medium-low	None	Knowledge, skills, attitude Symbols, rituals level
4	Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food and eating		None	
5	Learning to adapt to differences in orientations to time		Temporarily (mealtime) Concepts of time-keeping	
6	Learning to use the local language	Medium-high	New Zealand EPL ESL in New Zealand	Knowledge, attitude, higher level skills. Symbols, rituals level. Rituals driven by values in Cat. 7
7	Learning to build and adapt to local social networks		None	
8	Learning to cope with adaptation stresses including overcoming culture shock	High	None	Knowledge, awareness, attitude, higher level skills Symbols, rituals and values levels
9	Learning to adjust to the education and schooling system		None	
10	Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships	Highest	None	

Also in this Chapter, as mentioned earlier (See Figure 19, p. 94), I have mapped the adaptation progress of the research participants against an adaptation continuum through an analysis of

the participants stanzas: their adaptation experiences comments within the categories of description. Further, using my stanza-based analysis of their comments, I examined their experiences against a comparison between the sojourner's home country economy with that of the country that the sojourner went to for their sojourn according to the UN world economic situation report (United Nations, 2018).

In this regard, I found that only Category 1, Learning to adapt to the communities sights and sounds, and one sojourner comment in Category 2, appeared to bear any association to the home country and the country of sojourn. The association, it could argued, is that what the sojourners were experiencing was indicative of undeveloped economies (for example, favelas, people selling 'street food' and spiked security walls, and putting used toilet paper into a waste basket as it blocks the system (Category 2) that may indicate higher levels of poverty and lower levels of public spending. This is commented on further in the Category 1 section (below).

Category 2 (Learning to adapt to common everyday practices) (apart from the one comment mentioned above), Categories 3 (Learning to adapt to greeting rituals), Category 4 (Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food and eating), Category 5 (Learning to adapt to differences in orientations to time) and Category 6 (Learning to use the local language) bore no relevance. While the remaining categories (Categories 7-10) initially appeared to bear some relationships, I later determined that all of the developed or major-developed economies were also individualist and all of the developing economies were collectivist (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; see also Ball, 2001), with one exception: Japan (see note with Table 24, p. 192). Further examination of the stanza analysis determined that this was more the relevant correlation. The effect of a home country comparison with the country of sojourn from both these viewpoints is discussed in later in this chapter.

Additionally, the external horizons of context that affects adaption has been identified. These have been identified and listed according to each category of description.

Category 1: Learning to adapt to the community's sights and sounds

This category comprises the learning from experiences of the sights and sounds of cultural life on the streets, and the immediate visual symbols that the sojourners see on arrival in the local host community. This category is at the symbols level of culture. To learn the lcC necessary for adaptation requires the learning of knowledge about the symbolic sights and sounds of the host community and learning ethnorelative attitudes towards them.

The internal horizon of focus

The internal horizon of focus for this category was the research participants' experiences of the sights and sounds of street life in their community. This includes their initial experiences of seeing their new environment for the first time, as well as their later experiences of sights and sounds once they had lived in the community for some time.

The dimensions of variations in the internal horizon of focus were the various things that the research participants saw and heard that were new and unfamiliar to them, with their external horizon of context being the differences with the sights and sounds of their home environment. The variations of new and unfamiliar things were:

1. Rubbish on the streets;
2. The way animals were apparently being treated;
3. Animals running freely;
4. Favelas and shantytowns; and
5. Spikes embedded on the tops of security walls.

The following stanza lines are indicative of these variations:

I saw cows being pulled by ropes through their nostrils. I saw a monkey chained to a tree.

Dogs absolutely littered the streets, and small villages made of make-shift homes were crowded with people young and old, and every reachable wall [on big buildings] had graffiti on it.

... and fences all have spikes or wire.

Dust, cats in the street, rubbish - and this is in the airport [area], and I remember putting my bags in the taxi and then stepping on a half-eaten sandwich.

They'd have like birds in cages on the street and there'd be at least 20 birds in there and they're all making a noise...

Some mentioned more positive aspects of things that they saw, or phrased their comments in an ethnorelative manner:

The culture is amazing. They sang, danced, got us to join in and really just welcomed us. There were four NZ students and two NZ teachers on the trip and we did a haka¹ for them (twice because of demand) but I felt so proud to be able to share a bit of NZ with them. In the beginning I had a hard time with conversation because I didn't want to always talk about NZ but I realized I have to be proud of it, it's a talking point and part of being an exchange student. This has opened my eyes up to a bigger world and can do the same for others

Baskets on top of poles for your household rubbish. They look silly but it makes sense because otherwise all the dogs would get into the rubbish.

People with hoses watering public gardens. At first I thought it was stupid – why not use sprinklers, but then I realised it creates jobs and while they can't be paid much at least it's something.

These three comments are representative of the sojourner having quickly adapted and/or not needing any further adaptation to the things they saw and heard.

¹ A vigorous traditional dance or challenge from the Māori people of New Zealand performed by a group

Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions, and ways of understanding in Category 1: Learning to adapt to the community's sights and sounds

The variations above highlight the wide variety of sights and sounds that are locally accepted as normal in the community. However, many of these things were perceived differently by the research participants. Each sojourner who commented in this category reacted to their experience and formed a perception and a way of understanding. The dimensions of variation in perceptions and ways of understanding were:

Initial:

1. Surprise, shock, or disgust;
2. Loss of independence;
3. Sorrow, frustration, or desperation; and
4. Questioning the rationality of the community's standards;

Later in the sojourn:

5. Still finds it sad;
6. Just cannot adapt;
7. It's a different perspective;
8. Became used to it but with reservations; and
9. Became used to it.

The following comments are indicative of these variations:

Surprise, shock, or disgust and a loss of independence variations

Phillips reacted to what he saw as he left the airport upon his arrival:

Well the first shocking thing ... was coming out of the airport and it just being so filthy, like dust, cats in the street, rubbish, and this is in the airport, ... and I remember putting my bags in the taxi and then stepping on a half-eaten sandwich and this is so foreign to us.

This comment also expresses an understanding that what Phillips is seeing is *so foreign to us* ('us' being the sojourner group). Milly also expressed shock at what she saw:

I was shocked [seeing] slums as you arrive ... [in] from the airport, ... and the rubbish was everywhere so it can't be very healthy. [There is] graffiti everywhere, and fences all have spikes or wire. It's scary to think I am not as safe as at home, ... because I don't know where I am or what to do and I don't speak Spanish. I don't think I would ever be allowed to walk by myself down the road [here] so that it feels like a loss of independence.

In this comment, the ways of understanding expressed include Milly's perception of being *not as safe as at home*, the perception that she would not be allowed to walk the streets by herself, as well as the perception of a loss of independence.

Sorrow, frustration, or desperation variation

Felicity's comments illustrate this variation:

[I] saw cows being pulled by ropes through their nostrils. I felt awfully sorry for these animals and incredibly frustrated that there is nothing I can do. [I] saw a monkey looking miserable chained to a tree. [I felt] sorrow and desperation to free the monkey as it appeared to have no real use and was being treated terribly.

In this comment the ways of understanding expressed include a perception that there is *nothing I can do*, and that the monkey was *looking miserable, appeared to have no real use and was being treated terribly*.

Questioning the rationality of the community's standards variation

Meena's and Felicity's following comments illustrate this variation:

Meena *Driving through the streets ... [it] felt like I was in another world. ... Stray dogs absolutely littered the streets, and small villages made of make-shift homes were crowded with people young and old. and every reachable wall [on big buildings] had graffiti on it. My initial impressions ... were not good, and I am starting to question my being here. I don't know how I'm going to last 6 months here if these living standards are anything to go by.*

Felicity *I saw a family running a small stall making rotis – pancakes and wondered how they can make a living that way.*

The ways of understanding expressed in these two comments include the perception of being *in another world*, questioning even being there, and not having a good impression of the living standards.

The above variations indicate resistance to the things they saw in their community. However, over time the research participants' reactions and understanding changed, and they showed an ethnorelative attitude, and some empathy, towards their local communities. The following comments are indicative of variations 5 to 8 (some comments have been abridged for clarity):

Still finds it sad; just cannot adapt; it's a different perspective; and became used to it but with reservations variations

The comment below expresses tolerance rather than acceptance as indicated by the expression *but I still find it sad*.

Meena *I did get used to seeing the stray dogs lying around and scavenging for food and water, but I still find it sad.*

The expressions used in the following comments such as *dirty*, and poverty being described as *rife* indicate resistance. However, the way of understanding reached and indicated by the expression *that's a different perspective* is tolerance. Similarly, the second comment below states that the research participant *just can't adapt* thus indicating tolerance.

Phillips *Most of the country was dirty ... [and, due to the location] it's bound to get dusty, and because the poverty is so rife they feel the need to employ somebody to pick the rubbish up, so that's a different perspective*

Phillips *But no, poverty you just can't adapt. Probably coming from a ... [middle class place] and then you go there and you see these slums. But actually I wasn't exposed to [this country's] real poverty. So we thought people that earned less than a dollar a day were poor – those were the lucky ones. The people that don't work are the unfortunate ones.*

The following comment indicates acceptance:

Phillips *... and I guess that I adapted eventually by avoiding the rubbish, or kind of kicking it into the kerb.*

In this comment, although the research participant 'guessed' that he *adapted eventually*, the remark that he kicked the rubbish to the kerb, and, further, that there is no mention of dropping rubbish in the street himself, indicates more a level of acceptance than adaptation. In the following comment the remark *it's kinda life I guess* indicates an acceptance.

Became used to it variation

Phillips' comment illustrates this variation:

Interviewer: *Did you ever get used to it?*

Phillips *Yes, I got used to stepping on discarded food, got used to seeing huge rats just running along the street - it's kinda life I guess.*

Milly also expressed *just getting used to* the sights and sounds of her host community. Other participants stopped making comments that fell into this category in their journals. This is the variation of getting used to this aspect of daily life.

Table 10 is the summary of the variations in the internal horizon of focus and in research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 1: Learning to adapt to the community's sights and sounds.

Table 10: Summary of variations in Category 1: Learning to adapt to the community's sights and sounds

<i>Category 1</i>	<i>Sub-categories</i>	<i>Variations in the internal horizon of focus</i>	<i>Variations in perceptions and ways of understanding</i>
Learning to adapt to the community's sights and sounds	None	1. Rubbish on the streets 2. The way animals were apparently being treated 3. Animals running freely 4. Favelas and shantytowns 5. Spikes embedded on the tops of security walls.	<i>Initial</i> 1. Surprise, shock, or disgust 2. A loss of independence 3. Sorrow, frustration, or desperation 4. Questioning the rationality of the community's standards <i>Later in the sojourn</i> 5. Still finds it sad 6. Just cannot adapt 7. It's a different perspective

Category 1	Sub-categories	Variations in the internal horizon of focus	Variations in perceptions and ways of understanding
			8. Became used to it but with reservations 9. Became used to it.

What the research participants learned

The research participants learned, over time and to varying degrees, to adapt to, accept, or at least to tolerate the sights, sounds and symbols of their community. Research participants said that they became **used to** seeing these things, or they stopped mentioning them in their journals. Figure 20 summarises the levels of adaptation reached according to the variations within Category 1: Learning to adapt to the community's sights and sounds.

Figure 20: Summary of research participants' levels of adaptation to the community's sights and sounds



	Still finds it sad to see some things	Tolerance You just cannot adapt	A different perspective	Acceptance Became used to seeing such thing but with reservations	Adaptation Became used to seeing such things	Stopped making comments in their journals or made favourable comment
Meena	X					
Phillips		X	X	X	X	
Milly					X	
Felicity					X	
All other participants						X

Comparison with UN categorisations

As previously discussed in the Introduction to this chapter (pp. 99-100), and as illustrated in the above figure (Figure 20), four participants contribute to the comments relating to tolerance and acceptance in the adaptation continuum. It is notable that all four of these participants departed from developed rated economy countries and went to developing rated economy countries (United Nations, 2018). Given the nature of the sights and sounds mentioned in the sojourners' comments this fact is significant. As previously stated in the chapter Introduction, it could be argued that what the four sojourners who commented were witnessing may well have been indicative of undeveloped economies, whereas those who did not comment did not see any significant difference to the sights and sounds of their own environment. However, in the 'All other participants' in the above table there is a mix of major-to-developed and vice versa,

developed-to-developed, developed-to-developing and vice versa, and in transition economies-to-developed.

How the external horizon of context affected adaptation

In this category, sojourners' experiences and reactions to those experiences relate to the symbols layer of culture: the visible elements of a culture (the symbols layer of the cultural onion [Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005] [see pp. 20-22]) that caused reactions leading to perceptions and ways of understanding that culture. As the sojourn progressed, only four participants retained strong feelings regarding these visible elements, expressing levels of tolerance, acceptance and adaptation. All other participants either quickly stopped making any comments at all in this category or expressed positive feelings. The external horizon of context affecting adaptation for the four participants mentioned was that they were all from developed economies sojourning in developing economies (United Nations, 2018).

Category 2: Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices ('everyday life')

This category comprises the learning from experiences of everyday life in the local community. It differs from Category 1 in that this category is the everyday life and practices that the sojourner is now interacting with during their sojourn. This category is at the symbols level of culture. It required the research participant to develop knowledge about what symbolises the everyday practices in the community and ethnorelative attitudes towards them.

The internal horizon of focus

The internal horizon of focus for this category was the research participants' experiences of the everyday life in their community. The dimensions of variation in the internal horizon of focus are those everyday practices of the host community that are different to their external horizon of context: the way everyday things are done in the research participants' home community and which caused a reaction within the research participant. For example: using public facilities, personal habits, modes of dressing and dress protocol, driving practices, and seeing violence in school and on the streets all caused reactions. The dimensions of variation in the form of common everyday practices, thus, were:

1. Using public facilities and personal habits;
2. Modes of dressing and dress protocol;
3. Driving practices; and
4. Public violence.

Some participants commented about variations in **using public facilities** and **personal habits** (edited for clarity),

Public bathrooms don't have the paper in the stalls, you take it in when you go in, then put it in the bin.

People use the drinking fountains at school, and there are many of these. In my country we only have a few of them in town but none at school and you don't use them. And the students here don't shower after PE. There's one shower but no-one used it.

All girls in Finland spit, and you spit on the ground too, but not inside. My host sister on the other hand says I can spit in the toilet or the bathroom, otherwise you just swallow.

Other participants' comments illustrate the **modes of dressing and dress protocol** variation:

I've worn a warm jacket and a woolly hat in the mornings when I've gone to school lately. The other guys are still wearing their jandals, shorts and thin jerseys and every day complaining how cold it is, but they still don't wear more clothes.

Back in my country it is considered very rude to keep your jacket on inside. If you are wearing a jacket when in class, the teacher might very well snap at you and tell you to take it off. Here it is the teachers who are most likely to wear a jacket in a class room.

The following comments illustrate variation in **driving practices**:

No one wears a seat belt, and motorists don't observe zebra (pedestrian) crossings, but in NZ I hardly look before I cross.

People drive over 100km/h in narrow roads, the kind of roads that would have a speed limit of about 60-80 in Finland. There are also really many road works going on at the same time.

I didn't ride motorcycles when I was in New Zealand, and then when I got there it was I had to get on a motorcycle taxi. And you get on the back and you're not wearing a helmet.

One research participant commented on **public violence**:

But the school was just like back yard bullying kind of thing with teachers, adults, whereas the violence on the street was much worse.

Again, some positive aspects of everyday practices were mentioned in early stages of the sojourn:

Really relaxed every day even in school and after school at home. Is it also because of the weather? Students all the time hang around outside during interval and lunch time. That's completely different from Japanese (I never see anyone outside after school) I really feel relaxed and comfortable with this life-style.

There is far more energy here. Everything happens at a much more intense level with everything.

Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions, and ways of understanding in Category 2: Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices ('everyday life')

The variations above highlight the differences in the form of everyday practices in the research participants' host community to those in their home community. Again, research participants reacted to their experience and formed a perception and a way of understanding it. The variations in perceptions and way of understanding were:

Initial:

1. Surprise, shock, or disgust;
2. Feeling fear or feeling unsafe;
3. Feeling that something was strange or odd;

Later in the sojourn:

4. Resisted the practice;
5. Indifference or tolerance expressed;
6. Became used to it but with reservations;
7. Became used to it;
8. Expressed positive aspects of a practice; and
9. Stopped the home practice in the host community.

Reactions of surprise, shock, or disgust variation

The following comments are indicative of this variation:

Angelica *On my first week here I was really surprised that people (and not just one or two, but everyone!) ... uses the drinking fountain at school! And there are many of these. In [my country] we only have a few of them, in town ... [etc.] but none at school. And you don't use them, it's kinda disgusting. ... I find it very hard to drink from the ones in school, feel like everybody's staring at me and I'd rather use my water bottle. Still kinda weird to see people use them.*

In this comment, the perception expressed here is that it is weird and disgusting to see people using drinking fountains, and that Angelica felt that everybody was staring at her. Her way of understanding is that *you don't use them*.

Angelica *Had a big discussion with my host sister ... about whether you can spit or not on the ground. For me it's okay to spit; all girls in Finland spits, and you spit on the ground too! Not inside, but I think it's ok to spit in the side of the road. My sister on the other hand finds it disgusting to spit, especially for a girl. She says I can spit in the toilet or the bathroom, otherwise you just swallow it. For me that's disgusting, to swallow when you feel the need to spit...*

In this comment there is a reaction of disgust to swallowing rather than spitting. The comments express two variations in context: the difference between the practice in Finland to the practice in her local community.

Felicity *They'd have like birds in the cages on the street and ... there'd be at least 20 birds in there and they're all going mental like (makes a noise) and they just look sick. And the dogs ... like stray dogs everywhere – they're disgusting and mangy and [the local people are], like, "it's okay, it's okay".*

The ways of understanding expressed in this comment includes her perception that the birds *look sick*, and the dogs are *mangy*.

Milly *Public bathrooms don't have the paper in the stalls, you take it in when you go in, then [after use] put it in the bin beside the toilet because the system can't handle it. It grosses me out; I don't like the idea of not flushing the paper away, but they clear the bins frequently.*

The reaction and ways of understanding expressed in the comment above includes being *grossed out*, and not liking the process in public bathrooms.

Feeling fear or feeling unsafe variation

The following comments illustrate this variation:

Milly *No one wears a seat belt, and motorists don't observe zebra [pedestrian] crossings. I feel a little unsafe without a seat belt, and it's frustrating [at pedestrian crossings] because I still find it hard to recognise which way the traffic is coming, and in NZ I hardly look before I cross, so it is hard to realise that traffic doesn't often stop. So glad I'm not driving, there are no many times that I have had mini panics because we have been so close to hitting another car...*

In this comment, the way of understanding is that the *traffic does not often stop* and that they were *close to hitting another car*.

Felicity *... I didn't even ride motorcycles when I was in New Zealand, I was too scared to ride it and then when I got there it was like, "okay, you have to get on a motorcycle taxi", and I was like, "what?", and you get on the back and you're not wearing a helmet or anything and you go around a corner and I would just close my eyes and be, like, "oh my god I'm going to die, I'm going to die, I'm going to die".*

The way of understanding the experience described in this comment is that she (Felicity) was *going to die*.

Felicity *My host family were mental drivers as well, scared the shit out of me every time, but by the ... end ... I just laid back and was just like, "don't be phased and just listen to the music", so you get used to that, but it's still dangerous like they do have a lot of crashes and stuff.*

In the first expressions in this comment, the way of understanding is that driving is dangerous as, later in the stanza, she states that they *do have a lot of crashes and stuff*. A subsequent expression indicates a change in approach to *just get(ting) used to it*; however, the understanding that *it's still dangerous* remained.

Feeling that something was strange or odd variation

The following comments illustrate this variation:

Anna *There have been a couple of colder days lately and so I've worn a warm jacket and a woolly hat in the mornings when I've gone to school. The other guys are still wearing their jandals, shorts and thin jerseys. It felt very funny that I who is used to a very cold climate compared to this, is the one who wears the most clothes. The others are every day complaining how cold it is, but they still don't wear more clothes which seems to me pretty stupid. ... Speaking about the jacket brings another thing to my mind. Back [in my country] it is considered very rude to keep your jacket on inside. If you are wearing a jacket when in class, the teacher might very well snap at you and tell you to take it off. Here it is the teachers who are most likely to wear a jacket in a class room, which feels sometimes very odd.*

The ways of understanding expressed in this comment are that it was stupid to wear inappropriate clothes, and how odd it was to wear a jacket indoors.

Elisa *Sometimes I find it a little awful to see 15-year-olds driving a car, they are responsible ones but also the ones who seem to have no idea how to drive. I don't like school bus, but driving a bike on the side of the road doesn't feel really safe. ... It feels a little strange travelling on a bus here. In Finland people are quiet and usually just a few people are whispering with each other. Here the people are shouting/screaming/singing etc. in the school bus and travelling isn't really comfortable. But there are some really nice people in the bus so it's a good way of getting to know others – if you are brave enough to start a conversation.*

In this comment, the perceptions and ways of understanding expressed are that it was *awful* seeing 15 year olds driving, feeling unsafe, and the strangeness of travelling in a noisy (rather than a quiet) bus.

All the above variations indicate resistance to the practices that the participants encountered. However, as with the previous category, many of them, after a period of time, came to a level of tolerance for, or acceptance of, these practices, as is indicated in the following comments (some comments are abridged for clarity).

The following comments illustrate variations 4 to 9:

Resisted the practice; indifference or tolerance expressed; became used to it but with reservations; became used to it; expressed positive aspects of a practice; and stopped the home practice in the host community:

Milly *I don't like the idea of not flushing the paper away, but they clear the bins frequently, ... and as far as the paper being outside the stall it's no big issue, you just have to remember to take it in.*

Tolerance is expressed in the above comment with the expression *but they clear the bins frequently*. Adaptation to taking the paper from outside the stall is indicated with the expression *no big issue*.

Felicity *... by the ... end ... I just laid back and was just like, "don't be phased and just listen to the music", so you get used to that, but it's still dangerous like they do have a lot of crashes and stuff.*

The above comments indicate a changed way of understanding, which is indicated in the expression *by the end I just laid back and you get used to that*, also indicating a level of adaptation (tolerance).

The variation in the following comments is while the research participant became used to the practices, even expressing some positive points, some reservation remains. The following two comments indicate a low level of tolerance, or at least an indifference.

Interviewer *What about violence in the school, did you get used to that?*

Phillips *No, no way. I mean, physical kind of things you can usually brush off, walk away from kind of thing, so can kind of get used to it, but it was real shocking, like*

people would pick up broom sticks and hit each other over the head with it, and stuff like this. But the school was just like back yard bullying kind of thing with teachers, adults, whereas the violence on the street was much worse, ... like these two guys were fighting on the street with machetes, and then we saw one guy lift up a machete on another guy's skull, yea we kinda closed our eyes instinctively, but we heard the "clonk". Yea, so I did get really kinda numb to it all, not blocked it out, but just kinda "lala" about it, and continued our night and ate dinner after that. So I must have ignored it quite well...

Fantacee: ... But over the last few weeks I feel as though they've managed to get even crazier! haha. Don't know how long it will take before I stop holding onto the arm rest of the car every time we get close to a round-about. [Tolerance as indicated by the laugh.]

In the following comments, acceptance is expressed:

Damon: Many of the people that I know are such good people and despite the fact that there are problems, everyone keeps on living and doing what they can with what they've got.

In the next comments, while the research participant still has the perception that travelling on the bus *feels a little strange*, she appears to have adapted to this practice when she stated that *there are some really nice people in the bus so it's a good way of getting to know others*.

Elisa: The people are shouting/screaming/singing etc. in the school bus and travelling isn't really comfortable. But there are some really nice people in the bus so it's a good way of getting to know others

In this final comment, while the research participant accepts the practice her perception that it *sometimes feels very odd* remains.

Anna: Back [in my country] if you are wearing a jacket when in class, the teacher might very well snap at you and tell you to take it off. Here it is the teachers who are most likely to wear a jacket in a class room, which feels sometimes very odd.

Table 11 is the summary of the variations in the internal horizon of focus and in research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 2: Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices ('everyday life').

Table 11: Summary of variations in Category 2: Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices ('everyday life')

Category 2	Sub-categories	Internal horizon of focus variations	Variations in the perceptions and ways of understanding
Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices ('everyday life')	None	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using public facilities and personal habits 2. Modes of dressing and dress protocol 3. Driving practices 4. Public violence 	<p><i>Initial</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Surprise, shock, or disgust 2. Feeling fear or feeling unsafe 3. Feeling that something was strange or odd <p><i>Later in the sojourn</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Resisted the practice 5. Indifference or tolerance expressed 6. Became used to it but with reservations 7. Became used to it

Category 2	Sub-categories	Internal horizon of focus variations	Variations in the perceptions and ways of understanding
			8. Expressed positive aspects of a practice 9. Stopped the home practice in the host community.

What the research participants learned

Research participants learned, again over time and to varying degrees, to adapt to, accept, or at least to tolerate or become indifferent to the variations in ways of life within their community. As well, as in previous categories, the research participants indicated that they had become used to community practices.

There were, however, some examples of insufficient IcC learning and thus retaining resistance to local practices, including what appears to be choice as suggested in this comment:

I'd go to the dairy in barefoot, shorts, pyjamas, ... or something like this, whereas they wouldn't – they would get totally dressed up and stuff. ...

This comment is an example of a participant not progressing past resistance. However, this is an example of this participant continuing to resist **for this aspect of everyday practices only**. While Phillips also indicated resistance to some practices or values in other categories, he also developed tolerance and acceptance to other practices or values in those same categories. This is an example that while retaining resistance to some aspects of culture, learning IcC can still occur. Figure 21 (following page) summarises the levels of IcC learning and thus to the level of adaptation reached according to the variations within adaptation to common everyday practices.

How the external horizon of context affected adaptation

In this category, sojourners experiences and reactions to those experiences relate to the symbols layer of culture, as well as, in most experience occurrences, the rituals (how things are done) layer of a culture that caused reactions leading to their perceptions and ways of understanding. The external horizons of context affecting adaptation are the variation in ways of doing things in the sojourners context compared with doing things in the host context.

Figure 21: Summary research participants' adaptation to common everyday practices



	Resistance	Tolerance	Acceptance	Adaptation		Learning IcC
	Resisted the practice	Indifference or tolerance expressed	Became used to it with reservations	Became used to it	Expressed positive aspects of a practice	Stopped the home practice in the host community
Phillips	X	X				
Meena		X				
Felicity			X			
Anna			X			
Milly			X	X		
Damon			X			
Elisa					X	
Angelica						X
Other participants				X		

Category 3: Learning to adapt to greeting rituals

This category comprises the learning from experiences to do with the greeting rituals that were symbolic of their host community. It includes the research participants' experiences of greeting AFS representatives, their host family and others, especially when they first arrived in the host community. This category is at the symbols and rituals level of culture, and required learning the knowledge of the greeting ritual, the skills to enact it, as well as learning an ethnorelative attitude towards it. Not only were there the variations between the form of their host culture greeting rituals and that of their home culture, but also in the situational context of the greeting rituals depending on social status of the person being greeted that the research participants needed to learn.

The internal horizon of focus

The internal horizon of focus for this category was the research participants' experiences of the greeting ritual. Variations in the form of greeting rituals were due to differences in the way their host culture enacted the greeting which was different to their home way of greeting referenced from in their external horizon of context. The variations, thus, were:

1. Kiss on the cheek and/or hugging; and

2. Handshake.

The following comments or expressions from comments are indicative of greeting rituals variations (edited for clarity):

Here it is custom to greet girls with a kiss on the cheek, sometimes two. Apparently it is ok for the boys to kiss each other on the cheek when they greet too, although it is more common if the boys are good friends.

How to greet is hugging. In Japan we only bow or say hello.

A hand shake is enough (for me).

When you just say "hi" to someone you just touch with the hand. But back home they will say "hi" and you hug each other, or shake hand, and girls and boys they kiss each other on the cheek

Kissing on the left cheek is a greeting or farewell here.

Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 3: Learning to adapt to greeting rituals

Again, research participants reacted to the greeting ritual experience and formed a perception, and a way of understanding. The variations in perceptions and a ways of understanding were:

Initial:

1. Invasion of personal space;
2. Feelings of rejection and confusion;
3. Feelings of awkwardness;

After a short period of time in the sojourn:

4. Feelings of pleasure; and
5. A feeling of acceptance into the community.

Invasion of personal space variation

A feeling of invasion of personal space was a common variation. This variation describes the strong feelings of resistance that the greeting (or in some cases, departing) ritual caused in the research participant. People from cultures that were not generally high-touch (Ward et al., 2001) but who might use a hug or kiss in greeting people they were familiar with, were not comfortable when a high-touch greeting method used at the first greeting. The example from Elisa (below) occurred in New Zealand. Yet, the New Zealand sojourners, when arriving in a community where a kiss is the norm, felt that kissing was invasive (for example Meena's and Milly's comments below). Nova (below) was also referring to a New Zealand context.

Elisa *When I came here I felt a little shocked for the affection people show to each other, and the way they act when meeting people or saying good bye. I don't feel comfortable getting too close with others so a hand shake is enough. There is no way*

I'm going to kiss some stranger or host-relative to lips like they do here. I don't even feel comfortable when they kiss me on the cheek. I don't like constant touching and I'm trying to avoid situations where many people are hugging/kissing me. That's just too different, too personal.

Meena *We were greeted at the airport by an Argentine AFS volunteer and as I put my hand out to greet him like he had done with the boys, he leant over to kiss me on the cheek, taking me quite by surprise. A deeply rooted sense of personal space was awakened at this point...*

He explained that here in Argentina it is custom to greet girls with a kiss on the cheek, sometimes two. Apparently it is ok for the boys to kiss each other on the cheek when they greet too, although it is more common if the boys are good friends. I find this custom fairly invasive, as I come from a society where no physical contact what so ever is needed to greet anyone.

Milly *Kissing on the left cheek as a greeting or farewell. I do it with some of my girl friends and family at home, but I get a shock when boys do it or I have never met the person before. Kiwis² tend to have a no touching policy...*

Nova *How to greet is hugging. In Japan we only bow or say hello to greet people, so I thought it's different. I was surprised.*

Feelings of rejection and confusion variation

In this variation, the research participant understands that there is a greeting protocol that needs to be followed, and is willing to learn and adapt. However, the process of adaptation causes confusion, and even some feelings of panic about getting it right.

Pippo *So here ... they do "faire la bise" [which is] basically kissing people on the cheek when you meet them. It confuses me so much. I never know who to do it to, when to do it, etc. I'm better than I was at first though. I know the head movements now whereas before people would lean in towards me and I'd have a panic about what I was meant to do. I still only do it when other people make the first move because the times I tried I stuffed it up. Example... Monday mornings outside our first class we sort of form a line outside before we go in and so as people arrive they go through and kiss everyone in the line. So I came along and went to do it to the first guy in the line, someone I would count as a friend and he pulled away... It was weird. The next week though I was the only one he did it to. I don't understand.*

In this comment, the research participant described the learning process that occurred through to a level of competence after a number of experiences, although some knowledge and skill was still required.

Feelings of awkwardness variation

The following comments indicate this variation of during the initial learning stages:

Kirby *Firstly that was the hardest part because everyone at school tried to hug me and at first I got really confused, but they are still smiling at me, it was really awkward like all the time a really awkward...*

I had never hugged people before I came to NZ, so that made me really bedazzled...

² Colloquialism for New Zealander

In a non-high-touch culture (Ward et al., 2001), research participants from a 'kissing' culture, as well as confusion, also felt some rejection due to them not being greeted 'warmly'. The following comments are indicative of this variation:

Interviewer: *So you're expecting a kiss on the cheek but nobody gives you one?*

Winrow: *Yes, uh, sometimes I try to tell others what we do, and try some people to do it [with me], and sometimes I do it without thinking, because you give hugs here and we give hugs and kiss at the same time, like when you give a hug you're supposed to give a little kiss. Yeah, I got used to [the not kissing], [but] at first you feel "do they like me?" or "they are not sympathetic", or "is he going to kiss me?" – you don't know.*

Achilles: *Umm, people here are so cold compared to South American countries, for example when you just say "hi" to someone you ... just you know just [touch] with the hand. But back home they will say "hi" and you hug each other, [or] at [the very] least you shake your hands, and girls and boys they kiss each other on the cheek... it's very common, but here it's, like, "oh what are you doing", you know, when you kiss a girl on the cheek they're like "ooh, you touched me" or something. But, nah, it's just the way it is, yeah when I saw my host family for the first time I just went to hug them and they're, like, "okay, what are you doing", but I was prepared because in the pre[-departure] orientation time they told us that we probably won't be able to hug or kiss anyone ... [and] everyone was kind of sad, you know, we'll miss the hugs. But you just get used to it. I'm so scared that when I go back someone will kiss me on the cheek and I will be, like, "what the f...!".*

While many research participants initially felt strong feelings of resistance, they quickly accepted, then adapted to the greeting rituals of their hosts, even to the point of receiving pleasure from the experiences.

Feelings of pleasure and feeling of acceptance in the community variations

These variations were especially the case for research participants adapting to a higher touch (Ward et al., 2001) orientation. Those who moved to a lower-touch culture also adapted while missing the loss of pleasure from their higher touch home community. The following comments are indicative (some abridged for clarity):

Milly: *I think it's great to be able to greet someone like this, and it makes me feel accepted!*

Kirby: *Now I tend to love hugging, it's really good communication too.... That's amazing way to say hello or communicate with people. NZ-style handshake and hugging are impressive. Even after going back to Japan I'll keep hugging people. Even to my Dad.*

While Milly suggested that she had adapted to the cultural greeting ritual, in the perception of her host mother she had not. Milly further expressed the perception that her host mother felt that she (Milly) was 'cold' (see Ward et al., 2001):

Apparently I am cold e.g. no kisses and hugs.

Milly's reaction was defensive:

I am not always hug, hug, kiss, kiss but that's a cultural habit and I can't switch that off and I still want to be myself, not possible for me to be totally [from this culture]

The above analysis suggests to the researcher that sojourners need an **awareness** of how their host community believes they are adapting to the cultural systems. Sojourners can then take cues from this to adjust their ways of reacting. Further evidence of this came to light in other categories. Milly, however, fully understood at this point that she was, overall, not adapting. In Milly's assessment of herself, her difficulty in adaptation was because she was not learning the language. However, the analysis of Milly's comments, which will be discussed later in this chapter, indicate otherwise. Milly's process of adaptation within a number of categories was similarly fraught and is discussed further throughout this chapter.

Table 12 is the summary of the variations in the internal horizon of focus and in research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 3: Learning to adapt to greeting rituals.

Table 12: Summary of variations in Category 3: Learning to adapt to greeting rituals

<i>Category 3</i>	<i>Sub-categories</i>	<i>Internal horizon of focus variations</i>	<i>Variations in perceptions and ways of understanding</i>
Learning to adapt to greeting rituals	None	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Handshake 2. Kiss on the cheek and/or hugging 	<p><i>Initial</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invasion of personal space 2. Feelings of rejection and confusion 3. Feelings of awkwardness <p><i>After a short period of time in the sojourn</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Feelings of pleasure 5. A feeling of acceptance into the community

What the research participants learned

The research participants learned, over time, the required knowledge about greeting rituals and skills to enact them, and thus to adapt to the common greeting rituals of their host community. In her end-of-sojourn interview, Pippo reported that she had become actively engaged in the greeting ritual. In his journal Kirby described the greeting ritual learned as an *amazing way to say hello or communicate with people*. While others indicated that they had become used to the greeting ritual, one participant who had previously mentioned feelings of resistance made no further reference to it. Figure 22 summarises the levels of IcC learning and thus to the level of research participants' adaptation to greeting rituals.

Figure 22: Summary of the research participants' adaptation to greeting rituals

	Adaptation			Learning IcC
	Feelings of pleasure	Acceptance into the community	Became actively engaged. Became used to it/stopped mentioning	
Kirby	X			
Milly	X	X		
Elisa, Pippo, Winrow, Nova Achilles, Meena			X	

How the external horizon of context affected adaptation

The external horizons of context that affected adaptation in this category were the variations in the culturally different ways of greeting (and farewell) between sojourners and their hosts. The contextual difference in particular was between high-touch cultures and low-touch cultures (Ward et al., 2001).

Category 4: Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food and eating

As discussed in Chapter Three (p. 55), food can have culturally symbolic meanings (Ma, 2015), and has been shown to be of central importance in developing and maintaining social relations within and between cultures (Bourdieu, 1986; Fischler, 1988; Pearson-Evans, 2006). According to Douglas (1966/2001), food and its associated rituals can embody a culture's values. Reactions to food and food rituals can often indicate to what extent an individual is participating in the host culture. Rejection of the local culture's food can be construed as rejection of the local culture as a whole (Pearson-Evans, 2006).

This category comprises experiences to do with food and rituals associated with eating and sharing food or drink. This includes both being in a family at-home setting and in a public setting with family and/or friends. This category is at the symbols and rituals level of culture, and required the learning of skills relating to food rituals, as well as knowledge about food and food rituals along with an ethnocentric attitude towards food rituals.

The internal horizon of focus

The internal horizon of focus for this category was the research participants' experiences of learning to adapt to food and the rituals associated with food and eating in their host environment. Their external horizon reference is the comparisons with their home food and rituals associated with food.

The internal horizon of focus has two variations in form:

1. Differences in food itself; and
2. Social and bonding rituals associates with food and eating.

Within the **differences in the food itself** variation, some research participants commented on their personal tastes, with others commenting about the food itself. Research participants did not indicate any resistance to trying the local foods, however, not all research participants actually liked some of the foods. The following comments (edited for clarity) or expressions are indicative of the variations in form between the host setting and their home setting:

A lot of AFS students don't like New Zealand food, but I like it.

I saw so many sausages around, and, okay, first must be the sausages and then the steak or something like that but no, that's the barbecue.

Fish and chips³ here is like the whole meal, and sometimes it's only chips that you put on a sandwich with tomato sauce, and that's the meal.

New Zealand food is very different from my country's food. I tried some New Zealand food like "fish and chips", "baked beans", "spaghetti"⁴, "poached egg", and "feijoa". I've never seen before how to make poached egg.

Within the **social and bonding rituals associated with food and eating** variation, many research participants recognised that there were rituals associated with food (including drink) and with eating that were different to their home setting. Some recognised the local significance of such rituals.

When you're finished eating they will put more food on your plate, and more food, and more.

The evening meal is really social, you don't eat much and what you do is eat slowly with tea and coffee.

Mate⁵ is a communal drink, you share mate with your friends.

³ 'Fries'

⁴ Comes in a can with tomato sauce

⁵ A type of tea drink that has high significance in some Latin American cultures. The 'mate' (the drinking vessel) is made from a large nut, cut open and encased in leather, and holding only a few mouthfuls of liquid at any time. The drink is made from yerba (tea leaves) which are put into the mate. The bombilla, a metal 'straw' with a filter at the bottom end, is inserted and water added. A communal drink, the mate gets passed from the person who first offers it and fills it to each person in turn, being refilled with water as it is passed along.

Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 4: Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food and eating

The experiences of learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food did not cause such strong reactions in the research participants as did the experiences outlined in the previous categories. Some research participants came to recognise the cultural significance of rituals associated with eating. In this regard, little resistance was shown by the research participants, but rather a willingness to adapt to such rituals. The number of research participants commenting in this category was lower than in other categories, however, the data is significant. Research participants' comments follow within the following identified variations:

1. Liking or not liking the food;
Followed by, in a short period of time:
2. Did not particularly like some foods but had a willingness to try unfamiliar food;
3. Recognised the etiquette associated with food and eating;
4. Likes or accepts the food (and thus adapts to it); and
5. Recognition of social aspects and bonding rituals associated with food and eating

Liking or not liking the food; Did not particularly like some foods but had a willingness to try unfamiliar food; Recognised the etiquette associated with food and eating; Likes or accepts the food variations

A number of research participants commented on their perception of local foods after eating something that was new to them. The variations expressed in the following comments include liking, and thus quickly accepting or adapting to the local food in the host setting:

Achilles: *A lot of AFS students don't like [New Zealand food] [but] I ... like it. You eat a lot of meat, fish, and lamb. I'm one of those kind of persons who just eats everything, you know. But I don't like Vegemite⁶. In Argentina we have quite good pasta.*

Masha *New Zealand food is very different from [my country's] food, but much of [it] is very tasty. I tried some New Zealand food like "baked beans", "spaghetti in tomato sauce", "poached egg", and "feijoa". I've never seen before how to make poached egg, it was so strange to me when my host mum broke the egg into boiling water... I thought it would be disgusting but ... it was very yummy.*

Winrow: *And another thing ... you know, fish and chips, here that's like the [whole] meal [and] it's only chips sometimes, you put them on a sandwich [with] tomato sauce, and that's the meal, like I'm never full with that kind of meal, I didn't get much used to that but it's alright You can't complain you just get used to things and accept them.*

⁶ An Australian dark brown food paste made from yeast extract. New Zealand has a similar product, 'Marmite', which derives from the English food paste of the same brand name. The researcher agrees with the sojourner!

Recognition of social aspects and bonding rituals associated with food and eating variations

Some research participants commented on the social aspect of eating and its relevance to bonding with family or social network of friends. The variation in the comments below is a willingness to adapt to differences in the social aspect of food.

Milly: *The evening meal is really social, you don't eat much and what you do is eat slowly with tea and coffee. It is really nice to sit down with everyone but it does get to me when I have had a long day it is a mission keeping up with the conversation.*

Damon: *The most interesting cultural thing here to do with food and drink is the mate. [Damon then describes the ritualistic nature of drinking mate.] It's a communal drink ... you share mate with your friends.*

In the latter comment above, Damon notes his understanding of how the drinking of mate through the sharing of the mate drinking vessel was a popular and effective bonding mechanism. He commented:

... and a dancing culture, the focus is very different. In NZ I was always being saddened at "let's just sit around, get drunk and talk and be stupid".

Milly also recognised the social aspects of meals:

... Lunch is the main meal of the day ... and we would spend a good you know hour, hour and a half, maybe two hours at the table eating and talking with each other... It's really important to eat with your family, you know, everything closes from that period sort of about 1 until 3 and everyone goes home for lunch you know, schools go out ... I loved it, it's an amazing thing.

Table 13 is the summary of the variations in the internal horizon of focus and in research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in in Category 4: Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food and eating.

Table 13: Summary of variations in Category 4: Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food and eating

Category 4	Sub-categories	Variations in the internal horizon of focus	Variations in perceptions and ways of understanding
Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food and eating	None	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Differences in food itself 2. Social and bonding rituals associates with food and eating 	<p><i>Initial</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Liking or not liking the food <p><i>After a short period of time in the sojourn</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Did not particularly like some foods but had a willingness to try unfamiliar food 3. Recognised the etiquette associated with food and eating 4. Likes or accepts the food 5. Recognition of social aspects and bonding rituals associated with food and eating

What the research participants learned

The research participants quickly learned and adapted to the rituals associated with food and eating, even to the point of receiving pleasure from these experiences, as they did with greeting rituals. The following comments or expressions (edited for clarity) are indicative:

The most interesting cultural thing here to do with food and drink is the mate.

I loved it, it's an amazing thing.

I didn't get much used to that but it's alright. You can't complain you just get used to things and accept them.

I thought it would be disgusting but it was very yummy.

It is really nice to sit down with everyone. [Note. This comment is qualified with: but it does get to me when I have had a long day it is a mission keeping up with the conversation.]

An overall analysis of meaning, however, indicates that the research participant believed it was *nice to sit down with everyone*.

The expression *but I don't like Vegemite* indicates that the research participant has at least tried it. One research participant in New Zealand recognised the ritualistic nature of the *Kiwi barbeque*, noting his perception that it was *men only allowed [to cook]*. His understanding was that the barbecue seemed to be a social bonding strategy. Another research participant stated that while he did not particularly like *fish & chips* he understood that this was, again, a family bonding ritual. This indicates acceptance. Figure 23 summarises the variation between research participants' levels of adaptation to food and rituals associated with food.

Figure 23: Summary of the research participants' levels of adaptation to food and rituals associated with food

	Acceptance		Adaptation		Learning IcC
	Did not particularly like some foods but had a willingness to try unfamiliar food	Recognised etiquette	Liked or accepted the food	Recognised the social/bonding aspect	
Achilles, Winrow	X				
Felicity		X			
Masha			X		
Milly, Kirby Damon				X	

How the external horizon of context affected adaptation

There are two variations in form of experiences relating to adaptation in this category: food and the rituals associated with food and eating. Experiences with food were based on personal taste, which became the external horizon of context for this variation. A willingness to try unknown food, however, can be an adaptation demand and was discussed in Chapter Three (p. 55). Thus, the external horizon of context, the willingness to try local foods, can affect adaptation. My findings, however, were inconclusive in this regard.

Many sojourners realised an importance around participating in rituals associated with food and eating. The external horizons of context that affected adaptation, therefore, were the various cultural differences in such rituals, or rituals that didn't exist in the sojourner's own culture, along with sojourners' willingness to participate in these rituals.

Category 5: Learning to adapt to differences in orientations to time

A cultural dimension frequently faced by sojourners is differences in orientations to time. As has been discussed (Chapter Two, pp. 28-29), time is a social construction, and is therefore a culture-based concept (Hall, 1959/1981; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998). This category comprises experiences to do with different orientations to time. It is at the symbols and rituals level of culture, and required the learning of knowledge about how time and the use of time is regarded, an ethnorelative attitude about time orientation, and some skills associated with the use of time in relation to local orientation to time.

The internal horizon of focus

The internal horizon of focus for this category of description was the differences in orientations to time in their host environment to orientations to time in their home environment (their external horizon of context). There are two sub-categories:

- Temporality, being different mealtimes; and
- Concepts of time-keeping

Temporality (different mealtimes)

While the timing of the main mealtime and the number of mealtimes is a cultural construction, the issue faced by the research participants was less about resistance to the different mealtimes than about temporality, or one's 'biological clock' (meaning the periodicity of various body functions). The two major issues faced by the participants were the replacement of a warm midday meal with a snack-style lunch, or vice versa, and the replacement of a four-meals-a-day with three meals, or vice versa. Variations in the form of the internal horizon of focus in this sub-category were:

1. Timing of the main meal; and

2. Frequency of mealtimes.

The following are indicative comments on both these variations:

At home (the sojourner's natural country) I have a warm school lunch at about 12 o'clock. Here I only have a sandwich at interval and some fruit chocolate bars at lunch time.

Because of the different eating times I eat a lot more snacks and cookies, candies etc. during the day. There's the evening meal at six.

For breakfast I had little sugar biscuits and crackers to dip in my hot chocolate, there was no cooked food. I didn't get anything to eat at school either. One of the girls in my class explained that a lot of people don't eat at school, but wait until they go home for lunch, which some days wasn't until 3pm.

We have 4 meals a day instead of 3. You wake up, you have breakfast, and then you have lunch and then you have the evening meal, and it's closer from first to last meal.

Concepts of time-keeping

The variations in the form of the internal horizon of focus in this sub-category were due to sequential time orientation versus cyclic time orientation. In sequential time orientation, there is a greater emphasis on promptness and urgency (Hall, 1959/1981). However, in cyclic, or recurring time, promptness and urgency is not considered important. Cyclic time-thinkers do things as they naturally occur, or 'when it feels right' (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). This resulted in conflicts with time-keeping concepts in the external horizon of context. Variations, thus, in this sub-category were:

1. Sequential time orientation; versus
2. Cyclic time orientation.

The following are indicative comments in this sub-category:

Because I'm South American I tend to get everywhere really late, I don't really care about the time but people here get organised on the time - quite different than in Argentina.

When you want to meet someone back in Argentina you just say "I'll meet you in the afternoon", like in general, like you might see him at 4, 5 or 6, it doesn't really matter as you just have the whole afternoon for them. But here in New Zealand, if you lose 5 mins that's like quite a bit.

In my country we are not punctual, it won't matter that much between friends if you come 15 minutes later, it will be fine, unlike in New Zealand people are a little bit less tolerant with this. But Europeans are the opposite, they say that New Zealand people are not punctual!

Achilles presented an interesting theory in his comment about mealtimes and time-keeping:

We have 4 meals a day instead of 3 like you guys, I guess everything just gets different from there on because you wake up, you have breakfast, and then you have lunch and then you have ... [the evening meal], and ... it's closer [from first to last meal], ...

We (a South American country) have four meals a day instead of three like you guys (New Zealand), [and] everything just get different from there on, because [in my country] you wake up, you have breakfast, and then you have lunch, and then you have afternoon breakfast, umm afternoon meal or whatever – afternoon tea, and then you have dinner and

it's like one meal after the other, but here in New Zealand you just have breakfast, lunch, dinner, and it's closer [together], and sometimes I kind of feel that, umm the day goes faster that way, you know, like the day's shorter... and you have more of the night here in New Zealand, umm because in Argentina after dinner you go sleep straight away, but here in New Zealand after dinner you have like a long period of time [before] you go to bed, ... so I sometimes feel like its [still] the day. The ... more important part of the day ... in South America is the afternoon, and for you guys it's the morning... If you lose ... morning here people say you've lost the day, and I say "Why? You have the whole afternoon". But the afternoon here is only two or three hours, you know it's like, nothing. ... People in South America ... take naps after lunch [then] they ... just wake up in the afternoon and keep going for the rest of the day.

Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 5: Learning to adapt to differences in orientations to time

It is within the **temporality** sub-category that most resistance was shown by the research participants. However, as stated above, this seemed to be more a biological clock issue (an individual's regular sleep-wake-eat cycle) than any resistance to the mealtimes regime. However, once a research participant's biological clock had accepted the new mealtime they quickly adapted, with one exception, which has been identified. Variations in this sub-category were:

Initial:

1. Weird, strange or confusing;

Later in the sojourn:

2. Getting used to the differences; or
3. A willingness to tolerate difference

Weird, strange or confusing and getting used to differences variations

Some research participants perceived that even though some meal timing practices were 'weird', strange or confusing, they were still adapting to some degree:

Elisa *I find it weird not having a warm school lunch ... at about 12 o'clock. Here I only have a sandwich at interval and some fruit chocolate bars at lunch time. Sometimes I make myself a warm lunch which I can heat at school.*

Because of the different eating times I've noticed I eat a lot more snacks and cookies, candies etc. during the day..... I'm getting used to having [the evening meal] at six, but there are times when I really wish the first warm meal of the day wasn't in the evening.

Elisa indicated that she was getting used to the time of the evening meal, but she was wishing that her first warm meal of the day be sooner. While she missed her earlier warm meal, Elisa indicated adaptation by saying she was *getting used to* the different mealtime.

Milly indicated some confusion and feeling strange about mealtimes:

For breakfast I had little sugar biscuits and crackers to dip in my hot chocolate (there was) no cooked food. I didn't get anything to eat [at school] either which I thought was quite strange as by the end of the day I was absolutely dying of hunger. One of the girls in my class explained.....that a lot of people don't eat at school, but wait until they go home for lunch, which some days wasn't until 3pm.

However, later in her sojourn, Milly indicated adaptation:

Two courses [are] served at lunch; one salad, the other a hot dish similar to NZ. I ate all my salad first day and was happy with what I had eaten – then they brought out the second dish and I didn't eat anything and I felt rude for not touching it. Lunch is the biggest meal of the day here which is smarter because you have the time to burn off the energy where in NZ dinner [in the evening] is normally the biggest meal. Though we all get starving around 4 in the afternoon though I think that's more to do with time difference.

I am going to miss the timetable here – getting up late, lunch being the main meal when everything is closed from 1-3pm, then going to bed late like 2 or 3am. It will be weird to get back to NZ and have dinner the main meal which like in my house always changes and is not always together as people are working, etc. but also doing things before lunch. Here I never go out before lunch!

The above comments illustrate a progression from the weird, strange or confusing variation to the getting used to the differences variation.

Willingness to tolerate differences variation

Two other research participants recorded issues to do with temporality. AI indicated adaptation. Anna, however, indicated some mild resistance but was willing to tolerate the local situation:

AI *... At the beginning I thought it was, like, ... bring [school] lunch every day, because in [my country] we have cooked meals, but I got used to that and sort of liking it ... In the beginning when I saw ... differences I thought, like, sometimes it's a bit negative like ... when it was lunch box instead of cooked meals. ... but [eventually] I liked that about New Zealand.*

Anna *We have a warm meal with salad and all for lunch every day in [my country]. [The person I was talking to commented] that must be because of the cold climate. I was astonished. I have been taught since I was a kid that that it is important to have a good breakfast and lunch so that you learn better in school.*

Within the **concepts of time-keeping** sub-category the variations in the perceptions and ways of understanding were:

Initial

1. Knowing their time-keeping is not compatible with local norms;

Later in the sojourn

2. Adapting to punctuality differences; and
3. Confronting and adapting to differences in perspectives of urgency.

The following comments are indicative of the above variations:

Within the adapting to punctuality differences variation, Achilles and Winrow's comments indicated the reconciliation processes that research participants went through in order to adapt to differences in values orientation:

Achilles *Because I'm South American I tend to get everywhere really late, I don't really care about the time and stuff but, umm, I think what you mean is how people get organised on the time and, yeah, that's quite different than in Argentina.*

Interviewer: *Being late in New Zealand is being something like 5 mins after the time, being late in some other cultures could be hours, right? Because it's more important in New Zealand in a ...sequential time oriented culture ... to be on time, and if you meet someone you really want to talk to you have to say, "I can't talk to you now, I'll catch up with you later", but in a cyclical oriented time culture ... if you met someone on the way to an appointment you would stop and talk to them even though it would make you late to the appointment?*

Achilles: *True, and also because when you want to meet someone back in Argentina you just say "I'll meet you in the afternoon", ... like in general, like you might see him at 4, 5 or 6, it doesn't really matter [as] you just have the whole afternoon for them. But here in New Zealand ... because the day is shorter like if you lose 5 mins, [that's] like quite a bit.*

Winrow *[In my country] we are not punctual, ... it won't matter that much ... between friends if you ... come 15 minutes later, it will be fine, unlike in New Zealand people are a little bit less tolerant with this, ... [but] Europeans are the opposite, they say that New Zealand people are not punctual.*

Interviewer: *Did you get used to [New Zealand punctuality]?*

Winrow: *Yes, sometimes, like getting to school on time, and things like that, I always try to get [there] on time ... but, ... never, like, catching the bus early to be 20 minutes before the school, [for example] if it's 8:40 when we have to be I would be 8:30/8:39, I'd be at school on time but never before, and sometimes my host dad might be angry ... because I didn't take school bus to be there [at] quarter past eight, but ... the reason ... [is that] at quarter past eight if the school is not starting!*

Milly confronted the same punctuality issue, but from an opposing cultural way of understanding. This variation is confronting differences in perspectives of urgency.

People are always late. My friend said she would be here at 4pm – she wasn't here until 6 pm and the same friend a day later was 45 minutes late. I get annoyed at a friend who is like this but although it's annoying I can't be mad at her because everyone is like that here and I am not used to it, but I am sure I will like living on my own time! In NZ I thought I was relaxed but I always kept appointments for seeing people!

You don't pre-plan things – you just call up a friend an hour before going out and ask if they want to come. I find this annoying because I like to know what's going on so I can fit everyone in and don't have to turn anyone down and it means that sometimes I sit around doing nothing because no one has called and I don't have any ideas of what to do.

Anna's cultural way of understanding was different again, as Winrow observed in his comment above, regarding 'European people':

With Finish we're always, we like to be early, and New Zealand people are kind of a bit late – it's not a big deal, but it's not as bad as when you go to Italy or somewhere ...

Felicity experienced a difference in the perspective of the sense of urgency:

[When] ... I got back to NZ [on my return] I was, like, aaah, I have to be here, have to be there, and it's ... like there's a sense of urgency ... but there [Thailand] it's kind of like you're not going anywhere you're just there and you're just, like ... people do have to get things done but, umm, it's very laid back, very relaxed. [For example] we had these yellow books that we had to fill out like with grades, it's [a] kind of a roll book, and they'd be like "okay, Friday you have to get it finished", [but] the [local] teachers wouldn't do it, and they'd be, like, "okay, next Friday", and I'd [say] "I've finished, why are you extending?" and they'd be, like, "oh, we didn't do it, [we'll do it] next Friday", so I would start not doing it. And they would just extend it for months, it's just not important. [So] here it got me ... thinking ... like, "why does [something] have to be done on that date so someone can put it in a book, why is that important?"...

Interviewer: If you set a time for an appointment how critical was it to be there at that specific time or was a couple of hours either way be acceptable?

Response: Yeah [a] couple of hours, maybe one hour, it's varied, like if you were going to an appointment with someone really important then you'd want to be on time

I: Is that your perception or is that their perception?

R: That's my perception. But their perception is, like, ... if I got there on time they probably wouldn't be ready until an hour to see me, yeah, that's what it's like. Like I would go home after school sometimes I'd go to aerobics and I'd come home around 5.30 or 6.30 and I'd go to my host family's for dinner at around 7 because that's usually when they'd be having dinner. But sometimes my host dad would call me at like 5.30 and be, like, "Where are you?" and I'd be, like, "I'm at school", or "I'm in my apartment", or "at aerobics", and he'd be, like, "okay, we go dinner now, now we go", and I'd be, like, "oh, I'm late", I'm late because they'd want to leave and they'd be waiting for me so I'd run home and get ready and ... we'd go to the restaurant and we'd wait there for half an hour for everyone else to turn up and I'd be, like, "oh" (laughs). Or I'd go home and it'd just be my host dad and he'd be, like, "okay, we wait", ... and ... so I learnt to like be patient and not expect things to happen on time.

Table 14 is the summary of the variations in the internal horizon of focus and in research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 5: Learning to adapt to differences in orientation to time.

Table 14: Summary of variations in Category 5: Learning to adapt to differences in orientation to time

<i>Category 4</i>	<i>Sub-categories</i>	<i>Variations in the internal horizon of focus</i>	<i>Variations in perceptions and ways of understanding</i>
Learning to adapt to differences in orientation to time	Temporarily (mealtimes) Concepts of time-keeping	<i>Temporality:</i> 1. Timing of the main meal 2. Frequency of mealtimes <i>Concepts of time-keeping:</i> 1. Sequential time orientation 2. Cyclic time orientation	<i>Temporality:</i> <i>Initial</i> 1. Weird, strange and confusing <i>After a short period of time in the sojourn</i> 2. Getting used to differences 3. Willingness to tolerate differences <i>Concepts of time-keeping:</i> <i>Initial</i> 1. Knowing their time-keeping is not compatible with local norms <i>Later in the sojourn</i>

Category 4	Sub-categories	Variations in the internal horizon of focus	Variations in perceptions and ways of understanding
			2. Adapting to punctuality differences 3. Confronting and adapting to differences in perspectives of urgency

What the research participants learned

The research participants learned to accept, and all but one in one variation only eventually adapt to, different orientations to time. One research participant indicated tolerance regarding the temporality issue only. While many research participants may have initially felt some resistance to local orientation to time, all but the one identified quickly adapted to their host's temporality systems and approach to punctuality and urgency. The following comments or expressions (edited for clarity) are indicative:

I'm getting used to having the evening meal at six.

I was happy with what I had eaten – then they brought out the second dish and I didn't eat anything and I felt rude for not touching it. Lunch is the biggest meal of the day here which is smarter because you have the time to burn off the energy. Though we all get starving around 4 in the afternoon though I think that's more to do with time difference.

These comments indicate adaptation. The following comments also indicate adaptation, to the extent that the research participant predicts re-adaptation resistance once they go home:

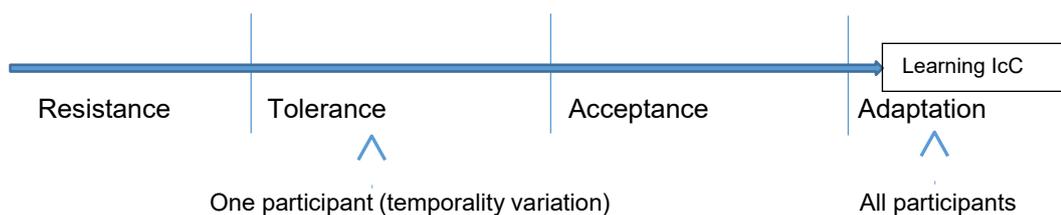
I am going to miss the timetable here. It will be weird to get back to NZ and have dinner as the main meal.

In the beginning when I saw differences I thought, like, sometimes it's a bit negative eventually I liked that about New Zealand.

So I learnt to like be patient and not expect things to happen on time.

In the second and third comment/expression immediately above, awareness and learning has taken place in order to adapt to the temporality and punctuality differences. While most of the comments about approaches to punctuality and urgency do not specifically state acceptance or adaptation, unlike the above, the style of writing used is 'matter-of-fact' rather than indicating any resistance. All research participants indicated that they just got used to time nuances, or they stopped mentioning it in their journals. As there is one exception in one aspect of temporality only, no table of variations is included for this category. Figure 24 illustrates the levels of adaptation on the adaptation continuum.

Figure 24: Ranges of research participants' adaptation to the local orientation to time.



How the external horizon of context affected adaptation

Time is seen and used quite differently by different cultures and, as such, is a listed dimension of culture (Hall, 1959/1981; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998), and is discussed in Chapter Two (pp. 28-29). The external horizon of context that affected adaptation, thus, was the cultural differences between the sojourner's time-orientation and that of the host culture within this dimension of culture. This was especially the case for issues to do with temporarily: the sojourner's sleep-wake-eat cycle adapting to mealtimes.

Category 6: Learning to use the local language

As previously discussed in Chapter Three (pp. 55-56), an important adaptation demand is learning and using the local language (Pearson-Evans, 2006). Learning the language, including the community's colloquialisms, became an important driver in the establishment of, and adaptation to, local social networks, which is also an important adaptation demand. This was the case for all of the research participants.

There are numerous references in the literature to the importance of knowing and learning the host culture's language (for example Alred, 2003; Kim, 1988; Pearson-Evans, 2006). My findings concur with these earlier findings, as without adequate language skills, including the colloquial use of the language, research participants' normal day-to-day interaction was hampered. Even in the cases where a research participant had the same primary language as the host culture, adaptation difficulties in this category eased only once the research participant had mastered colloquial use of the local language. This category is at the symbols and rituals level of culture, and required the development of language knowledge, an ethnocentric attitude to use the language appropriately, and higher-level vocabulary skills. Language is symbolic of culture (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Litchfield, 2005).

There are two sub-categories in learning to use the local language:

1. New Zealand EPL (English as Primary Language); and
2. ESL (English as Second Language) in a New Zealand, English speaking setting.

The internal horizon of focus

The internal horizon of focus for this category was the form of learning and adapting to using the local language, including colloquial language. The external horizon of context was the research participant's first language and how their language is used.

Within both of the sub-categories within this category of description, and regardless of the sub-category, research participants faced the same variations in the form of learning and using the local language. The variations were:

1. Difficulty using the language even though it had been learned prior to departure;

2. Could speak the language but had difficulty with local colloquialisms and punctuation; and
3. Barriers to learning or using the language including lack of confidence.

The following comments are indicative of the variation **difficulty using the language even though it had been learned prior to departure** (edited for clarity):

We have reverted to sign language and drawing pictures to communicate. It feels like everything I've learned in Spanish class has gone out the window.

My English was quite good when I came, but I didn't have much practice, much experience with listening and speaking so I couldn't understand for first two weeks. I got confused and couldn't concentrate when I was talking and trying to remember all my words which I learned 5 years ago.

At school you learn like academic English, whereas over here you learn expressions. I think the way I'm using English right now [speaking to the interviewer] compared to the start of the sojourn is completely different. I think my English is getting worse in fact, not as correct or proper but [colloquially] more authentic kind of, like you probably realise I say "kind of" all the time.

The following expression and comments are indicative of the **could speak the language but had difficulty with local colloquialisms and punctuation** variation (edited for clarity):

I got puzzled at kiwi pronunciation. I'm used to hearing American English, but not kiwi.

In the beginning I had some trouble to remember to use words like "pardon" and "please" because they simply do not exist in Finnish.

When someone says "thanks" for something you say "de nada" which is sort of "you're welcome" or "no problem", or sometimes I say "gracias" (thanks) back because that's what I would do in English.

The following comments and expression are indicative of the **barriers to learning or using the language including confidence** variation (edited for clarity):

My Spanish developed really slowly as I was never given an immersion situation. For the first two months, there was no place where I was FORCED to speak Spanish. There was no option to get rid of English in my life, and survive communicating and learning Spanish.

My English was pretty good when I came, I probably knew almost as much words...

An easy-to-adapt-to aspect early in the sojourn was mentioned:

Some things have been really easy to adapt to. Like saying 'see ya' every time you leave even if you won't see them again. That is something we would never do back home. Another easy one to adapt was to say simply 'ta' instead of 'thank you'. That was something I had never heard before but the people here use it all the time.

Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 6: Learning to use the local language.

Variations in perceptions of the experience of learning and adapting to using the local language also included difficulties in using the language, even though they learned it, and barriers to

learning the language. No research participant indicated any resistance to learning and adapting to using the local language. In fact, any resistance was to barriers they faced in learning the language, such as their hosts using English rather than the local language. Research participants came to understand that not knowing the local language was a barrier to adapting to life in the community. They developed an awareness of the benefits of adapting to using the local language, as well as of the disadvantages of using the local language when they were unskilled at using it. The variations, again within both sub-categories, thus, were:

1. Difficulty using the language even though it had been learned prior to departure;
2. Could speak the language but had difficulty with local colloquialisms and pronunciation;
3. Barriers to learning or using the language including lack of confidence; and
4. Barriers to adaptation caused by language.

Difficulty using the language even though it had been learned prior to departure variation

In the following comments, research participants comment about difficulties they encountered with using the language even though they had learned it before departing on their sojourn. Meena's perception at the beginning of her sojourn was that she did not understand anything that was being said to her, and that people were talking too fast and with a number of people talking at the same time. Her understanding was that her hosts were being *very patient* with her Spanish. Masha's situation was similar.

Meena *Met my family today! ... They ... are being very patient with my Spanish. I don't understand ANYTHING! We have reverted to sign language and drawing pictures to communicate. It feels like everything I've learned in Spanish class has gone out the window. I am trying to listen and recognise words, but they all talk so fast and at the same time which makes it practically impossible to catch a word of what they're saying.*

Masha *My English was quite good when I came, but I didn't have much practice, much experience with listening and speaking so I couldn't understand for first two weeks, probably because of such strong accent and speech, you speak so quickly. Yeah it was really hard to understand and I ... got confused and couldn't concentrate when I was talking and trying to remember all my words which I learned 5 years ago ...*

Al *[My English was] pretty good when I came, I probably knew "almost" as much words ..., but I wasn't very confident in speaking ...*

In Al's comment above, a lack of confidence in speaking is the perception. **Lack of confidence** is another variation.

Could speak the language but had difficulty with local colloquialisms and pronunciation variation

Pronunciation and difficulties with local colloquialisms were also problematic. Kirby perceived an amusing side to his problem. In Milly's case, however, her classmates perceived an amusing side to Milly's problem!

- Kirby *I got puzzled at kiwi pronunciation. I'm used to hearing American English, but not kiwi. [But] I can understand what they're saying [a] few seconds later. Funny as.
...*
- Milly *When someone says "thanks" for something you say "de nada" which is sort of "you're welcome" or "no problem". They are so polite, and I always forget to say it and [later] feel rude, or I say "gracias" (thanks) back because that's what I would do in English and the girls in class laughed at me.*

JackieFoxy and Anna formed perceptions regarding 'correct' use of language versus colloquial language. In Anna's case, the comparison between how her own language was used and her host language caused an issue for her.

- JackieFoxy *... at school you learn like academic English, whereas over here you learn ... expressions. I think the way I'm using English right now [speaking to the interviewer] compared to ... the start of the ... [sojourn] is completely different. I think my English is getting worse in fact, not as correct or proper but [colloquially] more authentic kind of, like you probably realise I say "kind of" all the time.*
- Anna *In the beginning ... I had some trouble to remember to use words like "pardon" and "please" ... because they simply do not exist in Finnish⁷ ...*

Barriers to learning or using the language variation

Some participants described barriers to learning the language (e.g. their hosts using English rather than the local language). Felicity understood that using her primary language was hindering her ability to develop in the local language. Damon faced a similar issue, and understood that his fellow sojourners were learning the language faster than he was. Phillips understood that he was also being hindered from learning the local language.

- Felicity *... I tried to learn [before I went], but I was just so busy, like, 'hello' and the numbers and this and that, ... When I got there it was okay, I didn't need to learn it. I had a coordinator who spoke English, and my host brother spoke English, so when I first got there it was okay. But I did pick up quite a bit like I could communicate most things that I needed to by the time I left and I think it was just like I really wanted to stay because I was just about to after 6 months ... get to that point where I could really start speaking it properly, like I was just on the verge of really getting it and I was learning like the vowels and the different stuff like the words you need to put sentences together so I think if I stayed a little bit longer I'd really start getting it right.*
- Damon *... My Spanish developed really slowly. I was never given an immersion situation. For the first two months, there was no place where I was FORCED to speak Spanish. There was no option to get rid of English in my life, and survive communicating and learning Spanish. As such, I can see that all of the new exchange students have better Spanish than I did after 2 months.*
- Phillips *The language was a toughie, ... a very difficult language to pick up, and it didn't help that [my host family] knew English quite well,*

⁷ In Finnish, 'please' and 'thank you' are used conversely. For example, "Pass the salt, please", becomes "Pass the salt, thank you". On receipt of the salt the polite response is: "If you please". However, such 'polite' use of the language is not in common use (Kaskenpalo, personal communication, 2010).

Barriers to adaptation caused by language variation

Meena and Masha both understood that having poor skills in the local language was a barrier to their adapting to the community and being accepted. Masha took some positive action, while Felicity came to understand the benefits of knowing the local language.

Meena *The language is proving to be one of the most tiring things mentally, and I'm feeling extraordinarily overwhelmed by everything and everyone. I also had to meet my extended family after I had slept a couple of hours this morning. I felt like I was a definite outsider with the language barrier ... although they were all very friendly and welcoming. I'm hoping that it won't take too long to feel accepted and like part of the family.*

Masha *When I arrived here my poor language skills was a HUGE barrier. I spent the first two or three months listening intently ... and practicing the new phrases that I learned. I also did an intensive language course which helped immensely.*

Felicity *But I couldn't communicate enough ... because if you speak Thai with people especially in like markets and food places and stuff they'll love you and like appreciate it so much ... [that] they'll give you discounts and say "ok, ok, I give you discount"...*

One research participant expressed a 'tongue-in-cheek' disadvantage to using the local language. Felicity, like Kirby above, could see an amusing side to her language issue.

Felicity *But then sometimes if you start speaking Thai they're like [makes fast mumbling noises] and it's like "what, I don't speak that much Thai" [laughs].*

Table 15 is the summary of the variations in the internal horizon of focus and in research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 6: Learning to use the local language.

Table 15: Summary of variations in Category 6: Learning to use the local language

Category 6	Sub-categories	Variations in the internal horizon of focus	Variations in perceptions and ways of understanding
Learning to use the local language	New Zealand EPL ESL in New Zealand	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Difficulty using the language even though it had been learned prior to departure 2. Could speak the language but had difficulty with local colloquialisms and punctuation 3. Barriers to learning or using the language including lack of confidence 	<p><i>Initial</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Difficulty using the language even though it had been learned prior to departure 2. Could speak the language but had difficulty with local colloquialisms and pronunciation 3. Barriers to learning or using the language including lack of confidence 4. Barriers to adaptation caused by language <p><i>Later in the sojourn (from between the first and the sixth month)</i></p> <p>All learned the language and/or the local colloquialisms and adapted to using it</p>

What the research participants learned

In this category, all research participants learned and adapted to using the local language, including colloquialisms as proven by their ability to communicate effectively in the local language. As previously stated, no resistance was shown to this. While that was the case, there was wide variation in the time taken to achieve enough learning in order to use the local language competently. Apart from an ironic comment from Milly that she automatically started using Spanish when talking on a distance call from her natural mother (*Haha, Mum called me and I picked up the phone saying 'Quien es? Quien es? And she was like 'your mum' and it took me so long to understand her...*), this particular aspect of learning the language was not commented on in other research participant journals once they had reached this stage of adaptation.

Milly's learning of the local language caused her some stress and anxiety, as indicated by her comment:

... my Spanish was wrong or I forgot what to say next, or my answers ended up trailing into interesting stories. I don't know, she made me nervous and I wasn't really thinking and thought that she couldn't (though I didn't know for sure) speak English had me worrying about that, where in reality it wasn't the end of the world if she didn't understand. I made a mistake because she would understand that my Spanish wasn't perfect!

Milly's case in this regard is discussed under Category 8: Learning to cope with adaptation stresses and overcome culture shock. In her journal, however, Milly began using Spanish, swapping between Spanish and English (which the researcher had translated by Milly herself). This fact leads the researcher to believe that Milly was in fact adapting to using the local language.

The following comments or expressions (edited for clarity) are indicative of a willingness to learning the local language:

I spent the first two or three months listening intently ... and practicing the new phrases that I learned. I also did an intensive language course which helped immensely.

I'm hoping that it won't take too long [to learn the language] to feel accepted and like part of the family.

The following comments or expressions indicate competent use of the local language and colloquialisms:

Haha, Mum [the natural mother] called me and I picked up the phone saying "Quien es? Quien es?" And she was like "your mum" and it took me so long to understand her...

In the beginning ... I had some trouble to remember to use words like 'pardon' and please' [which indicates that the research participant was now using these terms].

I was just about to after 6 months ... get to that point where I could really start speaking it properly.

My mind is obviously thinking better linguistically

As stated above, there was a wide variation in time taken to learn the local language sufficiently to communicate effectively, and all research participants adapted to learning and using it. Additionally, there was no variation in how they learned. Therefore, I have not created a table that summarises research participants' variations in learning the local language, nor have I included an adaptation continuum. Table 16 (following page) illustrates the time taken to learn enough of the local language to get by. This includes using colloquial language.

How the external horizon of context affected adaptation

This category highlights experiences in learning to use the local language. All research participants in my research recognised this adaptation demand, and adapted to using the local language. The external horizon of context affecting adaptation was the language difference, which was widely variable and included, in the context of this research:

- ESL sojourners in EPL-speaking New Zealand;
- EPL sojourners in English speaking destinations;
- EPL sojourners in EPL-speaking New Zealand who were unfamiliar with local language usage and colloquialisms;
- How much pre-learning or pre-knowledge of the sojourn destination's language the sojourner had; and
- How many barriers to learning the local language that a sojourner faced.

Table 16: The month in which research participants indicated that they had learned the local language sufficiently to use it enough to get by effectively

	First month	Month 1-2	Months 2-3	Months 3-4	Months 5-6	Just learned enough to get by
Meena (EPL)			X ^a			
Damon (EPL)			X ^b			
Phillips (EPL)						X ^c
Milly (EPL)					X ^d	
Pippo (EPL)		X ^e				
Felicity (EPL)					X ^f	
Masha (ESL)	X ^g					
Anna (ESL)	X ^h					
AI (ESL)	X ⁱ					
Kirby (ESL)				X ^k		
Kai (ESL)					X	

^a When I arrived here my poor language skills was a HUGE barrier. I spent the first 2 or 3 months listening intently ... and practicing the new phrases that I learned. I also did an intensive language course which helped immensely.

^b My mind is obviously thinking better linguistically.

^c The language was a toughie, ... a very difficult language to pick up, and it didn't help that [my host family] knew English quite well.

^d So I feel a little stupid. Mama told the hairdresser I didn't understand/speak Spanish and he ... asked easy questions like 'come se uama y quantos arios benes' (sic).

^e I had up to level 3 NCEA of French so it was okay when I arrived I could understand everything. Pippo however, comments that she did not have enough French to make local friends until the fourth month.

^f When I got there it was okay, I didn't need to learn it like I had a coordinator who spoke English and my host brother spoke English. But I did pick up quite a bit like I could communicate most things that I needed to [and] like I really wanted to stay because I was just about to after 6 months...

^g My English was quite good when I came but [without] much experience listening and speaking ... I couldn't understand anything for the first two weeks.

^h Anna came with a good knowledge of English, just having to adapt to colloquial use of language.

ⁱ AI came to New Zealand with a good understanding of English but lacked confidence.

^k This is an estimate based on Kirby's comments about the link between language and establishing local friends.

Category 7: Learning to build and adapt to local social networks

Also previously discussed in Chapter Three (pp. 53-55), another important adaptation demand is building one's social network of extended host family and local friends (Bochner et al., 1985; Pearson-Evans, 2006). This was true, to a greater or lesser extent, for all of the research participants. Building social networks has been described as the successful accumulation of 'social capital', and well-functioning social networks create trust (Siisiäinen, 2000). A sojourner who is trusted in their host community stands a much greater chance of being able to adapt, as they can draw on social support from their network (Pinter, 2010; Ward & Kennedy, 1999). This category comprises experiences to do with building extended family social networks and social networks of friends. This category is at the symbols and rituals level of culture driven by values, and required learning the knowledge of, and the skills to, build social networks that are based

on a different set of cultural values, combined with the requisite attitude to accept those different ways of doing things.

The internal horizon of focus

The internal horizon of focus was the establishing of social networks of extended family and friends. The external horizon of context was both situational, being based on the values system within which relationships were being formed, and in the differences in building a network of friends in their home environment: the ways of going about this based on the values system in their home environment.

In this category, the variations representing the form of building social networks were significant and broad, influenced by how well the participants could use the local language, how well they had adapted to local foods and rituals associated with eating, as well the level of influence their host family had in the general community. The size of the social networks of local friends was also affected by the research participants' network of friends at school and their international (their fellow sojourners) friends, as well as how receptive the host community was in accepting them as part of that community. The following summarises the variations in the form of establishing social networks of extended family and friends:

1. Influence of host family;
2. Influence of their school and international friends;
3. Influence of being able to use the local language;
4. Influence of food and associated rituals; and
5. Favourable community reception.

In some cases, the research participant's host family also provided an avenue for establishing social contacts. The following expressions and comment illustrate the **influence of host family** variation (edited for clarity):

I did have a lot of Thai friends with my host family.

I had an older host brother which helped me to establish my friends.

My host father who has the same passion for music as myself invited me to two music performances.

The comment and expressions following are indicative of the **influence of being able to use the local language** in building social networks (edited for clarity):

It took five months to break into school and, yeah, be part of the family and everything. I don't know which was first, English or friends.

When you start speaking more like them it's easier to pick up the conversation.

I didn't have enough French to make friends.

Others commented that making friends was influenced by how well the research participants had adapted to local foods and rituals associated with eating: the **influence of food and associated rituals** variation (edited for clarity):

When I saw something different I'd try it and say, "okay, this is different" so I try to be like the others, and it was easier to make friends.

Interviewer: *Do you think because you adapted to the food and its associated rituals that helped you settle in?*

Response: *Absolutely.*

We sat and chatted and drank mate. It was a way that we were equal and a way to build a relationship.

Asado⁸ cooking is the most common way to entertain a lot of people. As well, it tends to be a good time for the family to spend together.

Some research participants established networks of friends through the **influence of their school and international friends**. The following comments are indicative of this variation (edited for clarity):

I have been adopted by a group of girls who seem really friendly and welcoming. It was nice of them to take me under their wing.

Generally I feel I am making progress [at school] with friends, and everyone is making sure I'm involved.

It took me most of the first week at school to find out where people of my generation went at morning tea and lunchtime. It took one of the other students to say "hey, come on" and show me where everyone went.

I have noticed it's a lot easier to make friends with other students with an international background. I'm the only exchange student in my friend group, but in the group of 8 only 3 are New Zealanders, others have moved here from for example South Africa.

Most friends were international students because it's easier to make friends with them because we are all in the same situation.

Some research participants commented on favorable reception within the community. The variation is **favourable community reception** (edited for clarity):

Having religious views helped a lot, meeting at church club.

He introduced me to the conductor of a youth orchestra here. Now I know pretty much everybody in the orchestra and get on well with all of them.

⁸ Outdoor barbecue cooking common in South America.

Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 7: Learning to build and adapt to local social networks.

The variations in perceptions and understanding of the experiences of building and adapting to social networks included the research participants reconciling with the ways of doing things based on the host culture's values. Values in this category fell within the cultural dimensions of individualism/collectivism (Hofstede, 2001, 2009, 2011; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Lustig & Coster, 1999; Triandis, 1995, 2004; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998), universalism particularism (Trompenaars & Hampton-Turner, 1998), assertiveness/modesty (Den Hartog, 2004; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005), and specific/diffuse (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998).

The first relationships that the sojourner must build are with their host family. While most sojourner–host family relationships were successful, some were not, as in the case of Milly. Some sojourners change host families, for a number of reasons. Research participants Kirby and Milly had host family changes. Apart from these two, the researcher does not know if any of the other research participants changed host families. Certainly if any others did, it had no direct influence on any of the issues examined here as it was not mentioned by them.

Anecdotally, sojourners tend to remain in contact with members of their own cultural community, if indeed there are any within the same general geographical region. However, no research participant mentioned this. Many research participants did, however, comment about establishing friends with other foreigners.

Host families can directly influence the building and establishment of the sojourner's network of contacts and friends. If the relationship with the host family fails, however, or a relationship with an individual family member is not working, as in the case of Milly and illustrated in her comment below, this can hinder rather than help establishing wider relationships. The comments below clearly illustrate that research participants perceived that the relationship with their immediate host family helped or hindered the establishment of a wider network of local friends.

The variations in perceptions and ways of understanding in learning to build and adapt to local social networks were:

1. Influence of the host family;
2. Influence of their international friends;
3. Influence of being able to use the local language;
4. Influence of food and associated rituals;
5. Influence of relationships formed at school;
6. Relationship between a network of friends, personal development and learning lcC; and

7. The long-term impact.

The variations in this category reflect not only what the research participants learned, but also how. Thus, there is no clear distinction between an initial period of the sojourn or later in the sojourn. The following comments reflect a gradual building of a network of local friends and the things that influenced that. The following comments are sorted into the above variations.

Influence of host family variation

The following comments are indicative of this variation:

Phillips: *I had an older host brother which helped me to establish my friends, ... [it] helped me a lot.*

Damon: *... My host father [who] has the same passion for music as myself invited me to two music performances ... He introduced me to the conductor of a youth orchestra here (which is very good) and I essentially walked into one of the seats and started playing with them. Now I know pretty much everybody in the orchestra and get on well with all of them ...*

Milly: *... at home I'm not sure if my younger [host] sister likes me. [She] never invites me out or talks to me at home or school.*

Influence of their international friends variation

Establishing a social network of foreign friends in the host setting follows withdrawal from networks within one's own culture (Pearson-Evans, 2006). While online social networks can maintain immediate contact with previous networks, nevertheless the pattern purported by Pearson-Evans remains valid in order to establish local networks of friends. Elisa's and Bart's comments below illustrate their understanding of how this pattern occurs and the barriers to it. In Bart's case, it is contended that his comment regarding trusting and spending time with his international network of friends is due to some negative receptiveness in his host community (discussed further in Category 8: Learning to cope with adaptation stresses and overcome culture shock).

Kai seemed resistant to move away from his network of international friends (other international students) and to establish a network of friends within the local community (New Zealand residents). However, he did say that he **used to hang out with other international students** (emphasis added). While Elisa and Bart did not indicate any resistance to establishing a network of local friends, their comments indicated an understanding that establishing a social network of international friends is easier than a network of friends from the local culture.

Elisa: *I have noticed it's a lot easier to make friends with other students with an international background. I'm the only exchange student in my friend group, but in the group of 8 only 3 are New Zealanders, others have moved here from for example South Africa.*

Bart: *To me, the best part of my exchange in NZ is getting to know people from all around the world ... other than my host parents, the people I have been trusting and enjoying ... [being] with are all my exchange student friends.*

Kai: ... *I used to hang out with other international students ... I didn't really want to spend time with the others.*

Masha perceived some difficulty in establishing local friends. As can be seen from the transcript (below), the interviewer attempted to find out the reasons why. However, Masha was either reluctant to share the reasons, or genuinely did not know.

Masha: ... *Most friends were international students because it's easier to make friends with them because we are all in the same situation, yeah, and but ... kiwi friends I've found a little bit different, and it's kind of good to make friends with them because we've different interests and different ways of life... I've got some kiwi friends.*

Interviewer: *What were the differences you found?*

Response: *Just personality, not much.*

I: *Personality?*

R: *Yeah, not my type of people, I felt sometimes awkward and embarrassed in that company.*

I: *Did you get used to the differences or is it still a problem?*

R: *I think it's still a problem with people, I can't say it to you, like people are weird but just say different, they have their own interests, their own ways of life ...*

I: *Do you think they weren't interested in making friends with you?*

R: *They texted me and just told me do you want to go here and ... there, they were quite good, they were open to me, but I just didn't feel well with them, I didn't feel comfortable.*

I: *What do these people do that is so different that you cannot relate to them?*

R: *They don't do anything special [specific], but they are just not my type of people. I don't enjoy them and I don't feel comfortable. They are very different and sometimes I have nothing to speak with them. I can't really find such people whom I'll really like, love and enjoy to spend time with them ... I try to go out with them, but I don't enjoy it. I think later I will find such people and everything will be fine. I think I need a little bit more time...*

Masha further commented that she found it easier to make friends with the sojourners from Latin America, nevertheless she did have some local friends.

Influence of being able to use the local language variation

As stated earlier, it was found that there was a strong relationship between learning and using the local, colloquial language and building social networks. Many research participants generally indicated that the two aspects supported each other, with the data showing that building one's social network helped to improve using the local language. Correspondingly, improving the use of the local language helped to support the establishing of a network of local friends. While few of the research participants recorded this detail in their journals, all who were interviewed acknowledged this, coming to understand that learning the language was the key. Of the 16 research participants who commented on language adaptation demands, eight of those acknowledged that both improving use of the host language helped build social networks, and that building social networks helped improve the use of the local language.

- JackieFoxy: Interviewer: *Did it help in making friends once you got used to speaking the local language?*
 Response: *Oh yeah, of course, when you start speaking more like them it's easier to pick up the conversation and stuff, oh yeah.*
- Kai: *[When I first came] I didn't understand anything, I couldn't understand the accent and...*
 Interviewer: *How long did it take to be able to communicate in English?*
 Response: *About five months. ... And it also took five months to break into school and, yeah, be part of the family and everything. ... I don't know which was first, English or friends, ... but when I started speaking English I made lots and lots of friends ...*
- Pippo: *I didn't have enough French to make friends ... I didn't really make friends until the last two months. [Pippo was on a six-month programme.]*
- Milly: *In the three weeks of winter vacation with the time I spent with N ... my Spanish improved so much.*

Influence of food and associated rituals variation

Adaptation to local food and participation in food rituals has also been found to be important in developing and maintaining social relations between cultures (Bourdieu, 1986; Fischler, 1988; Pearson-Evans, 2006). People share things through food (Fischler, 1988). While not all research participants agreed, most understood that adapting to food and its associated rituals had some relationship with building their social networks.

- Felicity: *[At the start] it's hard to communicate ... trying lots of things ... it's very polite to eat all the food... [and] when you're finished they will put [more] food on your plate, and more food, and more... you learn to always leave something on your plate like you're not finished. Like they'd put so much food on my plate I couldn't eat it and I'd feel so rude when I'd take it back and say "I can't eat this, I'm so full". Those were the first words I learned in Thai.....[laughs].*
 Interviewer: *Do you think because you adapted to the food and ... [rituals associated with eating] that helped your settling in?*
 Response: *Absolutely*
- Winrow: *I'm sure that it did, yes, I always ... when I saw something different [I] try it... and [I] say, "okay, this is different" [so] I try to be like the others, yeah, and it was easier to make friends.*
- Damon: *An example of this was over the weekend ... we sat and chatted and drank mate. It was a way that we were equal and a way to build a relationship.*
The asado [Damon then describes the techniques of asado cooking] is the most common way to entertain a lot of people. The idea is "this person is coming from overseas so we are going to have him/her around for an asado". As well, it tends to be a good time for the family to spend together ...
- Anna: *I don't know about the food helping to adapt, but making friends with locals has definitely helped. I live in a small town and in school everybody knows everybody since primary school so it was hard first but now I'm in the know of all the dramas and other happenings so I feel almost like a part of the group. Still a bit an outsider but not a total stranger anymore.*
 Interviewer: *Did you find adapting to the language and food helped you with making a local network of friends?*
 Response: *No I didn't.*

Influence of relationships formed at school variation.

Being a school-based sojourn, networks of school friends featured strongly in establishing social networks within the host culture. Generally, research participants understood that building their network of friends was enhanced by the hosts' receptiveness to accepting sojourners into their social groups. Meena and Damon's comments reflect this:

Meena: *I have been adopted by a group of girls who seem really friendly and welcoming. It was nice of them to take me under their wing as I was feeling a tad overwhelmed*

...

Damon: *... One experience I had truly showed me how little I knew and how hard it is to really break into new regimes. It took me most of the first week at school to find out where people of my generation went at morning tea and lunchtime. It took one of the other students ... to say "hey, come on" to me and show me where everyone went.*

Relationship between a network of friends, personal development and learning IcC and Long-term impact variations

Many research participants described their understanding of the impact that building positive, long-lasting friendship networks would have on their personal growth and IcC development. Gabe's and Kirby's comments are indicative of the long-lasting positive effect of building strong social networks.

Gabe: *The memories I have made and the friends I have made them with will last forever, and I know I will never forget them. These have truly been the best months of my life.*

Kirby: *I've met everyone from lots of countries around the world, I got kind of relieved to see AFS students who also strive to settle in and make lots of efforts and to try everything they want to.*

I have met hundreds of people [here] who are not kiwi. They are from Asia, ... Europe and South America. I'm feeling excited to meet them and make a friend with lots of foreigners. I've got satisfaction from that. I admire NZ for multicultural perspective.

Other participants also perceived the long-term impact of establishing local friends:

The memories I have made and the friends I have made with them will last forever, and I know I will never forget them.

I'm feeling excited to meet them and make friends with lots of foreigners.

I've met everyone from lots of countries around the world.

Table 17 summarises the variations in the internal horizon of context and in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 7: Learning to build and adapt to local social networks.

Table 17: Summary of variations in Category 7: Learning to build and adapt to local social networks

<i>Category 7</i>	<i>Sub-categories</i>	<i>Variations in the internal horizon of focus</i>	<i>Variations in perceptions and ways of understanding</i>
Learning to build and adapt to local social networks	None	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Influence of host family 2. Influence of their school and international friends 3. Influence of being able to use the local language 4. Influence of food and associated rituals 5. Favourable community reception 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Influence of the host family 2. Influence of their international friends 3. Influence of being able to use the local language 4. Influence of food and associated rituals 5. Influence of relationships formed at school 6. Relationship between a network of friends, personal development and learning IcC 7. The long-term impact. <p>All participants built a local network of friends with various levels of success</p>

What the research participants learned

In this category, all research participants learned to build social networks, some to a greater extent than others. Some initial resistance was indicated, however, this seemed to be more to do with personal confidence, or being somewhat introverted in nature. All, however, eventually established local social networks. Four research participants commented on the perceived positive long-term impact of establishing networks of friends.

The values of individualism versus collectivism became a critical factor in how well the research participants settled into family life and established social networks. In Milly's case, her strong individualist orientation became a major culture distance barrier to adapting to collectivist family and social community values. Milly's, as well as other research participants' issues with values within a number of cultural dimensions are the subject of this category, and also Category 10: Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships.

Figure 25 summarises the variations in the ways that helped participants learn to adapt to locally-based networks of friends.

Figure 25: Summary of the variations in the ways that helped research participants build locally-based networks of friends

	Adaptation							Learning IcC
	Influenced by language skills	Influence of food/rituals associated with eating	Host family influence	Influence of school	International friends network	Host community receptivity	Long-term impact	
JackieFoxy	X							
Kai	X	X			Preferred them	Negative		
Pippo	X	X						
Milly	X	X	Negative	X			Has a new awareness of herself and how she has changed	
Damon	X	X	X	X		X		
Felicity	X	X	X					
Noppa	X							
Masha	X				Easier than local friends			
Winrow		X						
Phillips			X			X		
Anna		Not conclusive					Has learned new values. Has not compromised her own.	
Al								
Achilles								
Meena				X				
Gabe				X			Life-long memories and friends	
Elisa					X			
Bart		Y			X			
Nova						Negative		
Kirby						Negative	Many positive experiences	

How the external horizons of context affected adaptation

An adaptation demand discussed in Chapter Three (p. 54), and a demand faced by all research participants in this study, is building oneself a social network of friends. All the research participants developed social networks of extended host family and other friends, to a greater or lesser extent. Building such networks and adaptation to them was significantly affected by the following external horizons of context:

- The sojourner's language skills;
- Food and food-associated rituals;
- Host family support;
- Their school friends;
- Their network of international student friends; and
- The receptivity of (acceptance of the sojourner into) their host community.

Category 8: Learning to cope with adaptation stresses including overcoming culture shock

This category includes experiences of cultural adaptation situations confronted by the sojourner that the sojourner finds difficult and which cause adaptation stresses. In some cases, this can be severe stress, or 'culture shock' (Oberg, 1960). This category is at the symbols and rituals as well as, more significantly, the values levels of culture. Also required was the development of knowledge regarding adaptation stress recognition, an attitude to overcome such stresses, and higher-level skills: the ability to enact strategies for overcoming adaptation stresses.

The internal horizon of focus

The internal horizon of focus in this category concerned the experiences of coping with and overcoming adaptation stresses and culture shock. Kirby's comments illustrate:

I've ... felt so many times depressed and lost myself for that moment. But as a whole, those things became good things, one of the greatest experiences. I feel like I succeeded...! Now I'm feeling fretful, nostalgic... [that] I will no longer live here in NZ. I have taken it for granted that I see those things every day, walk on this road everyday, feel those things often, live here in NZ forever, but that's gonna be over. Everything comes to an end. Things i see, walk, touch, feel everyday are going to disappear in front of me. I feel sad of it.

The external horizon of context was their home environment and comparisons with it.

Variations in the form of learning to cope with adaptation stresses including overcoming culture shock were:

1. Little things are frustrating;
2. Factors external to the sojourn;

3. Racism/discrimination; and
4. Feelings of exclusion (by their host family and friends).

In this category, a developing awareness by one research participant is highlighted: a growing awareness of her own cultural viewpoints, and the differences between her viewpoints and those of her host family and community. This awareness developed from overcoming adaptation stresses. Three research participants commented on racism/discrimination issues that they faced. One of these and four others commented on other adaptation stresses. The comments from these four illustrate significant adaptation problems and stresses, including culture shock. The following comments/expressions (edited for clarity) are indicative.

Anna pointed out that **little things can be frustrating**:

Sometimes little things can be so frustrating and make everything feel so much worse, adding:

Then of course I started to think all the other little things I don't like here and pretty much had a really crappy day.

Milly's experiences also falls into this variation:

I am not in the world's best head space, the little things are getting to me.

The smallest things can knock my confidence.

In the variation **factors external to the sojourn**, Gabe experienced some issues during his sojourn that were outside his immediate control which caused him stress:

June has been a month of mixed emotions. From financial and domestic issues to suicide and Swine Flu, this month has definitely proved formidable. This is the first month of my stay that I have been uncomfortable with my situation, in that I've felt a bit overwhelmed.

Many comments in the **racism/discrimination** variation indicate an unfavorable reception from the host community causing some stress. These indicative comments and expressions were from the research participants in New Zealand:

When my friend and I were at town, girls shouted to us "Go back home".

Two teenage boys said "Fuck Off Asian!" I didn't know who they talk to at first. Old woman stared at me and I knew they talk to me.

Discrimination at school. In Japan I have never even heard the word "discrimination" and the words which discriminate people.

Every time they get stuck with another car [in heavy traffic] they swear at driver saying "Asian driver!!"

She kept talking about silly, racist, teasing, insulting things.

Kirby's experiences of racism/discrimination caused him, as he terms it, *depression*:

I'm getting depressed and disappointed with everyone.

Depression made me feel like doing nothing.

In the **feeling of exclusion** variation, Milly became increasingly less accepted by both her host family and her immediate network of friends:

Think I am feeling really homesick now as I miss the ease and understanding at home.

I don't know where to go or who with and when I go out alone I always get hassled by my family because of it.

Nc... asked discretely if I was invited and F... flat out said, "no". It hurts to be said "no" to in that way.

Had an awful end to last week.

A part of me views this as a failure and, like I always do, I blame myself.

Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 8: Learning to cope with adaptation stresses and overcome culture shock

Apart from the racism/discrimination variation, as is stated above, four other participants are included in this category. In the researcher's view, however, this does not indicate the phenomenon of culture shock per se not being a specific focus in this research, but rather the fact that extreme adaptation stresses were not an issue with the other research participants. While the instructions provided to research participants did not request specific illustrations of culture shock, the instructions were sufficiently broad that if culture shock was an issue it would surely have been included in the journals, as it did with three of the research participants that featured in this category. The awareness variation, similarly, was not asked for in the instructions to participants, but was volunteered by Milly.

Each of the research participants featured in this category found their own ways of coping with adaptation stresses and culture shock. Anna, for example, came to the understanding that communication was the key to a more successful sojourn, which could overcome frustrations about the small things.

The variation in perceptions and ways of understanding in this category were:

Initial:

1. Little things can be frustrating;
2. Time wasting;
3. Feeling depressed;
4. An awareness of racism/discrimination,
5. Being excluded;
6. Feeling a failure; and

7. Longing for a 'normal' situation;
- As the sojourn progressed:
8. Through communication
 9. Through a positive attitude;
 10. Through trusted friends;
 11. Keeping active and happy;
 12. Tolerance of incidences of racism;
 13. Learning about themselves;
 14. Developing awareness and personal confidence; and
 15. Personal confidence and host family support;

Following are comments indicative of the above variations:

Little things are frustrating and through communication variations

Anna commented that little things can be frustrations and that communication can prevent this being a problem:

Sometimes little things can be so frustrating and make everything feel so much worse. For me, one of these little things is coconut, or more specifically those coconut flakes that they seem to put on cakes and stuff here all the time. I don't like them and I just don't understand why they have to put them on everything. Can't a girl just buy a normal chocolate brownie without those bloody coconut flakes? ... It is really funny how such a little thing can stir up such strong emotions, but at that moment I was pretty much cursing that I had ever come to New Zealand, where I have to make my own lunch and where they put coconut into everything. And then of course I started to think all the other little things I don't like in here and pretty much had a really crappy day.

Afterwards that just felt so stupid how one can ruin a whole day because of a little thing like that. Not my proudest moment I must say, but makes a good memory. By the way, I must add that no blame can be put on my host mum for buying all those munch bars (meant for my lunch) because it never came up that I don't like coconut. I think I really should tell her that to avoid further spoilt days :)

Time wasting and positive attitude variations

Gabe understood that the external factors that were causing him stress, and that wasting time on them could ruin the overall quality of his sojourn. After a short period of, as he phrases it, *time wasting*, Gabe got back on track by developing a positive attitude.

June has been a month of mixed emotions. From financial and domestic issues to suicide and Swine Flu, this month has definitely proved formidable. This is the first month of my stay that I have been uncomfortable with my situation, in that I've felt a bit overwhelmed ... If it wasn't for my friends I'd probably go insane. Anyway, despite several setbacks this month, my exchange is still enjoyable as ever. I realize that whether or not things are going as planned, the WORST thing I can do is freak out and go ballistic trying to fix every last thing. I have to take things in stride – tackle problems one by one in a reasonable way...

August has been a shift in gear. As I slide over the halfway point of my stay, and into the home stretch, it has become painfully obvious that I've wasted a bit of time. The last couple of months in particular have flittered by with no exceptionally exciting occurrences [But] August has been one of the most exciting months of my stay.

Feeling depressed, trusted friends, and keeping active and happy variations

Kirby came to understand that by building a network of **trusted friends** he could resolve his depression issue. Adopting a similar strategy to Gabe, Kirby set about to improve his situation.

I decided to make myself happy with this life Depression made me feel like doing nothing, but I decided to overcome, I swear to myself.

AFS Mid-stay camp: First camp I've had was awesome. I didn't have to worry about being at home and school. Friends I've made and AFSers encouraged me about these problems. I cried so much when they nicely spoke to me and talked about my worries. Saddest moment was when we had to say good-bye and hug. I just said to myself, "Keep it up, I can do it, but I don't wanna go back".

Our family decided to host 2 more AFS students. Before I met them I was anxious about them if I can get along with them. But they both are really nice to me. Relieved. We know how we are feeling. It's easier to keep up conversations coz we are both interested in each other. I'm getting better, no longer alone.

This too relaxing mood makes me too lazy to do anything. This is also culture-shocked. I want to keep myself busy every day. I have to make the most of this relaxing mood and enjoy to be here. Since summer holidays started I've been really excited and enjoying. NZ Summer events seem to make me happy. I could make most of it.

An awareness of racism/discrimination and tolerance of racism/discrimination variations

Racism/discrimination was one variation that three research participants, reluctantly, either adapted to or at least tolerated. The two Japanese research participants, and the one research participant from another Asian country (not identified to preserve participant confidentiality), experienced some form of racism or discrimination in New Zealand. The experiences and perceptions of Nova illustrate the movement along a time line from, initially, feelings of strong resistance to the discrimination directed towards her, to mere surprise and recognition that this was 'normal' behaviour that Nova needed to get used to.

Nova: *When watching a movie at a cinema, girls who were behind us kicked our seat. I thought it was so rude and discriminating.*

A girl [who was a] stranger to me threw her popcorn at me! It was very, very annoying. I wanted to complain about it with her.

When my friend and I were at town, girls shouted to us "Go back home". I couldn't believe it that there were such a girl like that in NZ.

Two teenage boys said "Fuck Off Asian!" I didn't know who they talk to at first. Old woman stared at me and I knew they talk to me. I was just surprised.

Kirby illustrated the strength of reaction and the depression he was feeling about his situation:

Kirby: *In school bus, some boys threw pebbles away to me. I can't look back who they are coz I was too scared. Anger, fury, disappointment. I can't believe [it].*

Discrimination at school. I thought [New Zealand being] multicultural was a good perspective. That's what everyone desires around the world. ... [In Japan] I have

never even heard the word "discrimination" and the words which discriminate people. I think to be honest, it's not simple with different cultures and races to live together on the same island. It might be impossible unless they reconsider about multicultural – how great it is. I just can't believe what is going on. Who's happy with discrimination? I wanna get it changed but I can't do it by myself unfortunately. I'm getting depressed and disappointed with everyone, including myself.

Kirby also illustrated the unthinking blatancy of unintentional discriminatory, ethnocentric comments (edited):

People use cars every day to work. Congestion happens so often. Every time they get stuck with another car they swear at driver saying "Asian driver!!" Even if ... people don't like Asian, they shouldn't insult [them], especially in front of me. That's dreadful, cruel.

Kirby's comment also includes, *unless they reconsider about multicultural*. This comment, along with *if ... people don't like Asian*, suggests that he had internalised that many New Zealanders are prejudiced!

Bart also experienced incidents of racism:

Some students are nice and we could have enjoyable conversation about many topics; while some could be rude, impolite and immature which are totally disasters for me. [There is a] girl in class is exactly the latter one. Sometimes, i may response (sic) to her [as a] joke and have a little chat as being polite, however on Friday... she kept talking about silly ..., racist, teasing, insulting [things]. I ignored her in the beginning, but then she carried on, and when she walked past me and poked my head, i couldn't stand her anymore. I ran straight to her, and stared at her. She didn't seem to care, and i picked up the chairs next to me. I didn't throw them at her but ... [did it] to intimidate her, as i knew i would be in a big trouble if i really did throw chairs at her. Then i walked out of the class and went home.

Bart illustrates below how he, with the support of his teachers, overcame these incidents of racism by taking a pragmatic approach. It must be noted here that Kirby also tried to discuss his situation with his host family. However, Kirby's host family appears to have taken an ethnocentric approach by blaming the situation on Kirby, or Kirby's culture, rather than taking a contextual approach. Bart commented:

After that incident, the teachers have discussed with me about it. They understood my situation and know that I'm not the kind of reckless and grumping student. We talked about my exchange life here. Things seemed to change after that, that student is no longer that troublesome. I also learnt how to deal with problems and different people, instead of being over irritated I should find somebody to talk and help.

Being excluded, feeling a failure and longing for a 'normal' situation variations

Milly's journal indicated a growing awareness that she was not being accepted into a network of family and friends. She also indicated that was because she did not know what to do about the situation, as she did not recognise what the problem was. Milly came to believe her adaptation and acceptance problems were caused by poor use of the local language. However, the researcher disagrees with Milly and believes that the problem was that there was a wide individualism/collectivism culture distance that Milly did not recognise. While Milly's use of the local language took almost twice as long to develop as most other research participants (see Table 16, p. 137), the researcher argues that this was because her own implicit values in the

individualism/collectivism cultural dimension prevented her from establishing a sound social network. However, establishing a social network was exacerbated by the long time-line for her language development: a 'catch 22' situation.

Milly's comments here indicate that she has reached the point where she seems to be being excluded from the social network.

(1 June), Think I am feeling really homesick now as I miss the ease and understanding at home. I am no longer given the excuse of "she is foreign she doesn't know" so more is expected of me, like going out without being invited by friends. We are currently on 3 weeks of holiday and I don't always have a lot to do. For one it's cold, so you just don't feel like going out a lot. I don't know where to go or who with and when I go out alone I always get hassled by my family because of it.

At home in NZ I do go out a lot alone but here no one does. I don't think it would worry me too much but because I am not in the world's best head space, the little things are getting to me.

(4 July), Car provided awkwardness on the way home, something is going on this afternoon. Nc... asked discretely if I was invited and F... flat out said "no". I don't mind not being invited especially because my friends are better and nicer but it hurts to be said "no" to [in that] way.

(15 July), I am back down to being a little upset. Set myself the rule of going out every second day which so far I have done. Yesterday made plans to bake and watch Disney channel with N... and I was excited, to bake, to see her and show my brother I had friends, but she couldn't come? Had a rough couple of days at the end of last week. N... couldn't hang out as she was with her Nana and I don't think anyone is receiving my texts so didn't go out with anyone but Mama shopping.

(29 July), Had an awful end to last week – I called N... about 9 times over 3 days, M... over 5 times in 2 days and R... and co couldn't make sushi. I really did just feel awful as no one ever picks up the phone to explain or contacts you later to tell you why they didn't, though N... did in the end and her auntie [had] died.

(8 August), A part of me views this as a failure and, like I always do, I blame myself though I know I have tried and not everyone in this world will like me. They are a lovely family, but may be just not for me. ... I don't want to let my fear of the unknown and of speaking up get in the way. N... also pointed out that if I got to speak [Spanish] more at home she would think my Spanish would be better...

These comments illustrate the symptoms of culture shock: symptoms such as anxiety, helplessness, irritability, a longing for a more gratifying environment, an intense longing for home, and fear for one's safety (Church, 1982; Oberg, 1960) and, using Milly's words, *generally realising that I miss home*. While the researcher acknowledges that this may be homesickness per se, or a reasonable reaction to unreasonable circumstances, these comments are dated some four months into her sojourn. This is the first time in her journal that Milly mentions homesickness. Prior to this series of comments, while Milly did mention symptoms of culture shock (for example, on 27 May she comments that *the smallest things can knock my confidence*), the above comments indicate that her adaptation stress had become more intense. It is about this stage of her sojourn that Milly had largely adapted to symbols and rituals at the explicit level, and began to face ways of doing things based at the more complex, implicit values level. The researcher believes, therefore, that culture distance related to values was causing

Milly's adaptation problems. Milly, finding herself no longer understood or effective, felt uncertain, vulnerable, excluded, and helpless. She was not relating these problems to culture distance issues, but rather judging herself as a failure, or as behaving wrongly on her part.

Milly's further comments include the **feeling a failure** and **longing for a 'normal' situation** variations:

... harped on a little about me being ok and eventually I started crying and babbled about it being hard not understanding much and he just reassured me. I feel a little of a failure though, so many people see a problem.

Milly recorded further indicators of culture shock – anxiety, and longing for a 'normal' situation (Church, 1982):

The smallest things can knock my confidence – like this afternoon when I had to do work in ingles. That in itself is not a problem but the fact that I had an hour and a half to read a 4 page children's story and answer a couple of questions and I couldn't do it.

I have had a roller-coaster of a day – speaking Spanish with more confidence to my friends and family, but someone new and I freaked.

The thing I loved was being in a "normal" situation – I camp at home so it seemed like something I finally know plus Na... 's family are so nice, they look after me so well.

An interesting point here is that Milly appears to have been *expecting* the 'honeymoon' period as **preceding** culture shock in the AFS pre-departure preparation sessions:

I am learning that as much as I didn't want to I had expectations about the exchange. I thought it would be more exciting, and, I don't know, like maybe I expected to travel every weekend and for school to be really thrilling, but it's not like that, school can be boring like school in NZ, especially when you don't understand everything. My family have lives, and not money growing on trees so they can't travel every weekend. Maybe I thought I would feel more special – more of a celebrity. L... said at the end of the day it's just another year of your life – yes, there are many things: friends, family, culture – but that doesn't mean you will find the perfect life, you have to work for it.

Learning about themselves variation

In her journal, Milly recorded much about finding out 'who she really is' and what she has learned about herself:

I had a really good chat with S. (USA student) about why we found it so hard. We had been looking at the type A personalities who were saying they were having the best times with boyfriends and heaps of friends and speaking the language more because they weren't worried about making mistakes. And it made me realize more about who I am. I am a bit of a perfectionist. I really don't like showing or doing things until they are finished and perfect and even when they are finished I always think I can do better. I was used to being the intelligent one: if the teacher asked a question or someone wanted help in NZ I was the person they would go to, but here I don't even understand the question let alone the answer and I miss it. I miss knowing the answer and being able to help to carry out an intelligent conversation or debate.

In the beginning I had a hard time with conversation because I didn't want to always talk about NZ but I realized I have to be proud of it, it's a talking point and part of being an exchange student. This has opened my eyes up to a bigger world and can do the same for others.

I feel a stronger connection to NZ now. I am more proud of where I am from and want to learn more about its history and Māori....

I knew before I left that family was important, but realizing now that they are the greatest blessing in my life. Also learning how amazing my parents are and that they are so human but so loving, encouraging and forgiving.

Milly then listed all things that she has learned about herself (see below).

In her journal, Milly commented on cultural differences. Milly's tendency was to relate things to her own individual needs, an individualist orientation, rather than the needs of her host group, a collectivist orientation (Biddle, 2012; Triandis, 1995). In contrast, Anna's comments in the previous chapter tend to relate her host culture to her own cultural systems generally, which has a more collectivist tendency, even though Anna's home country is predominately individualist in orientation (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Nevertheless, Milly's reflections are indicative of developing awareness.

Developing awareness and personal confidence variation

Milly experienced all the previous variations in perception and ways of understanding, as well as a developing awareness of the stresses of adapting to a new culture:

We are currently studying internal and external journeys in Spanish now, and Thursday he asked me about my cultural journey. The hardest parts – language and culture. Differences – physical touching and when I said I thought that was cool, the idea was brought forward that I may adopt those everyday practices when I get back, I replied truthfully “that I would like to but the world is not mine”, and like if I kiss people on the cheek, a lot of people wouldn't understand, though I will definitely be more affectionate.

There are some things I will never learn and some things like going out alone that people here just don't understand. It's hard to know where you are letting go of your culture and embracing another or sacrificing pieces of yourself.

In coping with her adaptation stresses, Milly also developed an increasing awareness of herself:

What I have learnt about myself:

- *I don't like asking questions*
- *I like to be self-taught*
- *I enjoy my personal space*
- *Takes me a while to make friends. I tend to want to know if they are worth my while*
- *That I need to trust my gut, stop waiting to know for sure*
- *I can get through anything and life is what I make it.*

Personal confidence and host family support variation

Others commented about personal confidence and host family support:

More than your language it depends on your confidence and knowing how to express yourself. What helps more than that is how you feel inside - you feel confident enough to settle down. And it also depends on how your host family makes you feel. If your host family is over protective and stuff you won't feel alone, and you won't get depressed, particularly in the first few days. But after that it's better if your host family is more liberal and they let

you go. Not everyone can be an exchange student and get the best of the exchange because you need a lot of self-motivation.

As is clearly illustrated in the research participants' comments in this category, many of the symptoms of culture shock were evident, to a greater or lesser extent. The statements of Milly, Kirby and Anna, particularly, illustrate the symptoms of culture shock. The researcher believes, that while Kirby mentions feeling depressed, that none of these three participants recognised a culture shock condition. They did not mention the term 'culture shock' specifically in their journals, nor at the end of sojourn interview.

Table 18 summarises the variations in the internal horizon of context and in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 8: Learning to cope with adaptation stresses including overcoming culture shock.

Table 18: Summary of variations in Category 8: Learning to cope with adaptation stresses including overcoming culture shock

<i>Category 8</i>	<i>Sub-categories</i>	<i>Variations in the internal horizon of focus</i>	<i>Variations in perceptions and ways of understanding</i>
Learning to cope with adaptation stresses including overcoming culture shock	None	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Little things can be frustrating 2. Factors external to the sojourn 3. Racism/discrimination 4. Feelings of exclusion (by their host family and friends). 	<p><i>Initial</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Little things can be frustrating; 2. Time wasting 3. Feeling depressed 4. An awareness of racism/discrimination, 5. Being excluded 6. Feeling a failure; and 7. Longing for a 'normal' situation <p><i>As the sojourn progressed</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Through communication 9. Through a positive attitude 10. Through trusted friends 11. Keeping active and happy 12. Tolerance of incidences of racism 13. Learning about themselves 14. Developing awareness, 15. Personal confidence and host family support

What the research participants learned

Research participants learned to cope with and overcome culture shock and adaptation stresses. While the effects of culture shock and adaptation stresses had some considerable impact on their overall happiness, all participants in this category took positive, corrective actions. Such actions eventually led to their adaptation to the stresses of living in another cultural community. The level of adaptation in the racism/discrimination variation has been analysed as 'tolerance'. Each of the variations in perceptions and ways of understanding also reflect a growing awareness of both themselves and of the cultural context in which they were living, as well as/or the effects of good communication and a positive approach. Another approach taken

by the research participants was taking comfort from, or confiding in, trusted friends, or becoming involved in regular activities.

Figure 26 presents the adaptation continuum of the level of learning to overcome adaptation stresses and, thus, the level of adaptation to such stresses by the research participants.

Figure 26: Summary of the variations in learning to overcome adaptation stresses and thus adaptation to such stresses

	Tolerance		Adaptation				
	Tolerance of incidences of racism	Through communication	Developing awareness/positive attitude	Through trusted friends	Through keeping active and happy	Through personal confidence	Through host family support
Nova Bart	X						
Anna		X				X	
Milly		X	X	X	X	X	X
Gabe			X			X	
Kirby	X			X		X	
Achilles							X

How the external horizon of context affected adaptation

This category focusses on the stresses caused by adaptation difficulties. In some cases these stresses can be severe, thus resulting in culture shock. The external horizon of context that causes adaptation stresses is the culture distance between the sojourner's and the host culture. Culture distance arises from differences in values within cultural dimensions (Hofstede, 2001; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005) (see discussion pp. 49-50). The wider the perceived culture distance the greater the intensity that stresses can become. Variations in the form of the experiences that caused research participants' adaptation stress difficulties were:

- Little things becoming frustrating, mainly due to lack of communication with hosts;
- Time wasting due to a negative attitudes;
- Feeling depressed due to a lack of supporting social networks;
- Racism/discrimination directed towards the sojourner (in New Zealand only);
- Feelings of being excluded, feeling a failure, and longing for a normal situation; and

- Outside (external to the sojourn) pressures.

Later, as the sojourn progressed, such stresses were eased through communication, a positive attitude, support of trusted friends and host family, keeping active and happy, becoming tolerant of racist incidents, and learning about themselves and developing awareness of cultural differences.

Category 9: Learning to adjust to differences in the education and schooling system

Soon after arrival into the host community, sojourners on high school-based or teacher assistant programmes begin to attend school. Pedagogical differences and curriculum differences (referred to as education), and general school day-to-day life and activities (referred to as schooling), can combine to make this a formidable set of demands for the sojourner. Unsurprisingly, therefore, a significant number of comments, from nine of the research participants, fell into this category, as school became the centre of the research participants' new day-to-day activities and interactions.

This category comprises experiences associated with adjusting to going to school and with the education system. It is at the symbols and rituals and the values levels of culture. The values differences faced by research participants are highlighted in the following analysis. Research participants needed to learn to reconcile their own cultural values in relation to the education and schooling system with those of the host in order to learn to adapt to their situation. They needed to develop knowledge about differences in values, and learn the skills to cope with the outward symbolic representation of those values.

The internal horizon of focus

The internal horizon of focus for this category was the research participants' experiences of adjusting to the education and schooling system differences between their host school and their external horizon of context: their home school. This includes curriculum differences and differences in pedagogical practices. In some cases in this category, variations in the internal horizon of focus that caused reactions within the research participants were as a direct result of differences in their external horizon of context, being the differences in cultural values and beliefs.

The variations in the internal horizon of focus for this category were:

1. Teaching practices;
2. Status and respect for teachers;
3. School times;
4. School rules; and

5. General behaviour.

The following comments are indicative of the above variations (edited for clarity).

Many research participants commented on the differences in **teaching practices**:

We are doing this research in my history class and we were meant to use one period at the school library searching information. When we got there our teacher had already put all the necessary books on one table. I notice that the teachers spend a lot of their time to help their students to succeed as well as possible.

We had to write an essay as homework for our history lesson and the deadline was after one week. When the day came, only two people had returned the essay (I was one of them). Others said they are not ready and the teacher didn't seem to be too angry about it. In Finland if you return something late, the grade automatically drops by one number for every day that it's late. Some teachers even refuse to mark anything that's late.

Some research participants commented about **differences in the status of and respect**, or lack of respect, for teachers:

Some students speak very freely during classes and even make comments about teachers in their presence. I'm used to teachers having a certain position in class and that it is not appropriate to make any comments on their personal life. It is different if you speak to them during intervals or so, but during classes they expect that students sit quietly and work.

Teachers are always talked to on a first name basis. It is somewhat difficult to catch myself from saying "sir" and "miss" all the time, as well as the urge to stand up as a teacher comes into the class, though I guess that this is again an a-typical thing for NZ. Still, definitely something I have noticed. There is a lot less interventionism within the classroom. Students have more freedom just to talk, to wander around the classroom, to do things. It seems to be more learning when you want to learn, though, of course, this is a generalisation and changes from class to class with some teachers being very strict.

Some research participants commented about **differences in school times**:

We had to be at school at 7:15 as school starts at 7:30.

School on Tuesdays and Thursdays is open until 6pm for extracurricular activities which means you can do homework, talk with friends and do sports.

School is from 8-4 with two 15 min breaks and 45 mins lunch.

Differences in **school rules**, or lack of them was a source of comment:

I've never seen any school rules like in my home country – we have some school rules laid out and you have to sometimes refer to them. But here the teachers know some students are not doing some things according to the rules, like someone is smoking, or smacking windows or wagging, but the teachers are pretty easy and the rules here are pretty loose.

The school was very rules orientated, like if you were late, or miss a day of school or just an hour of school they would send a note to your family straight away. And they locked it up so you couldn't get out when classes were on unless you had a special note. And at lunch time, if you went out you couldn't get back in until they decided to open the doors.

We went to the Museum – 20 students, one teacher, 20 mins walk in the rain. We didn't have parental consent. They are just so much more relaxed and rules/laws are general guidelines.

The **general behaviour**, by students, as well as teachers was commented on:

School is more relaxed – people walk in and out of class, talk, burn things – my teacher turns up 15 mins late.

If you don't finish something no one cares, you can sit and talk, the teachers are often late.

I saw a girl charging a cell phone in school. I saw a girl taking a class lying down. I saw some girls listening to music in class – in Japan we are not allowed. Students start to move to classroom AFTER the bell rings. Students eat in class.

The violence in the school was horrendous. Teachers would fight teachers, students would fight students, teachers would fight students.

Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 9: Learning to adjust to the education and schooling system

The variations in perception and ways of understanding necessitated research participants' reconciliation with host culture values. Such values fell within the cultural dimensions of individualism/collectivism (Hofstede, 2001, 2009, 2011; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Lewis, 2006; Lustig & Coster, 1999; Triandis, 1995, 2004; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998), universalism/particularism (Trompenaars & Hampton-Turner, 1998), assertiveness/modesty (Den Hartog, 2004; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005), and specific/diffuse (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998).

Some resistance to differences in the education and schooling system were indicated by a minority of research participants, with one participant indicating strong resistance. This exception was Phillips, who commented on the violence that existed in his school. In most cases, where any resistance is indicated, the research participants tended to find a justification or counter argument to their resistance. Comments also included some praise for the education and schooling systems. Generally, research participants sojourning in New Zealand were surprised at the perceived lack of discipline in the classroom and lack of respect for the teachers. Conversely, some New Zealand research participants in Latin America surprised at more lenient classroom, and teacher, behaviour.

The variations in perception and ways of understanding were:

1. Uncomfortable with the different teaching practice;
2. Does not agree with the teaching practice;
3. Surprised and annoyed at the teaching practice followed by acceptance;
4. No or little respect for teachers;
5. Student behaviour and school rules;
6. Confused with rules and activities;
7. 'Horrendous' violence; and

8. Likes the different teaching practice variation.

Following are Indicative research participant comments relating to the above variations.

Uncomfortable with the different teaching practice variation

Anna expressed feeling uncomfortable about taking compliments in front of the whole class:

As it is coming close to the time when teachers decide who gets the Top of the Class, it is a constant subject in school. Many of my teachers are half joking, half seriously saying that I'm near the top of the class and throughout the year they have been saying how impressed they are of how good I'm doing when English is not my first language. And most of the time this happens in front of the whole class. Of course I liked that they thought I was doing well, but mostly I just felt a bit uncomfortable taking these comments.... I'm not very good at taking compliments and a big part of that comes from my cultural background.

Anna's comment (Anna is from Finland and was in New Zealand) reflects assertiveness/modesty cultural dimension values:

In Finnish culture modesty is one of the most appreciated characteristics in a person and if you look like you are proud of what you have done people take you as smug. Modesty is so to speak so tightly in our nature, that if you are given a compliment the first answer that most people would give is "oh, it was nothing" ... and then explain what you could have done better and making it sound like you did not do anything worthwhile in the first place ...

Finland is more modesty-oriented than New Zealand (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Kaskenpalo, personal communication, September, 2010). Anna is therefore correct when she observed that in Finnish culture *modesty is ... [an] appreciated characteristic...* This statement by Anna does not indicate any real resistance to the situation in New Zealand, as she states that she *liked that they thought I was doing well*, but rather indicates that her understanding is that New Zealand has a less modest cultural orientation than Finland.

Does not agree with the teaching practice variation

In the following comment, Anna expressed disagreement with teaching practices:

We had to write an essay as homework for our history lesson and the deadline was after one week. When the day came, only two people had returned the essay (I was one of them). I was absolutely amazed when the others said they are not ready and I was even more amazed when the teacher didn't seem to be too angry about it. In Finland if you return something late, the grade automatically drops by one number for every day that it's late. Some teachers even refuse to mark anything that's late. Here the students don't seem to have any kind of responsibility of their studies which makes me wonder how on earth they are ready for university next year.

Anna's comment reflects her more universalist orientation where rules take precedence, as opposed to a more particularist orientation in which the protection of relationships takes precedence (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). This is reflected in the teachers' ease at late submission as opposed to Anna's amazement/dismay at that.

Surprised and annoyed at the teaching practice followed by acceptance variation

Anna confronted more differences in cultural values, first feeling surprised, then annoyed, but then indicating acceptance of the teaching practice:

We are doing this research in my History class and we were meant to use one period at the school library searching information. When we got there our teacher had already put all the necessary books on one table. First I was a bit surprised because I had thought that we were supposed to find the books ourselves. [Then I became] annoyed; how will we learn to become independent researchers if the teacher basically does half of the work for us. But when I'm now thinking about it and comparing it to what other teachers do here I notice that they spend a lot of their time to help their students to succeed as well as possible. ...

This statement by Anna reflects the less individualist nature of the Finnish culture compared to New Zealand's highly individualist culture (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Being more individualist, the New Zealand cultural value is more oriented towards teaching 'how to learn' rather than 'know how to do things', and "preparing the individual for a place in society" (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 98). While Finland is not regarded as collectivist (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005), in a collectivist society the emphasis is more on the skills and virtues required to become a member of society (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). The teacher therefore would tend to regard the student finding their own books as being less appropriate than helping them find books, and to *spend time to help individual students succeed* by providing the relevant books for them. Anna's statement above is less a statement of resistance to the cultural value than a statement about values reconciliation, and therefore a development towards an understanding of and adaptation to the local culture's values, and thus the development of IcC.

No or little respect for teachers variation

Cultural values also have an effect on the status of teachers, and the respect shown towards teachers by their students. Anna and Felicity commented about their reactions to differences in respect for teachers.

Anna *Students don't seem to show any kind of respect to their teachers sometimes, which means that the teachers have no control in the class. Back home not showing respect to teachers is just that wouldn't happen.*

Felicity *Some students speak very freely during classes and they even make comments on teachers at their presence. It makes me feel quite puzzled. I'm used to that teachers have a certain position in class and that it is not appropriate to make any comments on their personal life. It is different if you speak to them during intervals or so, but during classes they expect that students sit quietly and work.*

Anna's and Felicity's comments indicate adaptation demands relating to status and respect. Anna's comment clearly reflects universalist-oriented values, with a greater respect for rules and order (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). It also reflects a stronger modesty cultural values system, also reflected in her previous comments above.

Felicity's comments reflect the more collectivist orientation of her host country's cultural values compared to her own, as well as a higher power distance. Additionally, her comment reflects the culture distance between her host country's values and New Zealand's values in the achievement/ascription cultural dimension. Countries with higher ascription-based values place more emphasis on the status one has been accorded within society than on the qualifications one has achieved (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). Status is interdependent, therefore any individual who downgrades or denigrates their perceived status has the effect of not only denigrating themselves, but equally denigrating the status of the rank or position that they hold (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). This also reflects the collectivist values of the culture where an individual's primary obligation is to their in-group, in this case the teaching profession.

In the comment below, the research participant gives no indication of resistance, with a 'matter-of-fact' description of the experience, indicating an understanding and acceptance of this way of doing things (research participant not identified for confidentiality reasons).

... because I was a teacher I was expected to dress like a teacher and act like a teacher, like when I first got there I would go out to bars in the weekend ... with, ... an American teacher there and a guy from the Philippines from an American school and ... a couple of people from England, and we would just go out and have a drink listen to ... live music ... or we'd just sit in a café and have some dinner. But the ... café's are owned by the parents of the students, and they would come ... and talk to me ... but then they'd go and tell my coordinator or the other teachers at my school and say that it's bad that I'm there. ... [I] shouldn't be out there drinking.

Student behaviour and school rules variation

Comments in this variation illustrate the reactions to wide differences in the regard for discipline and rules. Nova comments:

Nova *I saw a girl charging a cell phone in school. My mouth dropped open.*
I saw a girl taking a class lying down. My teacher wasn't angry. It was hard to believe.
I saw some girls listening to music in class. In Japan we are not allowed, so I was surprised.
Students start to move to classroom AFTER the bell ring. I thought "can we [go] slowly [to class]?"
Students eat something in class. I can't because it seems rude.

As with the majority of comments from the research participants, cultural dimension values played a major part in the sojourners' perceptions of such interactions. Milly indicated that, while school is *more relaxed*, she did *wonder how much people learn*.

School is more relaxed – people walk in and out of class, talk, burn things – my teacher turns up 15 mins late. I like the relaxed feeling because I don't feel bad for not doing work because I don't understand anything – but I do wonder how much people learn.

Milly's comments reflect particularist-oriented cultural values. More significantly, the teachers being *often late* reflects a cyclical time-oriented culture as opposed to a sequential time culture as has been previously discussed.

Milly took issue with a collectivist orientation that conflicted with her own individualist approach:

One of our [school] inspectors came in to talk to us and for once everyone in the class had agreed to keep their mouth shut – in NZ you would have the majority willing to make trouble, and most likely twist the story for more trouble. ... [The inspector] said that we are below our teachers, which makes sense as far as authority but she said if we ever had any problems with a teacher, we had to get our parents to talk on our behalf, which I think is a little stupid as we aren't children and aren't we taught to fight our own battles?

Milly's individualist orientation is resisting two collectivist-oriented values that are apparent in the above comment: First, the whole class had made a collective agreement not to cooperate with the inspector. Second, in more collectivist-oriented societies, the parents tend to become much more involved in their children's education than parents in individualist-oriented societies where the child develops independence, personal autonomy and achievement, thus becoming independent of their families (Trumbull et al., 2003). Milly did not understand this and perceived that the host way of doing this was *stupid*.

Nova's, Kirby's and Bart's comments below indicate a perception that the school rules are lax. Nova and Kirby's first comments indicate acceptance of the practices, but with reservations, while the other comments indicate acceptance or adaptation. They were all in New Zealand.

Nova *Club activity in school: They are so lazy about club activity compared with [my country] [where] people are practicing every after school, struggling with lots of homework. I got quite surprised at their laziness. I wonder if they don't want to do every day or just want to take a rest so often. This is one of the reasons which makes me think of NZ ... [as] a relaxing place.*

Kirby *My school [in Japan] doesn't have any rules ... but New Zealand schools have lots of rules, like, don't use cell phone, don't use mp3 during classes, because my school [in Japan], my teachers trust students then they're understand we don't use mp3 players and cell phones during classes, so that's why they allow us to use mp3 and cell phones at school, ... Japanese teacher trust us because we don't use cell phone during classes we know it's really bad but [New Zealand teachers] try to restrict a lot of things*

Bart *I've never seen any school rules like [in my home country] – we'll have some school rules laid out and then you have to sometimes ... refer to ... [them], but here ... the teachers they know some students they are not doing some things according to the rules, they are not behaving themselves, like even if someone is smoking, ... or smacking windows or wagging, but the teachers ... they're pretty easy, ... the rules here are pretty loose. ... That's ... one of the reasons why I find it relaxing here, because the rules aren't really that strict, ... because I don't really have to do some works that I found it too hard like in English class...*

Nova's, Kirby's and Bart's comments above reflect differences in power distance. Nova, Kirby and Bart are all from higher power distance-oriented cultures in which teachers are treated with greater respect, strict order is maintained in the classroom and students speak only when they are invited to (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005).

This category also includes the differences between a universalist-oriented culture and particularist-oriented cultural values. Universalist cultures apply rules and procedures universally to ensure equity and consistency, while particularist cultures encourage flexibility by adapting to particular situations (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). The following comments illustrate

differences in orientation based on the research participant's cultural underpinning of either universalist or particularist values. Milly's comment indicates that her home culture was more universalist than her host country, a Latin American country. Conversely, Achilles, who is from a Latin American country, took a particularist viewpoint.

Milly *We went to the Museum – 20 students, one teacher, 20 mins walk in the rain. It was crazy – in NZ that wouldn't have happened due to so many health and safety rules; we didn't even have parental consent. They are just so much more relaxed and rules/laws are general guidelines that no one really pays attention to.*

Achilles *Back home school is really important, but it's more important that you organise yourself rather than, well, let's say here you go to school every day and you never miss it. If you miss it it's like "Oh you wagged school", you know, but back in Argentina [if] you... don't feel like going to class and you just go out with your friend ... instead of going to school today ... I can just catch up tomorrow, so from that point of view, yeah, it's more important your relationship than the rules because, umm, you gotta be responsible, and you know that if you lose one class then you can catch up in the other one so I guess it's just it depends more on yourself.*

Pippo's comment, below, reflects a specific-oriented culture which tends to have more rigid structure and agenda, while diffuse-oriented cultures are more free-flowing (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). Pippo's comment indicates a perception that the school rules are more rigid than in Nova's, Bart's and Kirby's perceptions (above). However, there is no indication of resistance in Pippo's comment, with the matter-of-fact description indicating adaptation.

The school was very rules orientated, ... so strict, like if you were late, ... [or] miss a day of school ... or just an hour of school they would send a note to your family straight away ... and they locked it up so you couldn't get out when classes were on unless you had a special note, and at lunch time, like if you went out you couldn't get back in until they decided to open the doors.

Phillips commented that because there was apparently no structure he found it difficult to adapt to school life:

School was hard to adapt to and no structure ... We started at 7.30 in the morning and finished whenever the deputy principal said to go home. So that was tough.

'Horrendous' violence variation

Phillips' comment below indicates a perception that there was *horrendous violence* at school:

The violence in the school was horrendous. ... [In this region] they tend to be more traditional, more fanatics, and things like this. And the place we were in was less developed and kind of things like this. So teachers would fight teachers, students would fight students, teachers would fight students, kind of thing.

Phillips' comment reflects neutral/affective cultural dimension values. Phillips' host country appears to have a highly affective-oriented values system, and therefore, publicly, displays a wide range of emotions (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). Phillips' comment, in general, also reflects more assertiveness-oriented values. Additionally, high uncertainty-avoidance cultures also tend to express feelings more intensely and more emotionally, resulting in situations where "anything can happen" (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 171).

Likes the different teaching practice variation

Teaching practices, or pedagogy, can differ according to cultural values (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Hitchcock, Vu & Tran, 2010). As such, and the sojourn being high school-based, pedagogy also posed adaptation demands for sojourners. This included assessment practices.

Milly's comment indicates that she liked the different practice:

Tests are multi choice and there are a lot of presentations. For me multi choice means I may get a few questions right but I don't think it makes you think as much as having to think for yourself and write a response. But I do like the idea of presentations because I know so many of my friends ... don't want to speak in front of people – and jobs may require that of people so ... [students here] don't seem to have that same fear, which is good!

Milly's situation reflects values in the power distance/interdependence cultural dimension. Milly is from New Zealand, a 'Western' society with English being her primary language, and New Zealand being interdependence-oriented. However, Latin American countries, where Milly was, tend to have a higher power distance orientation (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005), and therefore a higher level of respect for, and obedience to, the teacher's requests (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Milly also liked the *extracurricular activities* period:

School on Tuesdays and Thursdays is open until 6pm for extracurricular activities which means you can do homework, talk with friends and they do have sports. It's cool ... especially because a lot of work here is assessed in group presentations so it offers a good opportunity to work on it. And for me a good opportunity to talk with others to improve my Spanish and also learn a little of the local dance style!

Table 19 summarises the variations in the internal horizon of context and in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 9: Learning to adjust to differences in the education and schooling system.

Table 19: Summary of Category 9: Learning to adjust to differences in the education and schooling system

Category 9	Sub-categories	Variations in the internal horizon of focus	Variations in perceptions and ways of understanding
Learning to adjust to differences in the education and schooling system	None	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teaching practices; 2. Status and respect for teachers; 3. School times; 4. School rules; and 5. General behaviour 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Uncomfortable with the different teaching practice 2. Does not agree with the teaching practice 3. Surprised and annoyed at the teaching practice followed by acceptance 4. No or little respect for teachers 5. Student behaviour and school rules 6. Confused with rules and activities 7. 'Horrendous' violence; and 8. Likes the different teaching practice

What the research participants learned

Most of the research participants learned to accept, and adapt to, differences in teaching practices and classroom behaviour, while resistance or tolerance towards other aspects of school life was indicated. This category, therefore, shows a wider divide between resistance and adaptation than all the previous categories. Most later ways of understanding, however, fell within the 'acceptance' to 'adaptation' sectors of the continuum, as illustrated, with only Phillips indicating tolerance: see Figure 27 (following page).

Many research participants initially felt some resistance to local practices, but eventually accepted or adapted to the local schooling and the education system. Any resistance was indicated to be very short-term, with the majority of research participants commenting only once on any given topic within this category. They learned to adapt to their schooling system by overcoming their resistance to the local cultural values that underpinned the teaching practices, by reconciling their own cultural values with those of the host. The exception, as stated above, was Phillips.

The following comments (edited for clarity) are indicative:

I got quite surprised at their laziness. I wonder if they don't want to do every day or just want to take a rest so often. This is one of the reasons which makes me think of NZ... [as] a relaxing place.

The above comment indicate resistance, but accepting the practice. The following comments indicate initial resistance, but some adaptation:

The rules here are pretty loose. That's one of the reasons why I find it relaxing here, because the rules aren't really that strict, because I don't really have to do some works that I found it too hard like in English class.

Then I became annoyed; how will we learn to become independent researchers if the teacher basically does half of the work for us. But when I'm now thinking about it and comparing it to what other teachers do here I notice that they spend a lot of their time to help their students to succeed as well as possible.

The first of the following comments indicate acceptance. The other two comments indicate adaptation:

Of course I liked that they thought I was doing well, but mostly I just felt a bit uncomfortable taking these comments. In Finnish culture if you look like you are proud of what you have done people take you as smug. [Accepted but with uncomfortable feeling]

But I do like the idea of presentations because I know so many of my friends ... don't want to speak in front of people – and jobs may require that of people so ... [students here] don't seem to have that same fear, which is good!

It offers a good opportunity to work on it. And for me a good opportunity to talk with others to improve my Spanish

Milly wrote other comments in her very comprehensive and detailed journal (see Appendix C1) about teaching practices and school life where she indicated resistance, and not indicating any move toward adaptation, for example:

She said if we ever had any problems with a teacher, we had to get our parents to talk on our behalf, which I think is a little stupid as we aren't children and aren't we taught to fight our own battles?

In NZ that wouldn't have happened due to so many health and safety rules; we didn't even have parental consent. They are just so much more relaxed and rules/laws are general guidelines that no one really pays attention to.

However, as schooling was not mentioned at all later in her journal, the researcher believes that this indicates that Milly later came to accept the schooling system.

Phillips' *yeah yeah* comment below indicates tolerance as his level of adaptation rather than resistance:

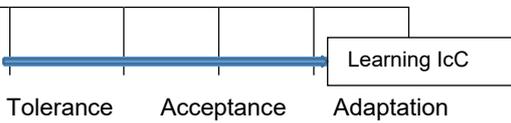
The violence in the school was horrendous. Teachers would fight teachers, students would fight students, teachers would fight students, kind of thing.

Interviewer: *Physically?*

Response: *Yeah yeah.*

Figure 27 depicts the variations in the levels of adaption learned by the participants' schooling and the education systems. In this case, this is summarised as tolerance, acceptance or adaptation factors.

Figure 27: Summary of the research participants' levels of adaptation to schooling and the education system



	Tolerance	Acceptance	Adaptation	
	Tolerance to general school life	Acceptance with uncomfortable feeling	Indicated acceptance of the practice	Indicated adaptation to the practices
Phillips	X			
Milly			X	X
Anna		X		
Felicity			X	
Nova Kirby Bart		X	X	X
Pippo				X
Achilles				X

Table 20 illustrates the cultural values dimensions in which research participants faced, overcoming, or the reconciliation of values differences while adjusting to the education and schooling system.

Table 20: Summary of cultural dimensions in which research participants faced overcoming or reconciling values while learning to adjust to the education and schooling system

	Neutral/affective	Power distance/ interdependence	Assertiveness/modesty	Individualism/collectivism	Universalism/particularism	Achievement/ascription	Specific/Diffuse	Time
Phillips	X				X			
Milly		X		X	X			X
Anna		X	X	X	X			
Felicity		X		X		X		
Nova Kirby Bart		X						
Pippo							X	
Achilles					X			

How the external horizon of context affected adaptation

As school became the centre of the research participants' day-to-day activities and interactions, pedagogical and curriculum differences (education) and general school day-to-day life and activities (schooling), combined to make this a formidable set of adaptation demands for the sojourners. Adaptation difficulties were due to culture distance in the external horizons of context, with several variations within this category:

- Teaching practices;
- Differences in status of and respect for teachers;
- School times and school rules; and
- The general behaviour of both teachers and students;

The external horizons of context affecting adaptation within these variations was the culture distance between the sojourner's education and schooling environment and the host environment within several cultural dimensions (discussed in Chapter Two, pp. 23-29):

- Neutral/affective: specifically even-tempered versus displays of emotion;

- Power distance: specifically variations in the ways respect for the teacher is expressed, and the teacher as the source of knowledge versus the teacher as a learning partner;
- Assertiveness/modesty: specifically openness to compliments versus modesty;
- Individualism/collectivism: specifically individual needs versus group needs, 'how to learn' versus how to do things' and preparation for in individual's place in society; and the interests of the group versus individual-oriented interests.
- Universalism/particularism: specifically priority of rules versus priority of relationships;
- Achievement/ascription: specifically respect based on status versus, respect based on qualifications;
- Specific/diffuse: specifically rigid application of rules and procedures versus adapting to particular situations; and
- Time: specifically variations in time-keeping.

Category 10: Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships

As the research participants began to overcome the plethora of adaptation demands covered in the previous nine categories, they began to face issues that derived from cultural values and beliefs at a deeper, more complex, implicit level. Category 10 is the highest complexity level in the categories of description hierarchy, and comprises experiences associated with adapting to the overall way of life, and values of the family and community at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships. Adaptation involved the elements of knowledge, attitude, awareness and higher-level skills, and includes acquiring knowledge about host community values, skills to recognise the symbolic representation of those values, an ethnorelative attitude towards them, and an awareness of the appropriate reaction and responses during interaction.

In Phillips' case the culture distance was such that some of the host community's values became irreconcilable within the available time that Phillips had to learn and understand them. In other cases, such as Milly's, a reconciliation with host values became crucial to successful adaptation to everyday life.

The internal horizon of focus

The internal horizon of focus for this category was those experiences that caused conflict between the research participants' values and beliefs and the host family's or host community's values and beliefs. In this category, all variations in the internal horizon of focus that caused reactions within the research participants were as a direct result of differences in their external horizon of context: the differences in cultural values and beliefs.

The variations, therefore, in this category, as the title of this category indicates, were from experiences to do with reconciliation of the research participants' own cultural values with those of their hosts. Directness versus indirectness; the concepts of private and public spaces (Lewin, 1936, as cited in Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998); the level of demonstrativeness; individual orientation versus group orientation including differences in approaches to parenting, and the concept of saving face; differences in how one's feelings are expressed; and differences in gender roles and status were all the subject of adaptation issues and difficulties, especially in the case of Milly.

The variations in the form of implicit values and beliefs conflicts were:

1. Directness versus indirectness;
2. The concepts of private and public spaces;
3. The level of demonstrativeness and how one's feelings are expressed;
4. Individual orientation versus group orientation and parenting;
5. The concept of saving face; and
6. The differences in gender roles and status.

The following comments are indicative of the above variations (edited for clarity):

The **directness/indirectness** variation falls into the specific versus diffuse cultural dimension, with specific being the orientation towards directness, and diffuse being an orientation towards indirectness (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). The following comments illustrate this cultural dimension:

When I go back home I am going to miss the polite way people ask me to do. Back home I would just be told to do so. And not just at home, but in everywhere and by everybody who are older than me.

When we (students) had to make some decisions, the Finns and the Germans were like "let's sort this all now so we don't have to think about it anymore and we can relax later" and some of the others were saying "Oh, can't we just stop talking now and figure it all out later? ...".

Kiwis say things clearly. For example, when I asked my friend to go to cinema to watch Harry Potter with me, she said "I hate it!". Japanese would say "I'm sorry, I don't really like it".

Concepts of **private spaces and public spaces** is also in the specific versus diffuse cultural dimension (Lewin, 1936; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). The following comments illustrate this cultural dimension:

Personal space is a lot smaller than NZ. People at school you don't know might hug you to get past – kiwi physical contact like that isn't too common but here it is totally normal around strangers.

Because all the girls lived in the same quarters, there was very little space and we all had to change our clothes in there and that sort of thing. The faces of some girls were worthwhile

seeing when they heard that. This is something that I have noticed so many times during this year. In Finland nobody cares about that kind of things. You just do what you have to do and don't think about it too much.

When I come to somebody's house they normally ask you, "Do you want something, a cup of tea or some snacks", or some stuff like that. If you say, "No", they say, "well just help yourself then". But in [my country] when you come to someone's place and they ask you if you want a cup of tea and snacks and you say no then it means they will ask you again, and if you say no then they'll just ask you again because it means that if you help yourself at somebody's house it's very rude and that you are not very well behaved. You can ask if you want something but just don't go and help yourself.

The **level of demonstrativeness and how one's feelings are expressed** variation falls into the neutral versus affective cultural dimension. Cultures with tendency to openly display their feelings are described as being affective-oriented, while others tend toward a more emotionally neutral orientation (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). The following comments are indicative of this cultural dimension:

Society is very demonstrative – lots of hugs, lots of kisses all the time. Although Kiwi's are very friendly on the whole, always willing to talk and interact and help out etc., the main difference is that here they do it with more energy, more excitement.

Yesterday consisted of a lot of watching the football which this country has qualified for the 2010 world cup, so there was celebration throughout the country. Last weekend there was two [of this country's] teams playing and on the news people were [shown] being beaten up due to supporting the other team. Sure us kiwis love our rugby but I don't really think NZ'ders celebrate achievements that well!

The violence on the street was much worse [than the violence at school]. We just continued our night and ate dinner after [one particularly violent incident].

Differences in how one's feelings are expressed also falls into the neutral versus affective cultural dimension:

In Finland if there are two girls that don't like each other they don't like to talk to each other, but here they are like friendly enough but they talk behind my back. We (Finnish) don't talk, outside [the face-to-face] conversation.

The way guys normally touch you, it's not sexual, it's like a sibling. For example at the disco my guy friend had his hands on my waist, but not because he was making a move on me, but more as a protective thing.

The **individual orientation versus group orientation and parenting** variation is the individualism versus collectivism cultural dimension. An individualist orientation tends to focus on individual needs while a collectivist orientation tends to focus on group needs. Parenting techniques are based on individualist or collectivist orientation (Green et al., 2005; Hofstede, 2001, 2009, 2011; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Lustig & Coster, 1999; Ting-Toomey, 2009; Triandis, 1995, 2004b; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998; Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2009; Zaharna, 2009). The following comments are indicative of individualist orientation thinking versus a collectivist orientation:

It's not really [that they are] selfish but they are pretty self-centred (individualistic). I became more independent after I came here because I think when I was in my home country I relied more on my parents.

In New Zealand I feel more like I have to do things for myself, but here (in Thailand) it was definitely more [community centred], like I was part of a community that was looking after me.

There are so many things you don't talk here with your family compared to what we do, like I can talk everything with my parents. Sometimes I feel a little bit bad because, like they're not giving me a lot of time sometimes, but it's just because it's the cultural.

My host brother told me that in NZ children learn morals only from parents, not from school. They don't think teachers are as precious as parents. I feel sad. For me also teachers are as respected as my parents because they teach us morals (values) repeatedly and help us make decisions for the future.

In my host family the kids are a lot more independent – my host mother doesn't tell me what to do at all, I just do whatever I think is the right thing to do. In Japan if I want to do something I always have to ask my parents.

The **concept of saving face** is a collectivist orientation tendency with no equivalent in an individualist-oriented society (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Qi, 2011):

I cannot wear my PE gear as it "reflects badly on" [my host] mother.

Society, especially in my area, was very much about "saving face". I'd go to the dairy in barefoot, shorts, pyjamas, or something like this, whereas they would get totally dressed up. And this Arabian pipe kind of thing with Arabian flavour, I smoked that ... and it got back to my family. It came out that I smoked it and she knew already and she just said, "Don't do it in public".

Differences in gender roles falls into the ascription versus achievement cultural dimension, and **status** into the power distance cultural dimensions. Ascription-oriented societies recognise status on the basis of age, and the status they have risen to in society rather than being based on their achievements. In some societies this can include their gender. Their status is also related to the power or domination they hold over others according to the power distance orientation of the society (see Chapter Two, p. 25) (Carl, Gupta & Javidan, 2004; Fiske, 1992; Hofstede, 2001, 2011; Hofstede, 2009; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Javidan, House, & Dorfman, 2004; Ting-Toomey, 2009).

Their mum's job in the house was usually to stay at home and cook three hot meals during the day, and she would be doing the dishes, everything like this. I would try to help but it wasn't really accepted for males to help out in the kitchen.

Little is expected of men in the home. My mama has been away for about two weeks and my older [host] sister has been doing the majority of the cooking, and her and [my other sister] the housework, and my Dad complains when he has to cook twice in the week.

In Thai language if I'm speaking to you I would address you [the interviewer] acknowledging your status, and you would address me [differently] because I'm younger than you or lower than you.

Dimensions of variation in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 10: Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships

For each of the conflicts in values that they face, the sojourner internalises their conflict and reaches a decision: to adapt to host community values and develop the skills to interact; to not compromise their own values but to come to understand and develop the skills to interact effectively within the host community; to reject host community values due to, for example, cultural rituals that may be morally unacceptable to them; or to position themselves somewhere in between these options. And the position adopted may be different for each of the values within a cultural dimension, even for specific aspects of a given cultural dimension. At the point a position is taken, in some cases, the adaptation process may stop and the sojourner will simply accept that 'this is the way things are, just different'. Sojourners may even simply adapt to their host environment at the symbols and rituals level, and complete an otherwise satisfactory sojourn.

In this sub-section, comments with explanations that illustrate perceptions and ways of understanding are related to the cultural dimension in which research participants faced culture distance values conflicts. Variations in perceptions and ways of understanding directly relate to issues within specific cultural dimensions:

1. Perceptions regarding directness/indirectness;
2. Perceptions regarding private/public spaces;
3. Perceptions regarding demonstrativeness;
4. Perceptions regarding individualist versus collectivist values;
5. Perceptions regarding differences in parenting;
6. Perceptions regarding saving face;
7. Perceptions regarding showing or hiding one's feelings; and
8. Perceptions regarding gender roles and status.

Perceptions regarding directness/indirectness variation

The tendency to get directly to the point rather than talk around an issue, is a trait of specific-oriented cultures, with indirectness being a trait of diffuse-oriented cultures (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). Symbolic of specific-oriented values is considerable freedom of speech, with the expectation that others not to take specific comments personally or to lose face. The diffuse cultural person can then feel shocked, even insulted. Anna came to understand that she had to reconcile her specific orientation, that is, her way of approaching situations specifically and straightforwardly, with an expectation of a similarly direct response:

I was the watch/team-leader for a couple of times and as you can imagine not everybody is willing to do always as asked. Especially when you are a girl and an equal crew member

at other times. Maybe it was partly because of the last days of the trip and all, but I started to get really pissed off really easily if I had to repeat things many times and then wait a couple of minutes for anything to happen. I think it is the way that I was brought up that if you have to ask twice for something to happen it is almost once too many. Another thing that I noticed ... [was] there were some differences in people's responses depending on where they were from and on their gender (naturally). If I asked a German to do something they did it right away, but if I asked something from a Kiwi boy, there was quite often this slight delay and the "why don't you do it yourself" look in their face. Some of the girls were the same. But there were exceptions on both sides too, of course. It was interesting to notice that when we [students] had to make some decisions, the Finns and the Germans were like "let's sort this all now so we don't have to think about it anymore and we can relax later" and some of the others were saying "Oh, can't we just stop talking now and figure it all out later? ...".

Anna came to adapt to New Zealand's more indirect approach of making requests. Anna also commented on differences in conversation protocol associated with the specific/diffuse cultural dimension.

Anna: *It feels strange that I'm going home just in three weeks or so. I will miss some things ... about New Zealand. Like the [polite] way people ... ask me to do things such as drying dishes or getting the washing in. Back home I would just be told to do so. And not just at home, but in everywhere and by everybody who are older than me.*

Another thing that is kind of similar is how conversation works differently in different cultures. In Finnish culture it goes, like, one person says something and the other listens quietly until the speaker has finished what he was saying. Then the second person answers and the first one stays quiet. Staying quiet while the other person is speaking shows respect and means that you are listening. If you have something you want to ask you wait until he/she is finished. Interrupting is very rude. You only speak when you have something intelligent to say, which means that "small talk" is not a part of our culture, because if you have nothing important to say, you stay quiet. Because I come from this background it is sometimes very difficult to take part in a small talk conversation and when having a conversation I often feel that people think I don't either understand or I don't really care to talk because I stay quiet while they are talking and not interrupting to ask questions and making the conversation move on like that. I also feel it very difficult to change how I communicate with people in here as it is sometimes against of what I have learnt.

While Anna's perceptions and subsequent understanding led her to reconcile to New Zealand's less specific orientation, Bart and Nova needed to reconcile their more diffuse-oriented cultural values:

Bart: *... Most of the people here they ... will just express their own feeling ... whether it's a good or bad feeling they will just express it, but me, ... if I appreciate something I will just tell them that I appreciate it, or when I find something that I didn't ... I will just keep it to myself, or I would just express it in a different way, like in a more conservative way.*

Nova: *Kiwi say [things] clearly. For example, when I asked my friend to go to cinema to watch Harry Potter with me, she said "I hate it!". Japanese would say "I'm sorry, I don't really like it", so I was surprised. But I thought it was good because it was really clear!!*

As well as directness, specific-oriented cultures tend to specifically define their private and personal spaces, while a diffuse culture will allow some freedom in letting strangers in to their

physical and personal spaces (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). Again, research participants' experiences fell within both these situations.

Perceptions regarding private/public spaces variation

While specific-oriented cultures tend to define their private and personal spaces, a diffuse culture will allow some freedom in letting strangers in to their physical and personal spaces (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). Anna spent some time crewing the 'Spirit of Adventure' sailing training ship and faced the issue of personal spaces:

Because all the girls lived in the same [quarters], there was very little space and we all had to change our clothes in there and that sort of things. The faces of some girls were worthwhile seeing when they heard that. This is something that I have noticed so many times during this year. In Finland nobody cares about that kind of things. You just do what you have to do and don't think about it too much. It was sort of funny to notice how the first morning the Finns just started to change their clothes without any further thought and how some of the other girls were a bit shy, or something like that, at first. It came to my mind what it would have been like if we had had some South Americans with us...

Anna, and Milly below, commented about personal (private) and physical (private) spaces, and how they perceived and came to understand and reconcile their own values against the opposing orientation:

Milly: *Personal space is a lot smaller than NZ. It's a little scary when someone at school you don't know like hugs you to get past, as kiwi physical contact isn't too common but here it is totally normal around strangers.*

Houses are smaller. It's often a little bit cramped at friends' houses and that can be uncomfortable especially when everyone is smoking, but otherwise it's fine – I enjoy my personal space but I am sure I can get used to it, it will just take, like most things, a little adjustment.

My host mother re-arranges my room tidies it, and finds clothes she thinks need washing. I am used to my own room being mine and no one touches it so it is sometimes annoying and everything has been moved, or looking for an item of clothing and your host mum has washed it.

Al and Nova commented about how New Zealanders tend to be more open and *let people in* to their personal spaces:

Al: *I think ... kiwis are, like outgoing and, uh, you like, you let people in, and, like let people know. I guess kiwis are one of those that let people in.*

Interviewer: *What trouble did you have with that?*

Response: *Oh I didn't really have trouble, I just get used to it*

Nova: *Dad [host father] talked to strangers. I couldn't believe!! Japanese people don't do that. Never! I thought Dad was really friendly.*

Angelica: *Kiwis talk to people they don't even know. My friend says "hello" to a man we meet on the street even if they've never met before. And I was thinking he knows many people, because every time we went into a shop in the mall he started to talk with the workers about almost personal stuff, like what he did in the weekend, school ... I was a bit surprised when I found out he didn't know them at all. In Finland we don't do that. We maybe say "hello" when we come into a shop, but you don't talk to them about stuff like that.*

I sat in the bus station yesterday with my friend. There were 3 teenagers and a woman there too. Suddenly the woman asks the teenagers where they are going and they all start talking with each other, without knowing each other at all from the beginning! My first thought was that the woman was drunk when she asked them [the youths] many more personal stuff, and they talked about school. Then I realised that it was completely normal for them. I have been here 4 months and still I'm not used to the fact that strangers talk to each other like that. In Finland you would answer a stranger just to be polite, but it would feel very awkward.

Angelica was experiencing a diffuse-oriented cultural value, where her hosts were more likely to let strangers into their personal and private spaces than in her own culture. Although she expressed surprise in the first comment, in her second comment, Angelica appeared to be perceiving and understanding the cultural difference when she states *then I realised that it was completely normal....*

Masha describes how difficult it was at first to intrude into what she had perceived to be other peoples' private areas:

When I come to somebody's house and these people normally ask you, "Do you want something, do you want a cup of tea or some snacks", or some stuff like that and if you say, "No", they say, "well just help yourself then" ... but in [my country] when you come to someone's place and they ask you if you want a cup of tea and snacks and you say no then it means they will ask you again, and if you say no then they'll just ask you again ... because it means [that] if you help yourself at somebody's house ... it's very rude or your friends didn't treat you very well, and that you are not very well behaved. You can ask if you want something but just don't go and help yourself.

Interviewer: *Did you get used to that kind of thing?*

Response: *Yeah, but first I ... couldn't stand it. I couldn't allow myself to just walk in open somebody's cupboard and look in there for some food I was just waiting.*

I: *Do you do it now when people say?*

R: *Yeah sometimes, but still I can't just go, so I say "Oh yeah, I'm hungry", and they say "Oh, just have some food".*

Similarly, the concept of openness of physical private spaces, in contrast to personal private spaces, was unusual for Anna. Anna however, came to understand and adapt.

There's one very nice thing, like during the last week in my house there's been like heaps of people coming for Christmas and New Years, and here, ... after dinner all the guests they go and do the dishes and they clean up and all that stuff, and bring some food like [it's] not just the host that does everything, that's what's really nice about here it's like they even clean the bathroom and everything.

Interviewer: *They don't do that in Finland?*

Response: *No, not that much, like if you're, like family, but if you're just friends then you just, well I guess it just depends.*

Felicity faced issues of what she regarded as being of a personal and private nature that she had to cope with. This was discussed briefly earlier in this chapter, however, a longer transcript is presented here to better illustrate the situation that Felicity faced:

Interviewer: *You had people telling you, you were too fat?*

Response: *Yeah almost every day, [and], like, ... there is some big women and big kids in my school and they [the less big people] think it's hilarious, like, they'll make fun of it all the time, like my host dad would pat my host brother on the stomach and be, like, "Oh you're so fat, ha ha ha ha", and like, my teacher at school would come up to me and grab my arms in the morning and be, like [makes noises] [and] grab ... my stomach and ... laugh at me. ... They had these beautiful ... rotis, they're like pancakes with the banana and the condensed milk and sugar, so if I had one of those they'd be like, "Oh one very fat, fat, fat" and I'd be, like, "Leave me alone because in New Zealand I'm not fat, I'm just average", you know I'm not tiny but I'm not fat [either] (the researcher concurs with this comment). ... If someone said that to a Thai person or they say it to me it's not offensive to them, but to me, if someone said that to me in New Zealand I would slap them, but there [in Thailand] it's like I just have to clench my teeth and [laughing sound] it's so funny.*

They do that a lot as well with poor children they make fun of poor children, like, "Oh he's so poor, he's got no money, hahaha, he can't afford this", so like all the kids will have like a drink and one kid won't because he can't afford it and they'll laugh at him and be like teacher, teacher he can't have a drink and I'll be like it's not funny and they'll laugh about, umm, dark skin, ... they think it's really, really ugly. They'll come up to me in the morning and put their arm next to mine and be, like, "oh beautiful, ugly, beautiful, ugly", and I'll be like "no!" [laughs]...

Perceptions regarding demonstrativeness variation

Demonstrativeness is symbolic of an affective cultural orientation as opposed to keeping emotions in check, a trait of neutral-oriented cultures (the neutral/affective cultural dimension (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998)). The culture distance in the range of feelings expressed relating to events such as sports and elections also generated comments from the research participants.

Milly pointed out the cultural difference in the range of emotions expressed by the two different cultures:

Yesterday consisted of a lot of sleeping, watching the football ... which [this country] has qualified for the 2010 world cup, so there was celebration throughout [this country] as they get a little carried away with football – like last weekend there was two [of this country's] teams playing and you watched the news that night to see that people were being beaten up due to supporting the other team, and like yesterday the crowd was split, there was the section for [this country] then on the opposite side is the Colombians. Sure us kiwis love our rugby but only occasionally have we drunken idiots, [but] I don't really think NZ'ders celebrate achievements that well!

Phillips was shocked by the open violence in day-to-day life on the streets. Phillips' comment describes highly affective and uncertainty-avoidance cultural values resulting in displaying extreme emotions openly (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998):

The violence on the street was much worse (refer Phillips' earlier comment regarding violence at school). ... I did get really kinda numb to it all, not blocked it out, but just kinda "lala" about it, and continued our night and ate dinner after that [a particularly violent incident]. So I must have ignored it quite well, mm.

Damon also perceived the demonstrative nature of the local culture:

Society is very demonstrative – lots of hugs, lots of kisses all the time. Fortunately I have had a fair amount of interaction with people from other similar cultures and so I had no qualms about it at all as I know some of the other students from NZ did, but it is very different that all the time when you meet people you don't know, there are hugs and kisses on the

cheek. I was thinking about it – although Kiwi's are very friendly on the whole, always willing to talk and interact and help out etc., in a very similar way to here, the main difference is that here they do it with more strength (? I can't find the words to phrase it any better – it is an idea of more energy with it, more excitement ... just more).

In [my host country] at the moment, it is elections. Politics here is something truly impressive. Next weekend are the actual elections. For the last 2-3 months, if you went down to the waterfront, there would be long lines of cars doing a political ... demonstration – would that be the right word, showing their support for a specific party. At times it would take 5-10 minutes for the cars to all get past, all with horns blaring, whistling, waving flags. A lot of times, roads were cordoned off so that politicians could give rallies. There has been a lot of advertising on the TV. It's just politics at a whole different level than that which we are used to in NZ. Far stronger, far more present, and far more pervasive within society.

Perceptions regarding individualist versus collectivist values variation

Individualist or collectivist values played a major role in the lives of the research participants, especially in maintaining good relationships, or otherwise. In Milly's case, building and maintaining relationships, especially with her host family, became a source of adaptation stress as was described in the previous category, with Milly eventually succumbing to failure in her relationships and thus needing to change to another host family.

Individualist values are about individual-centric interests taking precedence over group-centric interests. Bart describes the tensions between individualism and collectivism well:

I think [my own culture] is kind of Westernised, so I think the idea of individualism is rising, ... but still there is a certain ... core ... remaining, like, we don't really live by ourselves until 20 or twenty something, until you get a proper job, and then you can afford buying your own house, so we ... stay with our family. ... In some special occasion like Christmas or [Lunar] New Year we stay with our family as a big group ... If I have got a family I will invite my mum and dad to live with me, that's what most of [my culture will] do, but here most of the teenagers they are living just by themselves and try to ... get away from the parents as soon as possible. ... To a certain extent the students here ... have more independence and rely less on the others, but to a certain extent I find they could be really, ... like it's not really selfish but ... they are pretty self-centred because they care more about their own individual things instead of thinking about others, like in my school when you get on the bus all the students they don't really line up they just flock onto the bus and push over each other.

Bart then goes on to reconcile his own values with his host culture's values by saying *it's not really selfish but ... they are pretty self-centred*. Bart's interview transcript continues:

Interviewer: *You found that difficult?*

Response: *Not really difficult, I was just shocked, [but] it's not going to harm me, I just find it different ... it's not ... a bad thing it's just a cultural difference. So I became more independent after I came here because I think when I was in [my home country] I relied more on my parents. Yeah I think I understand both sides, I mean after I came here I adapted to both cultures ... It's good to experience more different cultures and then to appreciate some things there and then after, think about my own culture and think about the good ways of both cultures. **That's what the cultural exchange is all about I think** (emphasis added).*

Bart sums up the internalisation and reconciliation process perfectly, clearly illustrating that he has adapted to both cultures.

While Bart had a collectivist cultural orientation, Felicity came to understand collectivist values as someone coming from an individualist-oriented culture:

[In] New Zealand I ... feel more like I have to do things for myself, but [in Thailand] it was definitely more ... [community centred], like I was part of a community that was looking after me... [A] friend from England, came here just on holiday and got a job randomly with this [local] woman ... [who] looks after her, like buys her clothes and stuff, and takes her home for dinner, and tells her not to date, like she was dating this guy and she was like no you shouldn't date him he's bad. ... They kind of ... decide what's right or wrong and then they'll tell you, you should do this or you should do that.

... [But] they love western culture, ... it's different, it's like, more independent. ... I told them I paid for my own university and they were like "what?", they were just so shocked and they were just like ... "that's so cool", and I was like "no it's not, who paid for yours?" and they'd be like "oh, our parents", and I'm like "why?", and they're like "because they have to" and yeah, it's a very Asian thing to do I think, and they were like "oh, it's so independent" and I ... think it's also nice to pay for your own, it's like "yours", like when I paid for my own trip to [come] to Thailand it was like ... my own experience.

Felicity experienced another collectivist trait, the tendency to hesitate to speak out in front of someone not from the in-group:

In New Zealand you'll always get ... at least 2 or 3 students in a class that were confident enough to stand up in front of everybody and do something or try something, but here everybody does things together ... Sometimes I'd ask someone their opinion and they wouldn't tell me ...

Milly did not find reconciliation with collectivist values easy, nor did she recognise a looming problem: she was being rejected by her host family as illustrated in these expressions/comments:

... Missing my independence as no one goes anywhere alone.

No one likes being alone or doing things alone. My sister won't stay in the house alone and she is 16 ... Today when asked in what order you would put being solo, in a large group or in a small group, everyone said being in a group of some sort first and second. [It] makes sense [then] why people are surprised when I want to do things on my own, but personally I really like my independence and it's weird to think that people view that as a little abnormal.

When I got home the family and P... and his wife were here and everyone was making, like, the dough for empanadas and deep frying it. Just everyone together and working together is super nice!

Further, however, Milly's final statement clearly illustrates her strong sense of individualism. Eventually Milly was excluded from all her family and social in-groups:

I don't know what to do ... I am so f..... sick of being in the house sitting around watching TV. No one freaking text me back. Mama when I ask her if I can go out and N... when I ask if she wants to do anything. I have been trying to cook for the last three weekends but Mama won't take me to the supermarket, and I ask constantly. I have tried "let's go" and that gets a "later" reply. I have tried "next time" and that doesn't get me anywhere and "can I go on my own" gets "no" reply. I have no one's cell phone numbers to ask if they want to go out. I just want to do something or get out of the house. And I don't know if people misunderstand me, forget, or don't understand at all. I am trying, I just don't know what else to do.

It was around this point in time that Milly began to randomly write in Spanish in her journal, and increasingly so. This is an indicator that it was not so much the use of the language that was

causing Milly's adaptation problems (although there are several references in Milly's journal to her fear of not being understood, for example putting up *mental barriers and fear that they don't understand me*), but rather her strong individualism, as has been discussed. This is further illustrated in her following comments:

I have decided I like to do things for myself and don't really like to rely on others or take things from others ... Went for a really nice walk yesterday night along the beach. Felt good to get out of the house and also be with the family. Mama yo tengo un conversande and we are both (I think) feeling more comfortable with each other and therefore ...

Almost cried today when I was on the computer – but stopped myself as it's such a public place. I had just been talking with J... and she was talking about all the exciting things she is doing – and it made me teary because I am not there for it and I feel like I am doing nothing here.

I have to say I have been slightly grumpy and quiet the last couple of days, deep in thought but not extremely conscious though. I stood in the shower 20 minutes and don't know what happened.

Safe to say I have been grumpy all week and then extremely sick yesterday with a fever, massive headache, extremely achy, bad cough which brought on a sore throat and chest. N... was sick as well so I think mama couldn't be bothered waking me for school because F... came in about 5pm asking what I'd been doing all day and that if I was sick I need to tell mama. So don't think she knew I was sick

Milly is describing symptoms of culture shock (as discussed earlier).

A further indicator of Milly's unawareness of collectivist values is illustrated in her comment about finding it difficult to begin a conversation:

This afternoon there was a baby here and [the baby's] mum (although I didn't realise it at the time) came in and sat down. Neither of us knew what to say, and I couldn't figure out who she was so it made thinking of questions hard because I couldn't figure out what would be bloody obvious answers or offensive to ask. She would have been sure what I would understand so I tried to over compensate by formulating long answers, but they were just a jumbled mess of things that didn't make sense because my Spanish was wrong or I forgot what to say next, or my answers ended up trailing into interesting stories. I don't know, she made me nervous and I wasn't really thinking and thought that she couldn't (though I didn't know for sure) speak English had me worrying about that, where in reality it wasn't the end of the world if she didn't understand. I made a mistake because she would understand that my Spanish wasn't perfect!

In a collectivist orientation, there is no need to talk unless information is being transferred, and some things that are self-evident need not be said. In an individualist orientation, when people meet, verbal communication is considered necessary (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005: 86-91). It was an assumption on Milly's part that the baby's mother did not know what to say. From a collectivist viewpoint the mother may have felt that she didn't need to say anything.

Eventually, Milly appeared to finally perceive and understand what her adaptation difficulties may be:

I am such a selfish person. Really not liking myself at the moment. I really do suck.

However, her lack of knowledge and awareness of cultural values prevented her from changing her perceptions and understanding from an individualist outlook, and reconciling with a collectivist one:

5 months: scary! Talked to Mum and Dad and realised that I have a positive outlook. Good to talk to them as M... said I am happier after speaking ingles y especialmente con ellos! Talked about my friends issue and not having them take me anywhere, about my frustration at the organisation and no one explaining why they can't do things or why plans fall through, about learning to be myself and not worrying about what I do, like going out alone. Unlike last time when I cried getting off the phone I actually feel really hopeful. Mum reminded me that [another study abroad student] said he didn't understand a thing for the first 6 months. I feel my progress has been so slow

Perceptions regarding differences in parenting variation

Winrow's, Kirby's and Kai's comments below illustrate the differences in parenting values within the individualist/collectivist dimension. Kirby's comment also reflects a collectivist approach, whereby the purpose of education is the imparting of the skills and virtues necessary to become an acceptable group member.

Winrow: *There are so many things you don't talk here with your family compared to what we do, like I can talk everything with my parents. Of course ... the culture in each country will be different [as well as] the difference with families I guess. Sometimes I feel a little bit bad because, like they're not giving me a lot of time sometimes, but it's just because it's the cultural way of being and [I'm] just not used to some things, but after 6 months I [felt] alright.*

Kirby: *My host brother told me that in NZ children learn morals only from parents, not from school. They don't think teachers are as precious as parents. I feel sad. For me also teachers are as [respected] as my parents because they teach us morals (values?) repeatedly and help us make decisions for the futures.*

Kai: *In my host family ... [the] kids are a lot more independent, [my host mother] doesn't tell me what to do at all, I just do whatever ... I think [this] is the right thing to do. In Japan if I want to do something I always have to ask [my parents] ... and they say it's because they love me and they don't want me to do the wrong thing. But I find it funny because New Zealand people outside of the family always kind of tell me what to do [laughs].*

Kai's final comment is typical of the differences between an individualist parenting value and a collectivist parenting value (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Kai has accepted this by stating *I think [this] is the right thing to do*.

Again, Milly found collectivist values difficult to understand and adapt to:

I have to blow dry my hair every time I wash it. My mama gets really annoyed otherwise and says it will make me sick. I find it annoying. I like to wash my hair at night let it dry overnight then straighten it in the morning, but mama won't let me, instead I have to spend 10 minutes blow drying my hair.

In this comment, Milly seemed resistant to Mama as an individualist-oriented person would be, that is protecting their individual right to make their own decisions. However, Mama is acting just as someone from a collectivist-oriented culture would, expecting the 'child' to take their cue from Mama as the care provider. This situation of course may be health related, with the concept that leaving one's hair wet may cause sickness. While this may well have been Mama's motive in

this situation, she was nevertheless acting as a collectivist parent would act, and Milly was acting as an individualist would act. Symbolic of a collectivist orientation, children take their cues from their elders and parents, and a child who constantly voices an opinion deviating from the group is considered to be of bad character (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Milly may not even have been verbally resisting, but, having a collectivist-oriented values, Mama could read the self-evident signals. Furthermore, there was a power distance element: Milly's cultural values were lower power distance-oriented than Mama's. Being of a higher power distance orientation, Mama would expect obedience rather than treating the child as an equal.

Perceptions regarding saving face variation

Symbolic of collectivist cultures, people will 'lose face' in the sense of being humiliated when someone, either themselves or someone closely associated to them, in this case their host sojourner, fails to meet an essential requirement by virtue of the position in society that they occupy (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). As individualist cultures have no equivalent, the sense of losing face, therefore, is not readily understood if someone has an individualist-oriented cultural foundation, as is illustrated in the following comment from Milly. Her use of quotes suggests a lack of understanding regarding losing face:

I cannot wear my PE gear as it "reflects badly on" [my host mother].

Milly's host mother pointed to other non-adaptation issues, including that Milly appeared *cold*, as was mentioned earlier. Another of those issues was a face-saving issue where the problem of a clean room reflected on the mother and not on Milly, just as having a 'cold' host daughter would reflect badly on the mother's parenting:

People think I am a bad person as my room isn't clean.

... apparently I am cold e.g. no kisses and hugs.

Perceptions regarding showing or hiding one's feelings variation

Anna faced relationship issues that related to the affective/neutral cultural dimension. Anna has the tendency to state or show feelings directly to a person, a more affective orientation, whereas her hosts had the tendency to keep feelings hidden from the person affected, a more neutral orientation (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). Anna was not feeling any resistance to this situation, as indicated by her laugh while voicing this comment. Anna stated that:

Here [New Zealand] people are really polite and friendly ... like at school, ... In Finland if there are two girls [that] don't like each other they don't like to talk to each other ... but here they are like friendly enough [but] they just talk behind my back, and yeah [laughs], people think we are strange like we don't talk, like outside [the face-to-face] conversation.

Milly on the other hand experienced a more affective culture, where feelings are expressed more openly than they are in her home culture (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998: 70-78). Milly's situation was indicative of being in a collectivist culture, where in-group members are more protective of other group members (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998).

The way guys normally touch you, it's not sexual, it's like a sibling. For example at the disco my guy friend had his hands on my waist, but not because he was making a move on me, but more as a protective thing. I think it's really nice. ... It made me feel more comfortable with my environment. As kiwis I think we are a little scared of physical contact and it's great to be in a culture where it means you are friends rather than "he loves" you.

The universalist/particularist dimension has a strong relationship with the specific/diffuse dimension. Combined with a diffuse orientation, a particularist-oriented culture has a strong tendency to ignore the specifics of rules and procedures in favour of developing and maintaining relationships. As indicated in many research participants' comments, experiences relating to this were regular for sojourners from more universalist, specific-oriented values societies.

Many of the research participants also faced, and needed to reconcile, cultural differences in both gender roles and accorded status:

Perceptions regarding gender roles and status variation

Phillips experienced values differences with gender roles, power distance and status. He commented on allocation of home duties and status:

Their mum's job in the house was usually to stay at home and cook three hot meals during the day, or two meals – like I would wake up at 2 o'clock in the afternoon and eat a hot meal [then] at 4 o'clock she would cook, and she would be doing the dishes, everything like this, and I would try to help ... but it wasn't really accepted for males to help out in the kitchen. But I did eventually, I managed to wing my way in there. Yeah, well I wasn't just going to sit and watch her. At the beginning, you know, I sat by her whilst she was doing the dishes and talked and talked, and then kinda put some stuff away, and then kinda gradually eased into it.

Phillips' comment that *it wasn't really accepted for males to help out in the kitchen* is at odds with the immediately following *but I did eventually*. There could be two drivers for this: either Phillips was simply being friendly and helpful, in which case his helping in the kitchen was probably not motivated by ethnocentric thinking, or he could be making the point that allocation of gender roles in his culture is different, namely that males are expected to help out in the kitchen. If the latter is the case, then this is a further example of Phillips' reluctance to adapt to the local norms, thus indicating further resistance.

Milly, similarly, commented further on gender roles indicating resistance to the practice:

Little is expected of men in the home. My mama has been away for about two weeks and N... my older sister has been doing the majority of the cooking, her and R... the housework and my Dad complains when he has to cook twice in the week. Sure I can kind of understand it when my mum's home due to the fact that [it is her role] (although ... papa is on a two year paid leave) but my sisters who are both studying, doing the majority, is weird for me.

Milly's following comment, also used in the public spaces versus private spaces variation, likewise illustrates a difference in perceptions of, and a reconciling, with differences in the allocation of status:

My host mother re-arranges my room tidies it, and finds clothes she thinks need washing. I am used to my own room being mine and no one touches it so it is sometimes annoying and everything has been moved, or looking for an item of clothing and your host mum has washed it.

In many cultures, the status of a person, including more senior siblings, is acknowledged within the language in the way such persons are addressed (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998: 105-117). Sojourners who come from a country where no such status is acknowledged in forms of address, therefore, needed to adapt to this cultural values orientation. Similarly, in higher uncertainty-avoidant-oriented societies, languages often have different modes of address for different persons, as opposed to the greater tolerance of an ambiguity-oriented culture (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Felicity's and Phillips' comments are indicative:

Felicity: *In Thai language if I'm speaking to you I would ... [address you (the interviewer) acknowledging your status] and you would ... [address me ...] because I'm younger than you or lower than you. But it gets really interesting when they're the same age ... My host mother was quite important in society and my coordinator was also, but lower, and they're the same age but my host mother would always [address] my coordinator to show her that she was higher...*

Interviewer: *How did you feel about that when you first encountered it?*

Response: *Oh I found it quite strange because it's not normal for me, I've never had that here like the closest you'll get is like calling your teachers miss and sir, but [the school] I went to ... you call them by [their] first name so it's really different. [In] some circumstances it's a little bit annoying – some people I met who were very democratic (differently orientated as regards acknowledging status?), ... would make fun of me if I addressed them ... [in the polite way], ... they would just laugh at me and say you don't have to do that with us. But ... it gets very confusing because if you don't ... [because] you forget to do it to someone else they'll be, like, "why didn't she call me that, why did she call me this", ... and if you forget that ... they expect you to know it, and if you don't then it's bad.*

Phillips: *... also males and females. They would add a different vowel on the end ... so strange and so foreign ... I was calling everybody "woman" ...*

Bart also experienced culture distance in values within the power distance cultural dimension. Lower power distance-oriented cultural values systems are more interdependent, and teachers and students will treat each other on a more equal basis than in a higher power distance oriented culture. Lower power distance-oriented cultures also tend to be less afraid of authority and seniority (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005).

The way they address the teachers or the elderly is a little bit different because [at home] we focus quite a lot on the relationship, or between the seniors and the juniors, like ... in school [at home] when we see the teacher we address them as "sir" or "miss", and then at the beginning of class we have to stand up and bow ... We say "good morning" to teacher and do the greeting. But here they don't really do it that way, they just call the teacher by their first name or whatever, and then they don't really focus much on respecting the teachers, ... like some of the bad students they are pretty rude to the teachers – they just ignore the instruction, ... but we would never do that [at home]. When they ... [get] stopped by the teacher they just ran away, they don't really stop, so I find it different, but the different part is like the teachers are more friendly than the one [in my home country], ... they can talk and have a conversation with you like a friend. ... I feel a bit sorry for the teachers sometimes when the student is being rude to them. They deserve some kind of respect as a teacher, as a senior. I found it quite good if a teacher can be quite friendly to you ... I mean to a certain extent if you give some respect to the teacher and treat them like a senior

and give them more respect ... they can be quite friendly, so we can address them more in a friendly way. But I think ... in some serious occasion if you address them in the proper way [then] that's kind of the duty [for] students.

Table 21 summarises the variations in the internal horizon of context and in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding in Category 10: Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships.

Table 21: Summary of Category 10: Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships

<i>Category 10</i>	<i>Sub-categories</i>	<i>Variations in the internal horizon of focus</i>	<i>Variations in perceptions and ways of understanding</i>
Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships	None	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Directness versus indirectness; 2. The concepts of private and public spaces; 3. The level of demonstrativeness and how one's feelings are expressed; 4. Individual orientation versus group orientation and parenting; 5. The concept of saving face; and 6. The differences in gender roles. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perceptions regarding directness/indirectness; 2. Perceptions regarding private/public spaces; 3. Perceptions regarding demonstrativeness; 4. Perceptions regarding individualist versus collectivist values; 5. Perceptions regarding differences in parenting; 6. Perceptions regarding saving face; 7. Perceptions regarding showing or hiding one's feelings; and 8. Perceptions regarding gender roles and status.

What the research participants learned

Some of the research participants indicated that they had learned to accept and/or adapt to differences in values. Others learned to accept and/or adapt to some values, while tolerating or resisting other values. This category also showed a wide range between resistance and adaptation as illustrated in Figure 28 (p.188).

Acceptance or adaptation

Some research participants became aware of the differences in their host society's ways of doing things or expressing things. These differences were contrasted with their own ways of doing things, the difference internalised and a way of understanding formed. They adjusted to the differences, and made their sojourn a mix of both sets of cultural values. Thus, their experiences became their 'own'.

The following expressions/comments (edited for clarity) indicate such appreciation for and acceptance of difference:

Another thing that I noticed ... It was interesting to notice that ...

Most of the people here they will ...

Something that I have noticed many times is ...

They do it with more strength

It's not a bad thing, it's just cultural difference

I mean after I came here I adapted to both cultures. It's good to experience different cultures and then to appreciate some things there, and then after think about my own culture, and think about the good ways of both cultures.

Thailand was, like, my own experience.

Other ways that research participants reached adaptation was by learning to *get used to* things.

The following expressions (edited for clarity) indicate this:

I just get used to it.

Interviewer: *Did you get used to that kind of thing?*

Response: *Yeah, but [at] first I couldn't stand it.*

I can get used to it, it will just take a little adjustment.

I'm just not used to some things, but after 6 months I felt alright.

Some research participants indicated their immediate liking, and, thus, immediate adaption to cultural difference:

There's one very nice thing ...

It's great to be in a culture where it means you are friends rather than "he loves" you.

A laugh or a chuckle during the end-of sojourn interview was an indicator of acceptance or adaptation:

... and I'd be, like, "no" [laughs]

But I find it funny because New Zealand people outside of the family always kind of tell me what to do [laughs].

... and yeah [laughs], people think we are strange

Tolerance or resistance

Tolerance or resistance is indicated in these comments:

So I must have ignored it quite well.

Which is, like, very strange for us

... is weird for me.

I'm trying, I just don't know what else to do.

Sometimes annoying and everything has been moved.

These final two expressions follow a number of comments described earlier, in which Milly is resisting the ways of life of her host family due to culture distance in their collectivist-oriented

versus her individualist-oriented values. As already mentioned, eventually Milly's family situation broke down and she moved to another host family. With some support from the AFS organisation, Milly began to understand that she needed to make some changes to her attitude and cross-cultural interaction skills. As discussed in the previous category, awareness developed and Milly began to learn to adapt.

Figure 28 illustrates the range of adaptation levels, expressed as resistance, tolerance, acceptance or adaptation factors that were reached by the research participants who faced culture distance conflicts within cultural dimensions.

Figure 28: Summary of the variation in research participants' levels of adaptation to values at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships



	Resistance		Tolerance	Acceptance	Adaptation	
	Feelings of resistance	Ignored it	Accepted but feelings of strangeness	By contrasting and appreciating difference	Became used to it after a period of adjustment	Immediately liked the differences
Phillips	X	X				
Anna				X		X
Damon				X		
Bart				X		
Al					X	
Masha					X	
Milly	X		X		X	X
Winrow						X
Felicity						X

Table 22 illustrates the cultural dimensions in which research participants faced overcoming or reconciling values at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships.

Table 22: Summary of cultural dimensions in which research participants faced overcoming or reconciling values at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships

	Individualism/Collectivism (general)	Individualism/Collectivism (parenting)	Individualism/Collectivism (saving face)	Specific/Diffuse (public/private spaces)	Specific/Diffuse (directness/indirectness)	Power distance (gender roles)	Achievement/Ascription (status)	Neutral/Affective (demonstrativeness)
Milly	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Anna				X	X			
Al				X				
Nova				X	X			
Angelica				X				
Masha				X				
Felicity	X			X			X	
Phillips			X			X	X	X
Damon								X
Bart	X					X		
Winrow Kirby Kai		X						

How the external horizons of context affected adaptation

Adaptation experiences in this category are based on interactions and interplays between sojourners and hosts where cultural dimensions are the basis for an action. The subsequent reaction and perception was affected by culture distance within different cultural dimension orientations (discussed in Chapter Two, pp. 23-29). Sojourners, thus, faced adaptation difficulties with the ways their hosts were doing things, or reacting, based on their cultural dimension orientation, being the external horizons of context. The cultural dimensions affecting adaptation were:

- Individualism/collectivism: specifically individual needs versus group needs, saving face, and differences in parenting practices;
- Specific Diffuse: specifically directness versus indirectness and public spaces versus private spaces, including what is done in public versus what is done privately;
- Power distance: specifically differences in gender roles;
- Neutral/affective: specifically differences in demonstrativeness; and
- Achievement/ascription: specifically differences in application of status.

Summary of adaptation within categories

This section reviews the levels of adaptation reached by participants in each of the categories. In the first days, weeks and months of their sojourn, the research participants faced numerous adaptation demands: getting used to the things they saw; understanding and appropriately performing everyday practices; learning and adapting to using the language; adapting to the local food and associated rituals; building and adapting to local social networks; along with the stresses of such adaptation.

As their sojourn progressed, the more implicit values-based ways of doing things contributed to the sojourners' adaptation demands, which meant that the sojourners' journey to adaptation to living with their family and in their community became more complex. Adaptation demands at the explicit levels of culture, thus, began to merge with implicit level demands and the reconciling of two sets of different cultural values.

All of the research participants reached the adaptation stage in Categories 3, 4, 6, and 7. In the remaining categories the majority of the research participants reached acceptance-to-adaptation levels. Categories 3, 4, 6 and 7 are:

3. Learning to adapt to greeting rituals;
4. Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food and eating;
6. Learning to use the local language; and
7. Learning to build and adapt to local social networks

In Categories 1, 2, 5, 8, and 10, some research participants indicated tolerance to some experiences in these categories. In Categories 2, 9, and 10, resistance was indicated. Categories 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, and 10 are:

1. Learning to adapt to the community's sights and sounds;
2. Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices ('everyday life');
5. Learning to adapt to differences in orientations to time;
8. Learning to cope with adaptation stresses and overcome culture shock;
9. Learning to adjust to the education and schooling system; and
10. Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships.

It must be noted that individual research participants reached different levels of adaptation for the same experiences. Also, other than Categories 3, 6, and 7, participants reached different levels of adaptation; and the more complex categories had a higher incidence of resistance, with Category 10 having the highest.

Figure 29 illustrates the variation in the levels of adaptation reached in all categories.

Figure 29: Summary of levels of adaptation reached by the research participants

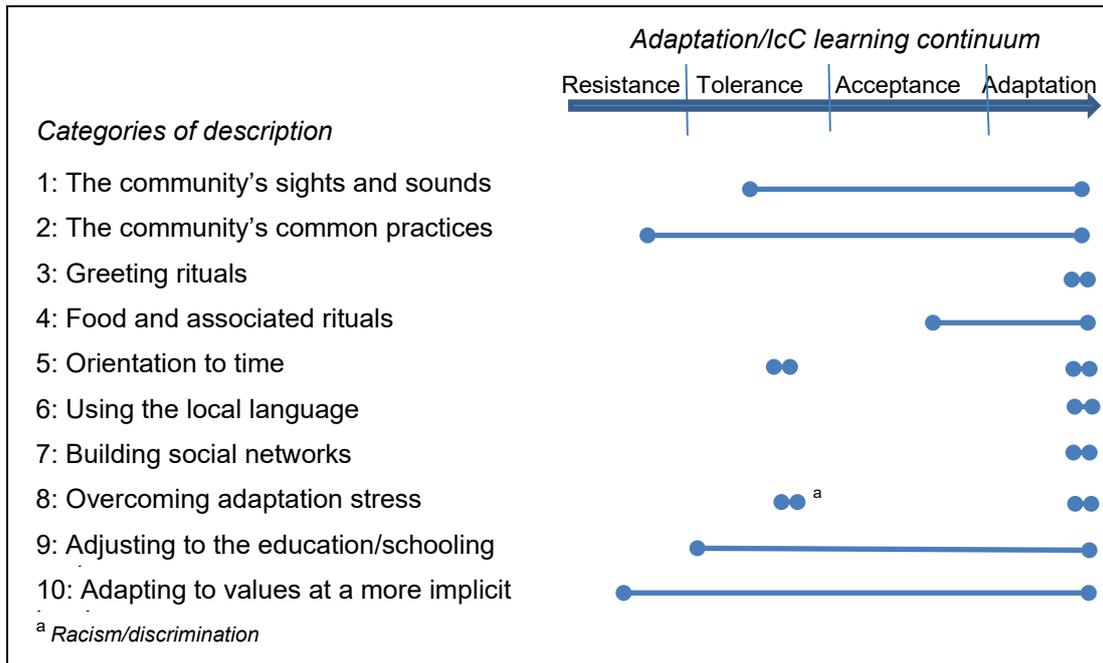


Table 23 illustrates all incidences of the cultural values conflicts faced by research participants in all categories.

Table 23: Cultural dimensions values faced by research participants within all categories

	Individualism/Collectivism	Specific/Diffuse	Neutral/Affective	Power distance	Universalism/Particularism	Time orientation	Assertiveness/Modesty	Internal control/External control	Uncertainty Avoidance/Tolerance of Ambiguity	Long-term /Short-term orientation	Achievement/Ascription
Totals	25	19	18	12	10	10	7	6	6	1	1
Milly ^a	11	1	4	5	1	4			1		
Anna	2	3	1	1	1	1	3				
Felicity	5	3	1	2	1	2		1	2	1	1
Kirby	1	2	1	1	1			1			
Nova	1	2	2		1			1			
Bart	1	1		1	1			1			
Pippo		1	1		2						
Phillips	1		3	2			3		3		
Angelica		1	1								
Elisa		1			1						
Winrow	1		1			1					

	Individualism/Collectivism	Specific/Diffuse	Neutral/Affective	Power distance	Universalism/Particularism	Time orientation	Assertiveness/Modesty	Internal control/External control	Uncertainty Avoidance/Tolerance of Ambiguity	Long-term /Short-term orientation	Achievement/Ascription
Kai	1										
Achilles		1	1			2					
Al		2					1				
Masha	1	1						1			
Damon			2								
Achilles					1						
Gabe								1			

^a Milly's journal is the most comprehensive and detailed

Table 24 takes the top three participants contributing the most to the data set in comparison with the bottom six, and illustrating the UN Categorisations of the sojourners' home and host country economies (United Nations, 2018), and their home and host country's individualism/collectivism orientation (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005).

Table 24: Relationship to UN Categorisations and Hofstede's Individualist/Collectivist rating table (Hofstede & Hofstede's, 2005)

UN Categorisation FROM	FROM Collectivist/Individualist	UN Categorisation TO	TO Collectivist/Individualist
<i>Top three contributions to the data</i>			
Dd	I	Dg	C
Dd	I	Dg	C
M	C ¹	Dd	I

<i>Bottom six contributions to the data</i>			
Dd	I	Dd	I
M	I	Dd	I
M	C ¹	Dd	I
Dd	I	Dd	I
Dd	I	Dg	C
Dd	I ²	Dg	C

¹Japan sees itself as Collectivist, while other Asian countries see Japan as Individualist (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005).

²This sojourner is from a collectivist-oriented minority culture within an individualist-ranked country (see Podsiadlowski & Fox, 2011).

Of three participants who provided the most data (57.33% of total data), all left for their sojourn from economies rated by the UN as major-developed or developed with their sojourn in a developing rated economy (United Nations, 2018). Of six participants who provided the least data (4.25%), four are from developed or major-developed economies and sojourning in developed economies, with two going from a developed economy to a developing economy (See discussion under 'data set limitations' p. 231).

From a cultural perspective, two of the top three departed from individualist-oriented cultures sojourning in collectivist-oriented cultures. One departed from Japan, a collectivist-oriented culture but regarded by other Asian nations as being individualist (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005) and sojourning in an individualist society (New Zealand) (see Podsiadlowski & Fox, 2011). Of the six who contributed 4.25% of the data, three are from individualist-oriented cultures sojourning in individualist-oriented cultures, with one from Japan (as mentioned above) sojourning in an individualist-oriented culture. Two are from individualist-oriented cultures sojourning in a collectivist-oriented culture, with one of these being from a collectivist-oriented minority culture within that individualist-ranked country (Podsiadlowski & Fox).

As previously suggested (Chapter Five, p. 100), I believe that individualist-to-collectivist, or vice-versa, is the more relevant correlation. As Rientiesa and Tempelaar (2013) found, students from collectivist-oriented cultures had higher levels of adaptation difficulties in individualism-oriented communities than their individualist-oriented peers. Apart from one of the low data-contributing group, the environment that the others departed from has a closer culture distance than the participants who contributed more data, thus suggesting that they adapted sooner and had no significant cultural adaptation difficulties to report in their journals and/or interviews. While there is one Japan-to-New Zealand sojourn in both the top three and the bottom six, the Japan-to-New Zealand participant in the top three noted in their journal that they underwent a family change during their sojourn. It is apparent from the sojourner's comments regarding their host family that support for their adaptation difficulties was lacking, as well as an ethnocentric-oriented attitude by their hosts, as evidenced in this comment:

Every time they get stuck with another car they swear at driver saying "Asian driver!!" Even if ... people don't like Asian, they shouldn't insult [them], especially in front of me.

Additionally, as noted on p. 152, and evidenced in their journal, this sojourner tried to discuss incidents of racist taunts with their host family. The host family, however, appears to have taken an ethnocentric approach by blaming the situation on the sojourner's culture rather than taking a contextual approach. Thus, the sojourner in the top three provided much more data related to resulting adaptation stress than did the sojourner from Japan in the bottom six.

How research participants reached their levels of adaptation (the how aspect)

This section describes **how** the research participants reached their maximum levels of adaptation in all 10 categories. To assist the reader with the following sub-sections, the categories of description hierarchy is reproduced below (Table 25).

Table 25: The categories of description hierarchy

<i>Hierarchy</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Cat.</i>	<i>IcC and cultural onion elements</i>
Lowest	Learning to adapt to the community's sights and sounds	1	Knowledge, attitude Symbols level
	Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices ('everyday life')	2	
Medium-low	Learning to adapt to greeting rituals	3	Knowledge, skills, attitude Rituals level
	Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food and eating	4	
	Learning to adapt to differences in orientations to time	5	
Medium-high	Learning to use the local language	6	Knowledge, attitude, higher level skills. Symbols; rituals driven by values in Cat. 7
	Learning to build and adapt to local social networks	7	
High	Learning to cope with adaptation stresses and overcome culture shock	8	Knowledge, awareness, attitude, higher level skills Values level
	Learning to adjust to the education and schooling system	9	
Highest	Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships	10	

Categories 1-3 (adaptation to the sights and sounds, common practices in everyday life, and greeting rituals)

In Categories 1-3, many research participants initially felt strong feelings of resistance. However, these feelings, in the main, quickly became milder until a point where no reaction to such experiences was felt, or the research participant tolerated or became indifferent to, accepted or adapted to these symbols and rituals of daily of life in their local community. However, there are two instances of retained resistance in Category 2 (common practices in everyday life).

Comments from research participant journals and interview responses in these categories, predominantly, clearly demonstrate a progression from strong feelings of resistance to milder feelings of resistance, then to a level of adaptation to the various situations, or feeling that 'everything is normal', thus indicating adaptation. When the research participants came to partly accept such things, or were just used to them, they showed an ethnorelative attitude, and some empathy, towards the local communities. In Category's 1 and 2, most participants stopped making comments that fell into these categories in their journals. The end-of-sojourn interview confirmed that, as they no longer felt any reaction, they made no comments.

In Category 3 (greeting rituals), participants initially felt strong feelings of resistance. However, through repeated experiences, they quickly accepted then adapted to the greeting rituals of their

hosts, even to the point of receiving pleasure from the experiences. This is especially the case for research participants adapting to a higher touch (Ward et al., 2001) orientation. On the other hand, those who moved to a lower-touch culture also adapted, while regretting the loss of pleasure from their higher touch home community.

Kirby's experiences are indicative of adapting to a higher touch culture:

Firstly that was the hardest part because everyone at school tried to hug me and at first I got really confused, but they are still smiling at me, it was really awkward. But now I tend to love hugging, it's really good communication too.

Later in the same journal: Hug: That's amazing way to say hello or communicate with people. I got to know how and when I can hug. I had never hugged people before I came to NZ, so that made me really bedazzled. NZ-style handshake and hugging are impressive. Even after going back to Japan I'll keep hugging people. Even to my Dad.

In the above comments, Kirby's path to adaptation to the greeting ritual is clearly expressed. And in the case of Milly (also adapting to a higher-touch culture), Milly's path to adaptation to the greeting ritual is similarly clear in her comment *I think it's great to be able to greet someone [like this]*. Milly commented further:

I get a shock when boys do it or I have never met the person before. Kiwis tend to have a no touching policy, but I think it's great to be able to greet someone [like this], and it makes me feel accepted!

Categories 4-7 (food and associated rituals, adaptation to local orientation to time, adaptation to using the local language, and building social networks)

In Category 4, again through repeated experiences, participants quickly accepted then adapted to local foods. They also quickly learned and adapted to the rituals associated with food and eating, even to the point of such experiences being pleasurable, as with greeting rituals.

While some research participants initially felt some resistance in Category 5, all indicated that they had become used to time nuances, for example:

I'm getting used to having the evening meal at six.

So I learnt to like be patient and not expect things to happen on time.

in Category 6, again through repeated experiences and practice, and showing no resistance to doing so, research participants adapted to using the local language. The following comments are indicative of non-resistance to learning the local language:

I spent the first two or three months listening intently ... and practicing the new phrases that I learned. I also did an intensive language course which helped immensely.

I'm hoping that it won't take too long [to learn the language] to feel accepted and like part of the family.

In Category 7, learning to build social networks, some participants found that learning the local language and/or partaking in rituals associated with food influenced the establishment of these networks:

Oh yeah, of course, when you start speaking more like them it's easier to pick up the conversation.

I don't know which was first, English or friends, but when I started speaking English I made lots and lots of friends.

I didn't have enough French to make friends. I didn't really make friends until the last two months.

We sat and chatted and drank mate. It was a way that we were equal and a way to build a relationship.

Some participants established friends through their host family or through classmates at school:

I did have a lot of Thai friends with my host family.

I had an older host brother which helped me to establish my friends.

My host father has the same passion for music as myself and invited me to two music performances. He introduced me to the conductor of a youth orchestra here now I know pretty much everybody in the orchestra.

I have been adopted by a group of girls who seem really friendly and welcoming.

One of the other students said "hey, come on", and showed me where everyone went.

Category 8 (learning to cope with adaptation stresses including culture shock)

In Category 8, research participants adopted different strategies to cope with the stresses that occurred. However, each of these strategies reflected a growing awareness of themselves, as well as the cultural context in which they were living and/or the effects of good communication and a positive approach. Another approach was taking comfort from, or confiding in, trusted friends, or becoming involved in regular activities. The following comments (edited for clarity) are indicative of the variations in how adaptation to the stresses of living in a different cultural community occurred:

Through communication

...because it never came up that I think I really should tell her that to avoid further spoilt days.

I don't want to let my fear of the unknown and of speaking up get in the way. N... also pointed out that if I got to speak [Spanish] more at home it might be better.

Through a positive attitude

I realize that whether or not things are going as planned, the WORST thing I can do is freak out and go ballistic trying to fix every last thing. I have to take things in stride – tackle problems one by one in a reasonable way.

I am learning that ... I thought it would be more exciting, and for school to be really thrilling. But it's not like that – school can be boring like school in NZ, especially when you don't understand everything. Maybe I thought I would feel more special – more of a celebrity. It's just another year of your life – yes, there are many things: friends, family, culture – but that doesn't mean you will find the perfect life, you have to work for it.

Through trusted friends, and family support

But they both are really nice to me. We know how we are feeling. It's easier to keep up conversations coz we are both interested in each other. I'm getting better, no longer alone.

The thing I loved was being in a "normal" situation. It seemed like something I finally know, plus Na... 's family are so nice, they look after me so well.

Keeping active (although there was disappointment when this did not happen)

I set myself the rule of going out every second day which so far I have done. Yesterday made plans to bake and watch Disney channel with N... and I was excited, to bake, to see her and show my brother I had friends.

Awareness plus a positive attitude

And it made me realize more about who I am.

In the beginning I had a hard time with conversation because I didn't want to always talk about NZ but I realized I have to be proud of it, it's a talking point and part of being an exchange student. This has opened my eyes up to a bigger world and can do the same for others.

I feel a stronger connection to NZ now. I am more proud of where I am from and want to learn more about its history and Māori....

I knew before I left that family was important, but realizing now that they are the greatest blessing in my life. Also learning how amazing my parents are and that they are so human but so loving, encouraging and forgiving.

In the **racism/discrimination** variation in this category, the experiences of Nova (p. 151) illustrate the movement along the time-line from, initially, feelings of strong resistance to discrimination directed towards him, to mere surprise and some tolerance of it as being a 'normal' behaviour that he had become used to. Another research participant rationalised that *it's not simple with different cultures and races to live together on the same island. It might be impossible unless they reconsider about multicultural*. Another decided that *instead of being over irritated find somebody to talk and help*.

Category 9 and 10 (adjusting to the schooling system, and adapting to values at a more implicit level)

In Category 9, many research participants initially felt some resistance to local practices, but eventually, though repeated experiences, accepted or adapted to the local schooling and the education system. While most participants' comments in this category indicate initial resistance, they learned to adapt to the schooling system by overcoming their resistance to the local cultural values that underpinned the teaching practices, again through repeated experiences. There was one exception (Phillips).

In Category 10, some research participants became aware of the differences in the local people's ways of doing things or expressing things. These differences were contrasted with their own ways of doing or expressing things, and ways of understanding were formed. The following expressions (edited for clarity) indicate such awareness:

Another thing that I noticed ... It was interesting to notice that ...

Most of the people here they will ...

Something that I have noticed many times is ...

They do it with more strength

It's not a bad thing, it's just cultural difference

Other ways that research participants reached adaptation, or otherwise, was by learning to *get used to* things. The expressions below indicate this:

Acceptance or adaptation

I just get used to it.

Interviewer: *Did you get used to that kind of thing?*

Response: *Yeah, but [at] first I couldn't stand it.*

I can get used to it, it will just take a little adjustment.

I'm just not used to some things, but after 6 months I felt alright.

Some research participants indicated their immediate liking, and thus immediate adaption to, cultural difference:

There's one very nice thing ...

It's great to be able to greet someone like this, it makes me feel accepted

It's great to be in a culture where it means you are friends rather than "he loves" you.

A laugh or a chuckle was an indicator of acceptance or adaptation:

... and I'd be, like, "no" [laughs]

But I find it funny because New Zealand people outside of the family always kind of tell me what to do [laughs].

*... and yeah [laughs], people think **we** are strange*

Another indicator of adaptation was research participants' acceptance of the contrasts between their host's and their own ways of doing things. They adjusted to the differences, and made their sojourn a mix of both sets of cultural values:

... after I came here I adapted to both cultures. It's good to experience different cultures and then to appreciate some things there, and then after think about my own culture, and think about the good ways of both cultures.

Thailand was, like, my own experience.

Tolerance or resistance

The following comments indicate tolerance or resistance:

So I must have ignored it quite well.

Which is, like, very strange for us

... is weird for me.

I'm trying, I just don't know what else to do.

Confidence, host family support, and positivity

Confidence was also mentioned by research participants as an important factor in how they adapted. Achilles sums up the importance of confidence and support from the research participants' host family in promoting that confidence:

More than your [language] I think it depends on your confidence ... to be honest and [knowing] how to express yourself. ... I reckon what helps more than that is ... how you feel inside..., you feel confident enough to settle down. And it also depends on how, umm, how safe you feel ... how your host family makes you feel. If your host family is over protective and stuff you won't feel alone, and you won't get depressed ... particularly in the first few days. But after that it's better if your host family is more liberal and they let you go. I reckon not everyone can be an exchange student and get the best of the exchange because you need a lot of, umm, self motivation, you know, you've got to be able to wake up one day and say, "Okay ... I'll just go to city by myself" and, you know, see everything and do it. If you don't want to do that you just miss so many chances, it's just pointless why would you come.

Milly commented on the importance of being positive:

Positivity helps – [you] understand more ... because I felt I could!

These comments and expressions support Kim's (2001) argument that a level of positive pre-disposition and self-motivation towards cultural adaptation must be present in the sojourner in order to become 'intercultural' (See Chapter Three, p. 57).

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the findings of research participants' adaptation experiences within the 10 phenomenographic categories of description were described and extrapolated according to the outcome space structure outlined in Chapter Four (pp. 75-76). The categories are arranged hierarchically according to the level of complexity of adaptation demands. For each category, the internal horizon of focus (that is the focal point for the study of the experience) and its variations, the variations in the external horizon of context, and the variations in the research participants' perceptions and ways of understanding, were identified and analysed. Some research participants did not fully adapt to certain aspects of symbols and rituals, and ways of life that are driven by values. It can also be argued that some of these things were not fully **accepted** either, but, rather, were 'tolerated'. However, in most cases adaptation occurred.

In each of the 10 categories of description, what the research participant learned within each category's relevant experiences are outlined. What they learned was a level of adaption to that categories object of learning: the IcC necessary for adaption **in that category**.

How the research participants learned was described for all categories in totality, with individual 'how' nuances as found. How the research participants learned the IcC required for adaptation was by repeats of the same or similar experiences over time, and, or assisted by communication, host family support, adopting a positive attitude, keeping active, and confidence.

The following chapter is a holistic synthesis and discussion of the analysis presented in this chapter, with conclusions, observations and recommendations. An SI/phenomenography model for the experiential learning IcC is proposed.

Chapter Six: Discussion, contributions and recommendations

Introduction

In this final chapter, I synthesize my findings into a holistic representation of the adaptation to cultural difference experiences, demands and difficulties that the research participants faced. From this synthesis I draw conclusions, outline the contributions of my research, and present recommendations for both research and practice. I have gone about this by, first, answering the research questions, then by drawing conclusions from the analyses of the research data that is presented in Chapter Five: The Outcome Space. I then outline a number of further observations drawn from the theory, data analysis and the literature. Further, a proposed theoretical model for scaffolded and conscious experiential learning of IcC is explained. How my findings compare with existing research is outlined.

Contributions outlined include my conclusion that learning IcC is **not** a general linear continuum, but varies according to a number of factors as explained in this chapter, and that some resistance shown to the things the sojourners saw, and the differences in ways of doing things, does not necessarily mean non development of IcC in general. Contributions to phenomenography, as well as to cultural and IcC research and practice, are also outlined. Also discussed is the limitations and challenges of this research, and recommendations for further research and practice.

Answering the research questions

The overarching research question (RQ) addressed in this research was:

- To what extent is IcC learned by a sojourner during a cultural-immersion study abroad programme? (RQ1)

Supplemental questions were:

- What ways of understanding adaptation experiences enhance or detract from learning IcC? (RQ2)
- What are the phenomenographic dimensions of variation that give life to IcC? (RQ3)

RQ1: To what extent is IcC learned by a sojourner on a cultural-immersion student exchange programme?

The competencies learned from a study-abroad intercultural-immersion experience are reflected in the 10 phenomenographic categories of description that were discussed in the previous chapter (The Outcome Space), which also represent what the research participants learned. These were:

1. Learning to adapt to the community's sights and sounds;

2. Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices (adaptation to or coping with a community's 'everyday life');
3. Learning to adapt to greeting rituals;
4. Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food and eating;
5. Learning to adapt to differences in orientations to time;
6. Learning to use the local language (including colloquial use to the point where day-to-day interaction is effective);
7. Learning to build and adapt to local social networks (of extended host family and friends);
8. Learning to cope with adaptation stresses including overcoming culture shock (and adopting appropriate strategies to overcome the negative effects of these);
9. Learning to adjust to the education and schooling system; and
10. Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships (establishing respectful relationships with awareness and appropriate recognition of status and gender roles, as well as reconciling cultural dimensions and effecting appropriate action within the host culture values in relationship to one's own values).

From the findings five specific key competencies were identified:

1. Learning the local language;
2. Building a network of local friends;
3. Adapting to local foods and rituals associated with food;
4. An ethnorelative approach to reconciling values conflicts; and
5. Developing critical cultural knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness.

Learning the local language and building a network of local friends (competencies 1 and 2)

I have combined these first two competencies together, as the ability to communicate using the local language had a significant effect on building local networks of friends, and, conversely, having a network of friends further helped their language learning. As was found in the literature review, using the local language is considered crucial to the bonding process between individuals and their social groups (Kim, 1998). My research found this to be true between the research participants and their host family members. Whorf (1988) suggested that there is a complex relationship between language, perception, thought and culture which leads to developing a second, intercultural personality. Pearson-Evans' (2006) research subjects saw their choice of language as an act of identity. Students with low host culture language skills but

who expected to speak it, Pearson-Evans argued, interpreted unwillingness on the part of the hosts to speak to them in the local language as exclusion from the local culture.

My research corroborates the relationship between learning and using the language, building a social network of friends, and the successful adaptation to, and interaction with, the local community. I also found in my research, however, that this relationship was not absolute (illustrated in Figure 30, p. 205).

Furthermore, while all of the research participants were successful in building and adapting to social networks, there was wide variation in the time it took to get their networks established. Table 26 illustrates the month in which the research participants who commented in this category, in their journal entries and/or their interview, indicated that they had established a good enough network of local friends that they felt at home and well supported.

Table 26: The indicative month in which the research participants had established a network of local friends

	<i>Month 2-3</i>	<i>Month 3-4</i>	<i>Month 4-5</i>	<i>Month 5-6</i>	<i>> 6 months</i>
Anna			X		
Bart				X	
Damon		X			
Al		X			
Anna		X			
Felicity	X				
Kai				X	
Pippo			X		
Winrow			X		
Milly					X ^a

^a*After changing host families*

Similarly, there was a wide variation in the time it took for research participants to learn and adapt to using the local language effectively. Table 27 (below) illustrates the month during which the research participants who commented in this category indicated that they had learned sufficient language to be able to communicate and interact with local people effectively. The New Zealand EPL sojourners generally took longer than their ESL counterparts to master the local language and, therefore, longer to further adapt to their host community's cultural environment and build their social networks.

Table 27: The indicative month in which the research participants had learned enough of their host language to be able to communicate adequately

	First month	Month 1-2	Month 2-3	Month 3-4	Month 5-6	Learned enough to communicate
Meena (EPL)			X ^a			
Damon (EPL)			X ^b			
Phillips (EPL)						X ^c
Milly (EPL)					X ^d	
Pippo (EPL)		X ^e				
Felicity (EPL)					X ^f	
Masha (ESL)	X ^g					
Anna (ESL)	X ^h					
Al (ESL)	X ⁱ					
Kirby (ESL)				X ^k		

^a *When I arrived here my poor language skills was a HUGE barrier. I spent the first 2 or 3 months listening intently ... and practising the new phrases that I learned. I also did an intensive language course which helped immensely*

^b *My mind is obviously thinking better linguistically*

^c *The language was a toughie, ... a very difficult language to pick up, and it didn't help that [my host family] knew English quite well*

^d *So I feel a little stupid. Mama told the hairdresser I didn't understand/speak Spanish and he ... asked easy questions like 'come se uama y quantos arios benes' (sic) (Milly).*

^e *I had up to level 3 NCEA of French so it was okay when I arrived I could understand everything. Pippo however, comments that she did not have enough French to make local friends until the fourth month. Note: Pippo is an EPL sojourner*

^f *When I got there it was okay, I didn't need to learn it like I had a coordinator who spoke English and my host brother spoke English. But I did pick up quite a bit like I could communicate most things that I needed to [and] like I really wanted to stay because I was just about to after 6 months*

^g *My English was quite good when I came but [without] much experience listening and speaking ... I couldn't understand anything for the first two weeks*

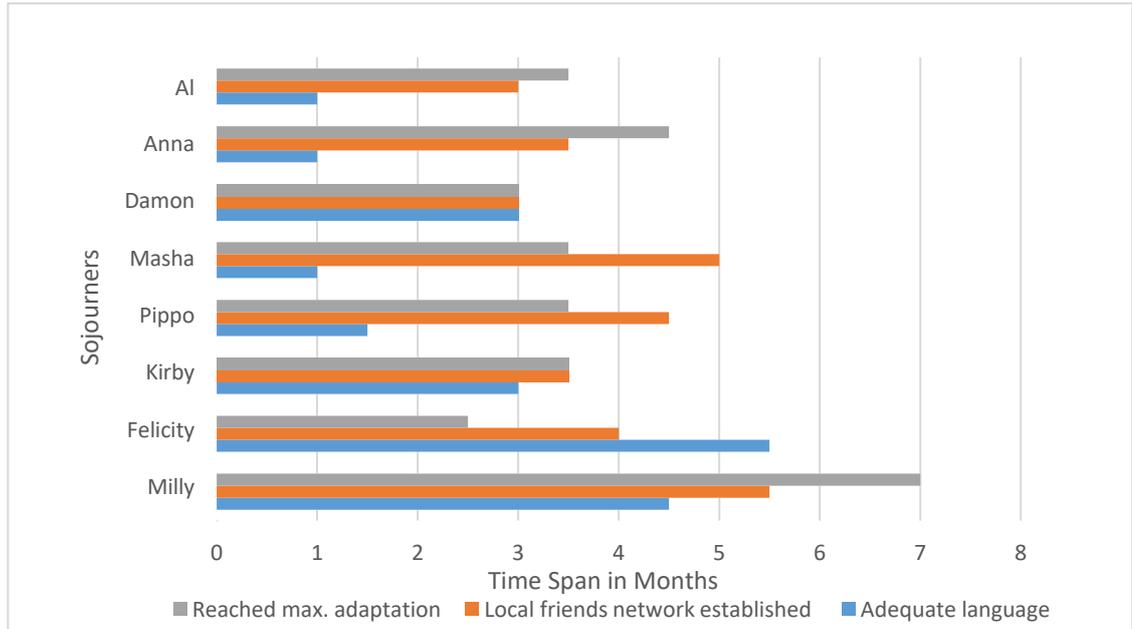
^h *Anna came with a good knowledge of English, just having to adapt to colloquial use*

ⁱ *Al came to New Zealand with a good understand of English but lacked confidence*

^k *This is an estimate based on Kirby's comments about the link between language and establishing local friends*

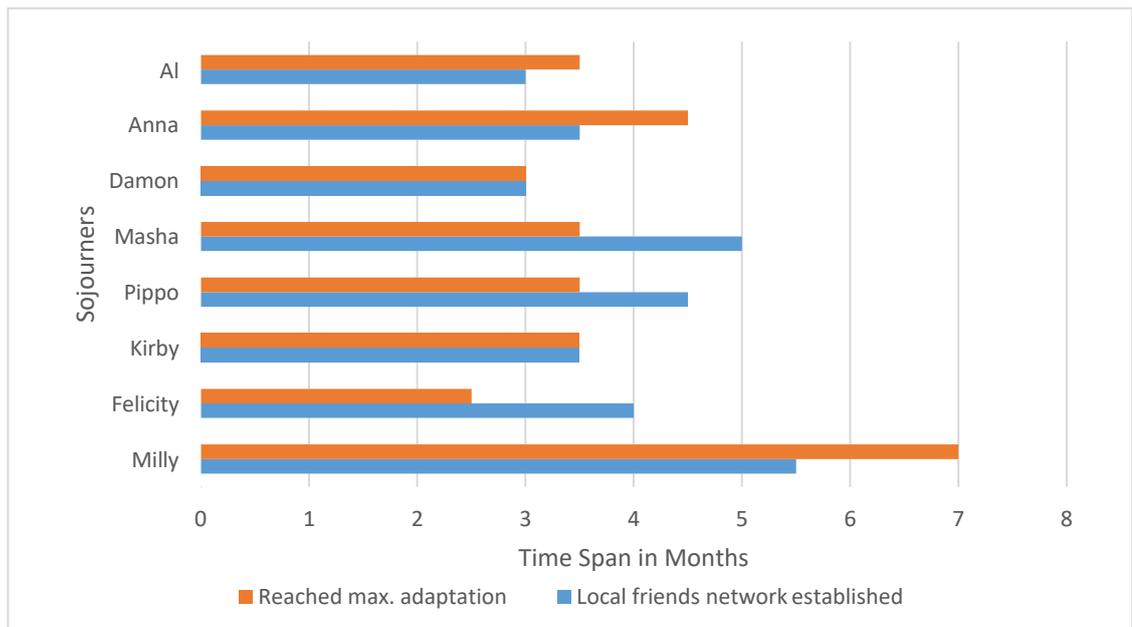
In order to investigate any possible causal effect between using the local language, establishing a local network of friends and adaptation, I have produced two graphs illustrating the relationships between these three elements. Figure 30 (below) illustrates the relationship between using the local language well enough to communicate effectively (adequate language), establishing a network of local friends and overall adaptation to living in the local community. Data for this figure is taken from Table 26 (time taken to establish network of local friends), Table 27 (time taken to use the local language effectively), and Table 35, p. 219 (time taken to reach maximum adaptation measured by living and interacting effectively). The 0-8 scale of the bottom (x) axis represents the months taken to reach these milestones.

Figure 30: Relationship between language, building a social network of friends, and maximum adaptation level



In the case of Milly, Kirby and Damon, the relationship between achieving adequate language, establishing social networks and adaptation is clear. However, Pippo, Masha, Anna, and Al could all speak the host language at the beginning of their sojourn, only needing to adapt to colloquial nuances of the language. For these participants there was a closer match between the time taken to build their social networks and adaptation: Figure 31. Data for Figure 31 is taken from Table 26, p. 203 (indicative month when network of local friends was established), and Table 35, p. 219 (time taken to reach adaptation measured by living and interacting effectively). The 0-8 scale represents the months taken to reach these milestones.

Figure 31: Relationship between building a social network of friends and adaptation



The food/adaptation relationship (competency 3)

As described previously, food has been shown to be of central importance in developing and maintaining social relations within and between cultures, and also in developing local social networks (Bourdieu, 1986; Fischler, 1988; Geeraert et al., 2014; Pearson-Evans, 2006). A sojourner's reactions to food and food rituals often indicate the extent to which they understand and appreciate their host culture's core values, and are thus an important aspect of participating in the host culture (Pearson-Evans, 2006).

In my research, however, the link between food and food rituals and adaptation was not conclusive. While some research participants commented on rituals associated with food and meals as being important to bonding with family and friends, others made no comment in their journals regarding any link between food and adaptation, but rather responded to questions at the end-of-sojourn interview. Table 28 illustrates the number of food/adaptation-related comments extracted from Category 4: Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food, and Category 7: Learning to build and adapt to local social networks.

Table 28: Food/adaptation-related comments (numbers of incidences)

<i>Family bonding</i>	<i>Social bonding</i>	<i>No link</i>	<i>No comment</i>
4	4	1	12

Learning an ethnorelative approach to resolving cultural differences (competency 4)

Another competency that can be learned from a cultural-immersion exchange programme, is taking an ethnorelative approach to reconciling cultural differences. This is especially the case for Categories 1 (Learning to adapt to the community's sights and sounds), 2 (Learning to adapt to common everyday practices), 3 (Learning to adapt to greeting rituals), 5 (Learning to adapt to different orientations to time), 9 (Learning to adjust to the education and schooling system) and 10 (Learning to adapt to values and beliefs at a more implicit level). As was seen in these last two categories, values and beliefs conflicts affected adaptation. Furthermore, I contend, an ethnorelative approach to reconciling cultural differences applies equally to the host family in building a relationship with their sojourner.

As was stated in the previous chapter summary, comments from research participants in Categories 1-3 clearly demonstrate a progression from strong feelings of resistance to milder feelings of resistance. Sojourners then progressed to a level of adaptation to the various situations, or felt that 'everything is normal', thus indicating adaptation. When the research participants came to partly accept such things, or were just used to them, they showed that they had developed an ethnorelative attitude. In Categories 1 and 2, participants stopped making comments in relation to these categories in their journals. The end-of-sojourn interview confirmed that, as they no longer felt any reaction, they made no comments.

In Category 3, a number of participants initially felt strong feelings of resistance. However, through repeated experiences, they quickly accepted then adapted to the greeting rituals of their hosts. While some research participants initially felt some resistance in Category 5, all eventually indicated that they had become used to time nuances.

In Category 9, as the sojourners were on a school-based cultural-immersion programme, successfully adapting to the schooling and the education system would enhance the overall quality of the sojourn significantly. Sojourners in these types of programmes, therefore, should be aware of the underlying values upon which the schooling and education system operates, and develop appropriate competencies and strategies. Table 29 summarises the research participants whose journal comments indicated values conflicts in Category 9: Learning to adjust to the education and schooling system. The values conflicts are indicated within the relevant cultural dimensions (see House & Javidan, 2004; Hofstede, 2011; Triandis, 2004a).

Table 29: Cultural values conflicts faced in Category 9: Learning to adjust to the education and schooling system

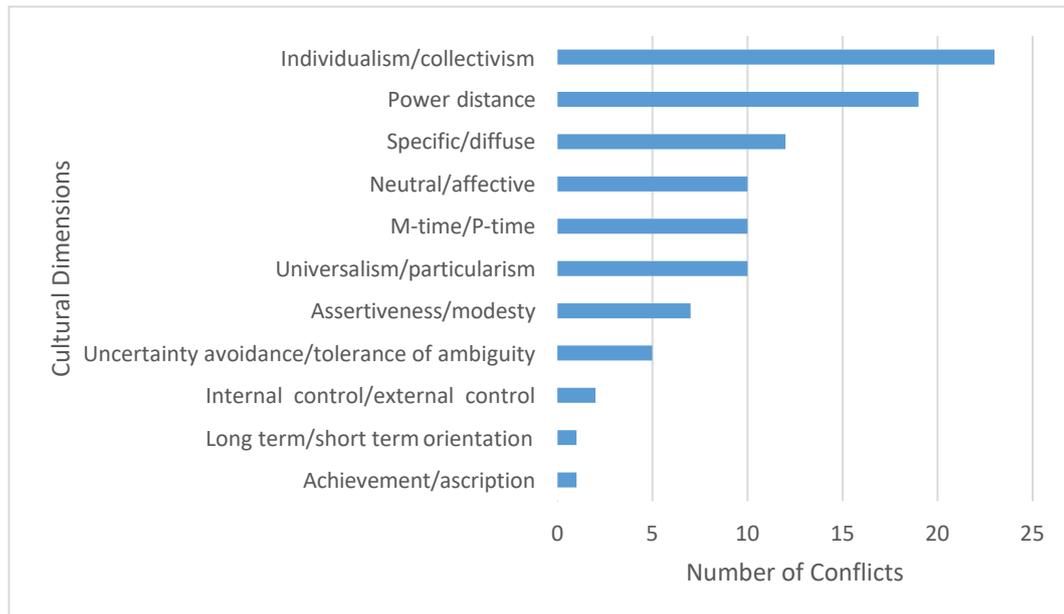
	Individualism/ Collectivism	Power distance	Universalism/ Particularism	Assertiveness/ Modesty	Uncertainty Avoidance/Toleran ce of Ambiguity	Achievement/ Ascription	Specific/ Diffuse	Neutral/Affective
Milly	X	X	X					
Anna	X	X	X	X				
Felicity	X	X				X		
Kirby	X	X						
Nova	X		X					
Bart	X							
Pippo							X	
Phillips				X	X			X
Achilles			X					

Individualism/collectivism, specific/diffuse, and power distance are the cultural dimensions that have the greatest impact on adaptation (for category 9 and 10)

In categories 9 and 10, the greatest impact on adaptation in terms of frequency of values conflicts were values in the individualism/collectivism, specific/diffuse, and power distance cultural dimensions. Individualism/collectivism, especially, impacted on building social and family networks, food rituals, education and schooling, status, and face saving by host families. The specific/diffuse dimension impacted on establishing relationships, physical and personal spaces, and education and schooling. Power distance impacted on establishing relationships, and at school. Reconciling to different values are major elements in the adaptation demands of cultural-immersion for study abroad sojourners. Figure 32 illustrates the overall impact that

values had on the research participants' adaptation in all categories based on the number of comments indicating values conflicts in the journals and interviews.

Figure 32: Incidences of the values conflicts within cultural dimensions faced by the research participants



Knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness (competency 5)

This sub-section outlines a knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness framework that will support the learning of competencies for the IcC needed for successfully adapting in a cultural-immersion experience. Chapter Three included a review of the role of these four elements in IcC (see Chapter Three, pp.34-36). This sub-section is divided into discussion regarding knowledge and skills competencies, and attitudes and awareness competencies.

Knowledge and skills competencies

The knowledge elements competencies of IcC have been defined as knowing the essential norms and taboos of the host culture and of one's own cultural behaviours, of the host's and one's own primary language, and how to reflect on one's own cultural behaviours with those of the host (Byram, 1997; Fantini, 2006). Fantini stated that other important knowledge elements are: the ability to define 'culture' and describe its components; recognise signs of cultural stress and cite strategies to overcome it; describe cross-cultural adjustment stages; and use techniques and strategies to aid learning and adjustment regarding the host culture and its language. The inference here is that these topics may need to be formally learned prior to a sojourn.

Skill competencies include: flexibility in interactions; adjustment of such things as personal behaviour and dress to avoid causing offence; the ability to adopt strategies for learning about the host culture and its language; and the ability to demonstrate a capacity for appropriate

interaction in a variety of social situations (Fantini, 2006). Fantini also lists the ability to use appropriate strategies for adapting to the host culture and for reducing cultural stress, to use culture-specific information to improve one's style in personal interactions, and use appropriate strategies to help resolve cross-cultural conflicts and misunderstandings.

All of these knowledge and skill elements, and the others listed in Table 30 below, were manifested to some extent in the research participants' adaptation journeys as described in the table.

Table 30: Summary of IcC knowledge and skills competencies and how these are manifested in research participants' learning experiences.

<i>Knowledge/skill element</i> (Deardorff, 2006; Byram, 1997; Fantini, 2006, 2012; Howard-Hamilton et al., 1998; Sercu, 2005a)	<i>Comment</i>
Knowledge of social groups and their products and practices, and of general processes of societal and individual reaction, including essential norms and taboos	These points are illustrated repeatedly in many research participants' comments. Research participants constantly went into significant detail about the various symbols and rituals that they were adapting to. This included elections and sports events. While historical factors were not present in research participants' journals and end-of-sojourn interview transcripts, neither was this a required element of the data collection. Language, including the colloquial use of language, was frequently mentioned.
Using knowledge, skills, and attitudes under constraints of time and interaction	
Culture-specific and culture-general knowledge, including important historical and socio-political factors that shape the culture	
Knowledge of important aspects of host and sojourner's own language	
The ability to define culture and describe its components, to recognise signs of cultural stress and cite strategies to overcome it, to describe a model of cross-cultural adjustment stages, and to use techniques and strategies to aid learning of and adjustment to the host culture and its language	While a number of research participants touched on strategies for overcoming cultural stresses, the researcher believes that generally this is an aspect in which the participants were lacking in tools and understanding. In the recommendations section below, the researcher recommends that pre-departure preparation should include these aspects based on the cultural dimensions components described in this thesis, along with strategies for overcoming cultural stresses associated with reconciling these aspects with one's own values system.
Skills of interpreting and relating an event from another culture: to explain it and relate it to one's own culture; and skills of discovery and interaction. Ability to contrast the host culture with one's own	Discovery and interaction became an integral part of day-to-day life for the research participants. Interpreting and relating events to one's own culture was also the subject of many research participants' comments.
Insight regarding the ways in which culture affects language communication as the elements of cultural knowledge.	This is illustrated in research participants' comments relating to colloquial use of language, explanations of forms of address, and various nuances about the host language in relation to their own; for example, the use/non-use of words and phrases such as 'please' and 'thank you'.
Flexibility in interactions, adjustment of behaviour, dress, etc to avoid offence, and using appropriate strategies to help resolve cross-cultural conflicts and misunderstandings. The ability to use culture-specific information to improve one's style of personal interaction.	While most research participants showed flexibility in their interactions, and sensitivity in their dress code (in the case of Felicity), for Phillips this was not so apparent. Milly did not have the strategies in place to resolve cultural conflicts. The researcher believes that, in both cases, the culture distance between the values systems was not fully

<i>Knowledge/skill element</i> (Deardorff, 2006; Byram, 1997; Fantini, 2006, 2012; Howard-Hamilton et al., 1998; Sercu, 2005a)	<i>Comment</i>
	understood by the research participants, as has been extensively discussed.

Attitude and awareness competencies

The ‘attitude’ elements of IcC have been defined as curiosity and openness, and readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about your own ethnocentric attitudes (Byram, 1997). Sercu (2005a) advocated the importance of valuing oneself and others, a positive disposition towards learning IcC, and generally maintaining a critical engagement with the foreign culture and one’s own culture. Kim (2001) similarly pointed out that the sojourner’s predisposition to the sojourn can have an effect on adaptation. Fantini (2006) listed behavioural adaptation elements in communicating and interacting with the host culture in appropriate ways as including: having and expressing an interest in, and learning from, the host culture; dealing with emotional aspects of the host culture; adopting appropriate situational roles; showing an understanding of differences in behaviours, values, attitudes, and styles; and reflecting on the impact and consequences of personal decisions and choices.

Attitude and awareness is summarised in Table 31 below, along with how the element is manifested in the research participants’ adaptation experiences.

Table 31: Summary of IcC attitude and awareness elements and how these are manifested in research participants’ learning experiences

<i>Attitude/awareness elements</i> (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006; Sercu, 2005a)	<i>Comment</i>
Behavioural adaptation to communication and interactions with the host culture in appropriate ways, including perceiving and expressing awareness of similarities and differences in language and culture	This is evident in the research participants’ journals and interview transcripts, as discussed in the how research participants learned what they learned in each of the categories of description.
Awareness of how various situations require modification of interactions, and of how one is viewed in the host culture and why. An understanding of differences in behaviours, values, attitudes, and styles. Self-awareness and the ability to look at oneself from ‘the outside’, the ability to see the worldview of others and to evaluate this view, and an understanding that individuals cannot be reduced to collective identities	This is illustrated in the research participants’ journals and the data analysis in general.
Curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and beliefs about your own. To revitalise oneself and value others. A positive disposition towards learning intercultural competence and a general disposition characterised by a critical engagement with the foreign culture under consideration and one’s own. An interest in, and learning from, the host culture	These are the whole concept of an AFS sojourn. Generally, the researcher believes that for the most part this objective was achieved, apart from the host family breakdown situation with Milly ¹ . The researcher further believes that a satisfactory level of IcC maturity was achieved, albeit at higher levels in the research participants who reached deeper levels of adaptation to cultural values.
An ability to deal with emotional aspects of the host culture and to adopt appropriate situational roles	

Attitude/awareness elements (Byram, 1997; Dearsdorff, 2006; Sercu, 2005a)	Comment
Reflection on the impact and consequences of personal decisions and choices	As above
Awareness of one's own cultural conditioning, personal habits and preferences, choices (and their consequences), and personal values that affect one's approach to cultural dilemmas and their resolution, and how one's own habits and values are reflected in specific situations	
Awareness of the diversity within the host culture's society and the dangers of generalising, and of the host's reactions to oneself that reflect their cultural values	
Awareness of how one perceives oneself as a communicator, facilitator and mediator in an intercultural situation, and one's own level of IcC development	

¹ *We are currently studying internal and external journeys in Spanish now, and Thursday he asked me about my cultural journey. The hardest parts – language and culture. Differences – physical touching and when I said I thought that was cool, the idea was brought forward that I may adopt those habits when I get back, I replied truthfully 'that I would like to but the world is not mine', and like if I kiss people on the cheek, a lot of people wouldn't understand, though I will definitely be more affectionate.*

In the beginning I had a hard time with conversation because I didn't want to always talk about NZ but I realized I have to be proud of it, it's a talking point and part of being an exchange student. This has opened my eyes up to a bigger world and can do the same for others.

I feel a stronger connection to NZ now. I am more proud of where I am from and want to learn more about its history and Māori....

I knew before I left that family was important, but realizing now that they are the greatest blessing in my life. Also learning how amazing my parents are and that they are so human but so loving, encouraging and forgiving.

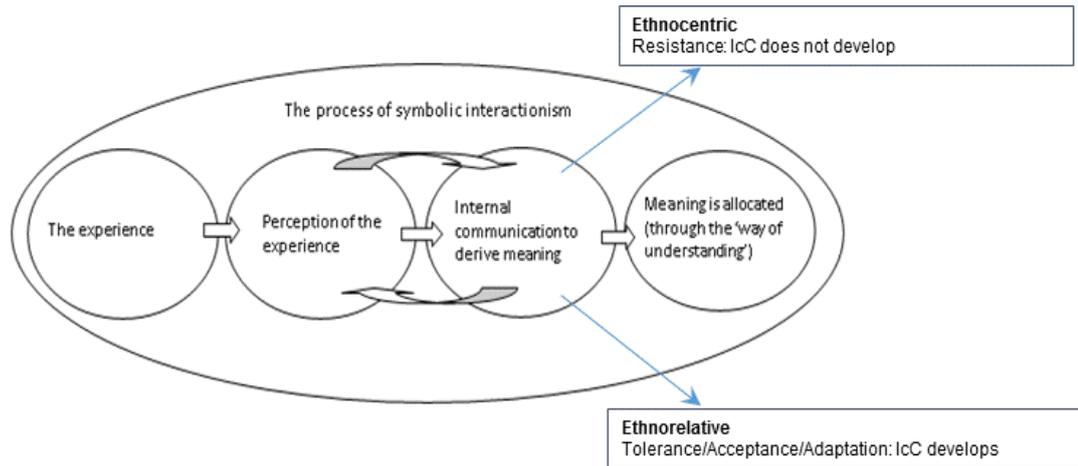
What I have learnt about myself:

- *I don't like asking questions*
- *I like to be self-taught*
- *I enjoy my personal space*
- *Takes me a while to make friends. I tend to want to know if they are worth my while*
- *That I need to trust my gut, stop waiting to know for sure*
- *I can get through anything and life is what I make it.*

RQ2: What ways of understanding enhance or detract from IcC?

The ways of understanding that enhance IcC are those that are learned from engaging in the internalisation of experiences using ethnorelative reasoning. This requires the sojourner to be aware of cultural symbols, rituals and values and to develop strategies for reconciling cultural difference. Further, an understanding of the contexts associated with the cultural symbols, rituals and values is needed. As already stated (Chapter Three, p. 58), this can be incorporated into sojourner pre-departure preparation, or as a stand-alone learning topic. Conversely, using a cultural deficit approach (Bender-Szymanski, 2000), or ethnocentric-oriented reasoning, detracts from IcC. Using the SI theory in practice to develop understanding and meaning, and by putting a situation into an ethnorelative context before taking action, supports the development of IcC. Figure 33 illustrates a process of SI theory. I contend that if this process is consciously adopted during reflexivity and internalisation of an experience to make sense of it, then the SI theory process will support the development of IcC. This point is examined further in the later in this chapter (pp. 221-223).

Figure 33: The process of SI theory that may support the development of IcC



Another indicator of adaptation was the research participants' acceptance of the contrasts between their host's and their own ways of doing things. They developed the competencies to adjust to differences by making their sojourn a mix of both sets of cultural values. The following comment and expression illustrate this:

I mean after I came here I adapted to both cultures ... It's good to experience more different cultures and then to appreciate some things there and then after, think about my own culture and think about the good ways of both cultures. That's what the cultural exchange is all about I think.

Thailand was, like, my own experience.

Furthermore, an understanding of cultural values can forewarn sojourners of many of the adaptation stress issues that they may confront. These are **implicit** cultural constructs at the 'Deep Culture' level (Shaules, 2007). As such, these values systems are not readily noticed by the unaware sojourner. As has been illustrated in the previous chapter, in some cases the stress effect can be considerable.

RQ3: What are the phenomenographic dimensions of variation that give life to IcC?

Many phenomenographic dimensions of variation were experienced by the sojourners within a wide range of cultural aspects, as was extensively outlined in Chapter Five. All of the participants encountered cultural differences: greeting rituals, visual symbols, every-day practices, the education and school systems and school life, and values within cultural dimensions. All afforded a wide range of variation in comparison with their own familiar symbols, rituals and inherent values.

Regardless of the sojourners' culture distance from host practices and values, all differences, including their variations, resulted in perceptions that the research participant then began to internalise and try to understand. If that meaning was constructed in an ethnorelative context rather than using ethnocentric-oriented reasoning (Bender-Szymanski, 2000), then the outcome

was positive (as outlined in RQ2 above, and also in Chapter Three, p. 61). From these findings, I conclude that if dimensions of variation of perceptions are internalised using a 'what am I learning' focus, together with an ethnorelative reasoning process, and thus an ethnorelative way of understanding, 'life' is given to the development of the IcC. This concept is expanded on later in this chapter.

Further observations

This section contains discussion of further adaptation demands and IcC learning observations derived from the theory of SI described in the theory chapter (Chapter Two), the literature review (Chapter Three), and the research findings in the Outcome Space chapter (Chapter Five). These observations are that:

- Both personal confidence and host family support affected the time taken to adapt;
- The 'honeymoon stage' did not come at the beginning, but later after the sojourner had passed through the initial resistances following their arrival in their new community. It was not a U-curve but came in 'waves';
- The less complex levels in the categories of description hierarchy (explicit symbols and rituals/practices) invoked a stronger initial reaction. However, the process of adaptation was faster; and
- In the more complex levels, the final level of adaptation took longer to reach. In most cases, the intensity of adaptation stresses and strength of resistant reaction was lower, but, in some cases, values conflicts caused severe adaptation stresses.

Personal confidence and host family support

One observation derived from the findings of my research is that both personal confidence, as well as host family support, affected the time taken to adapt. Frequently in their comments, research participants mentioned a lack of confidence as being a barrier to adaptation. As was seen in Chapter Three (pp. 56-57), Kim (2001) pointed out that the sojourner's predisposition to the sojourn (including their confidence) has an effect on their adaptation. Kim also pointed out that adaptation is helped by environmental factors, such as the host community's and host family's receptiveness to, and support of, the sojourner's differences (Kim, 2001).

Achilles summed up the importance of confidence and support from the research participants' host family in promoting that confidence:

More than your [language] I think it depends on your confidence ... to be honest and [knowing] how to express yourself. ... I reckon what helps more than that is ... how you feel inside..., you feel confident enough to settle down. And it also depends on how, umm, how safe you feel ... how your host family makes you feel. If your host family is over protective and stuff you won't feel alone, and you won't get depressed ... particularly in the first few days. But after that it's better if your host family is more liberal and they let you go. I reckon not everyone can be an exchange student and get the best of the exchange because you need a lot of, umm, self motivation, you know, you've got to be able to wake up one day

and say, “Okay ... I’ll just go to city by myself” and, you know, see everything and do it. If you don’t want to do that you just miss so many chances, it’s just pointless why would you come.

Milly commented on the importance of being positive:

Positivity helps – [you] understand more ... because I felt I could!

Some research participants commented that host family members helped them establish local social networks, and adaptation was associated with this. Two contrasting comments are those from Damon and Milly:

Damon: ... My host father [who] has the same passion for music as myself invited me to two music performances ... He introduced me to the conductor of a youth orchestra here (which is very good) and I essentially walked into one of the seats and started playing with them. Now I know pretty much everybody in the orchestra and get on well with all of them ...

Milly: ... at home I’m not sure if my younger [host] sister likes me. [She] never invites me out or talks to me at home or school.

As illustrated in Table 32, the time to adaptation for Damon and Milly is similarly contrasting:

Table 32: Damon’s and Milly’s comparative time taken to establish social networks (extracted from Table 17).

	Month 2-3	Month 3-4	Month 4-5	Month 5-6	> 6 months
Damon		X			
Milly					X

The ‘honeymoon stage’ of the sojourn

A second observation from the findings is that the ‘honeymoon stage’ does not come at the beginning, but later after the sojourner has passed through the initial resistances following their arrival in their new community. Further, this stage is not a U-curve, but rather it comes in ‘waves’.

As described in the literature review (Chapter Three, p. 51), research has found that sojourners suffer the most severe adjustment problems in the initial stages of their sojourn, when differences are most noticeable and the resources for coping are likely to be at the lowest (Ward et al., 2001). Other studies verified that the level of depression and negativity among sojourners was highest during the entry period (Ward et al., 1998; Ward et al., 2001; Ward & Kennedy, 1996). My research concurs with these findings, especially in the cases of Milly, Kirby and Anna. As already stated (Chapter Five, p. 154), Milly appeared to have been expecting the honeymoon period to precede culture shock as purported in the AFS pre-departure preparation sessions. However, it came much later in her sojourn, after she had changed her host family, as it did with Kirby.

Milly’s, Kirby’s and Anna’s cases illustrate the variations in the research participants’ overall IcC development journey. Taking Kirby’s case, while he adapted to the host environment within 3-4 months, he became a victim of some negative host community receptivity. Kirby described how

he changed host family and school. While at first he expected things would continue normally, they did not, as a new problem was unexpectedly confronted: racism at his new school. Kirby talked to his new host family about these problems, and requested a change back to his old school, both without success. Kirby, as he himself describes, went into a state of depression. Eventually the racism subsided, and his comments suggest that he adapted to it as being an everyday part of life in that particular school. Then Kirby's host family took on two more study-abroad students, thus providing a friendly and understanding social network. With these changes in circumstances, and a strong determination to make things better, the depression lifted and Kirby's private world went back 'up', as he himself describes. Eventually he reached plateau where everything was normal again. Not long after that, summer and the 'beach season' came, and school closed for the summer holidays. Kirby's private world went 'up' further.

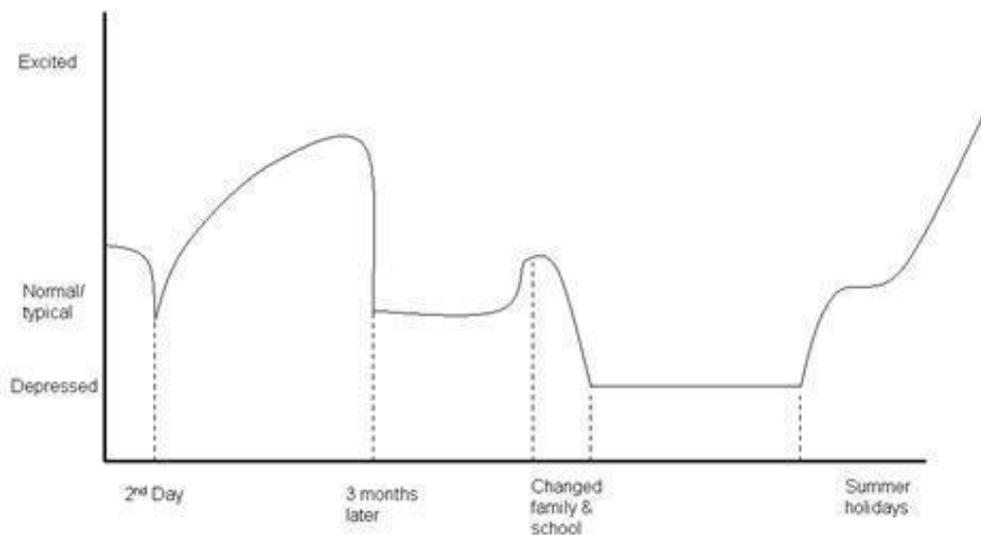
Discrimination at school. I thought [New Zealand] multicultural was a good perspective. That's what everyone desires around the world. I'm getting depressed and disappointed with everyone, including myself.

Later: Our family decided to host 2 more AFS students. Before I met them I was anxious about them if I can get along with them. But they both are really nice to me. Relieved. ... We know how we are feeling. It's easier to keep up conversations coz we are both interested in each other. I'm getting better, no longer alone.

Later still: This too relaxing mood makes me too lazy to do anything. I want to keep myself busy every day. I have to make the most of this relaxing mood and enjoy to be here. Since Summer holidays started I've been really excited and enjoying. NZ Summer events seem to make me happy. I could make most of it.

I wrote this graph showing my year.

Figure 34: Kirby's illustration of the ups and downs of his sojourn



I've ... felt so many times depressed and lost myself for that moment. But as a whole, those things became good things, one of the greatest experiences. I feel like I succeeded...! Now I'm feeling fretful, nostalgic [that] I will no longer live here in NZ. I have taken it for granted that I see those things every day, walk on this road every day, feel those things often, live here in NZ forever, but that's gonna be over. Everything comes to an end. Things i see, walk, touch, feel everyday are going to disappear in front of me. I feel sad of it.

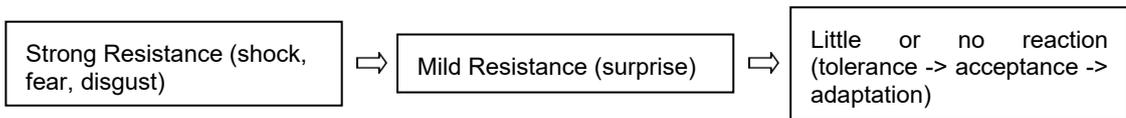
Kirby's graph can be likened to a 'wave', not a U-curve.

The process of adaptation

Adaptation was faster at the less complex level of the hierarchy

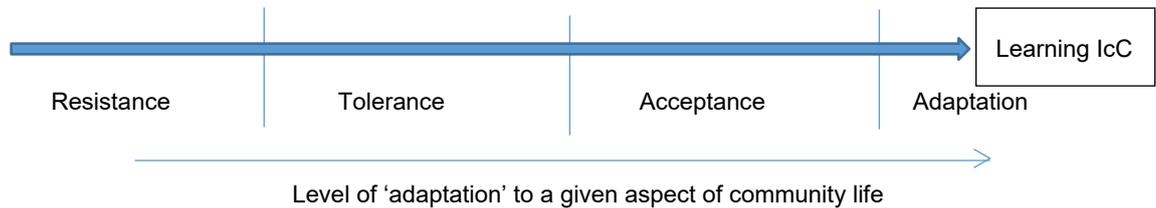
The less complex levels of the categories of description hierarchy invoked a stronger initial reaction than the more complex levels; however, the process of adaptation was faster. Research participants, generally, appeared to follow a pattern similar to those described in models such as the DMIS (Bennett, 1993) and, more particularly, the 'Deep Culture' model (Shaules, 2007). For symbols and rituals (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Shaules, 2007; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998), however, I contend that the pattern of learning can be simplified as in this progressive model (Figure 35):

Figure 35: Simple adaptation pattern



To describe the overall process towards adaptation, I have used a progressive model based on the Shaules (2007) 'Deep Culture' model continuum as described in the previous chapter. To remind the reader, the adapted model is reproduced below (Figure 36):

Figure 36: Adaptation continuum



Further, I also repeat the 10 categories of description hierarchy listed in the Table 9 (p. 99). The hierarchy is based on the standard phenomenographic approach when listing the categories of description and is reproduced here as Table 33:

Table 33: The categories of description and the hierarchy

Hierarchy	Description	Category	IcC and cultural onion elements
Lowest	Learning to adapt to the community's sights and sounds	1	Knowledge, attitude Symbols level
	Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices ('everyday life')	2	
Medium-low	Learning to adapt to greeting rituals	3	Knowledge, skills, attitude Rituals level
	Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food	4	

<i>Hierarchy</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>IcC and cultural onion elements</i>
	Learning to adapt to differences in orientations to time	5	
Medium-high	Learning and adapting to using the local language	6	Knowledge, attitude, higher level skills Symbols; rituals driven by values in Cat. 7
	Learning to build and adapt to locally-based networks	7	
High	Learning to cope with adaptation stresses including overcoming culture shock	8	Knowledge, awareness, attitude, higher level skills Values level
	Learning to adjust to the education and schooling system	9	
Highest	Learning to adapt to different values and beliefs at a more implicit level and to maintain relationships	10	

It was found that the complexity of the adaptation process in a category influenced the length of time taken to reach the maximum adaptation level.

Generally, research participants reached more advanced levels of adaptation in the less complex, lower level categories (Categories 1-5), and their maximum level was reached sooner than for the more complex categories (Categories 6–10). Categories in the ‘high’ and ‘highest’ levels involved increasingly complex adaptation problems generated from culture distance in values within cultural dimensions (House & Javidan, 2004; Hofstede, 2011; Triandis, 2004b), thus the pattern of learning was more complex.

Categories 1–5 (see Table 34 below)

In Categories 1-3, research participants, generally, initially experienced strong reactions of resistance. However, within a short time, the research participants had come to accept and/or adapt to, or at least to tolerate, the experiences described above. In the case of the greeting ritual (Category 3), all participants reached full adaptation. However, the initial reactions indicated in Categories 4-5 were more subdued than for Categories 1–3.

Categories 1-3 were:

1. Learning to adapt to the community’s sights and sounds;
2. Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices (‘everyday life’);
3. Learning to adapt to greeting rituals.

In Category 4: Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food, while some research participants showed some initial resistance to trying different foods, apart from those foods that personal tastes rejected, most adapted to eating the local foods. One research participant stated that they did not really like a particular food. However, they accepted eating it as they adapted

to the ritual associated with it. In Category 5: Learning to adapt to differences in orientations to time, similarly, some resistance was indicated to different time orientations. While one student remained resistant regarding the timing of mealtimes, all other aspects of time orientation were quickly adapted to.

Categories 4-5 were:

4. Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food;
5. Learning to adapt to differences in orientations to time.

Table 34 summarises the reactions to experiences in Categories 1–5, and the variations in levels of adaptation reached. The time taken to reach the maximum level of adaptation is also shown.

Table 34: Summary of reactions to experiences, levels of adaptation reached, and time taken; Categories 1–5

<i>Category</i>		<i>Initial reaction</i>	<i>Levels of adaptation</i>	<i>Time (months)</i>
1	Learning to adapt to the community's sights and sounds	Surprise, shock, disgust Sorrow, frustration, desperation Questioning the community's standards and rationality	Tolerance Acceptance Adaptation	1–2
2	Learning to adapt to common everyday community practices ('everyday life')	Surprise, shock, disgust Feeling unsafe Feeling that something is strange or odd	Resistance Tolerance Acceptance Adaptation	1–2
3	Learning to adapt to greeting rituals	Surprise, shock, invasion of personal space Confusion, rejection Being 'cold'	Adaptation	1–2
4	Learning to adapt to food and rituals associated with food	Some showed initial resistance Most adapted immediately	Acceptance Adaptation	1–2
5	Learning to adapt to differences in orientations to time	One indicated resistance, all others quickly adapted	Resistance (1, for 1 aspect) Tolerance Adaptation	1–2

Developing knowledge and understanding about the cultural symbols and rituals that sojourners can expect to face in the above categories before arrival would forewarn sojourners. On arrival, they would already be aware of these visual symbols and practices, and learn and develop the skills to react and/or participate appropriately. This is especially the case with the greeting ritual as it is the first thing encountered by study-abroad sojourners. They would already be prepared for what they see. They would understand differences in time orientation and be prepared to adapt. Through strategies such as having advanced knowledge, initial strong feelings of resistance would be lessened and adaptation would develop faster.

The more complex the level in the hierarchy, the longer it took to reach the final level of adaptation

Converse to the less complex hierarchy levels, in the more complex levels, the final level of adaptation took longer to reach. In most cases, the intensity of adaptation stresses and strength of resistant reaction was lower (evidenced in Chapter Five: the Outcome Space). However, in some cases, values conflicts caused severe adaptation stresses.

Table 35 summarises the length of time that the research participants took to reach their maximum level of adaptation to values differences at more complex levels, and thus adaptation generally, as measured by living and interacting effectively in the community.

Table 35: Summary of length of time that research participants took to reach their maximum adaptation level measured by living and interacting effectively

	<i>Classification (see Key below)^a</i>	<i>Month 2-3</i>	<i>Month 3-4</i>	<i>Month 4-5</i>	<i>Month 6-7</i>	<i>Not Recorded</i>
Masha	01		X			
Fantacee	01					X
Kirby	01, 02		X			
Gabe	02	X				
Anna	01, 02, 03			X		
Milly	01, 03				X	
Phillips	04					X
Felicity ^b	01 (comment not included ^c)	X				
Pippo ^b	01 (comment not included ^c)		X			
Al	01 (comment not included ^c)		X			
Kai	01 (comment not included ^c)			X		
Nova Bart Achilles Elisa Winrow Angelica Achilles Damon Meena JackiFoxy Noppa	Not recorded					X

^a Key:

01: *Life is 'normal'*. 02: *'I live here'*, 03: *I have changed*. 04: Not fully adapted

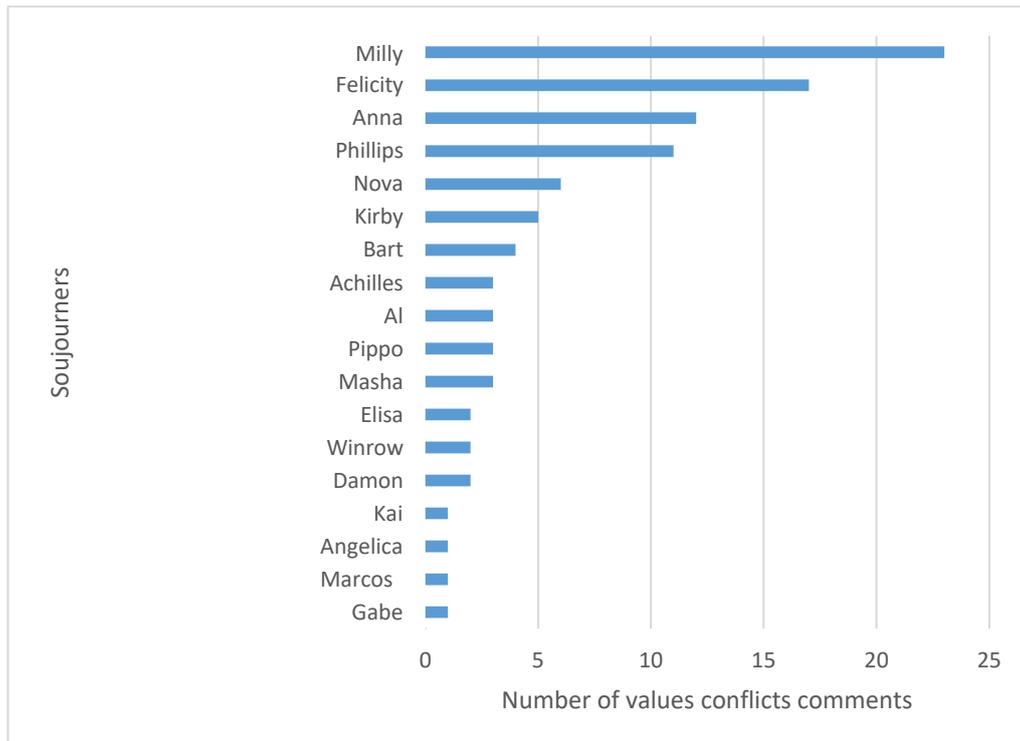
^b Felicity's and Pippo's sojourns were significantly shorter than the others (approx. six months). Felicity and Pippo are more mature students.

^c These participants indicated adaptation by ceasing to write in their journals. This was confirmed at the end-of-sojourn interview.

All incidences of adaptation problems that were reported in the research participants' journals and at the end of sojourn interview that were caused by values conflicts are illustrated in Figure

37. The numeric value scale (x axis) represents the total number of reported incidents of values conflicts.

Figure 37 Incidences of values conflicts reported by research participants



Not all journals were completed, and some research participants did not attend the end-of-sojourn interview. Therefore, not all incidences of cultural dimension/values conflicts, building social networks and adaptation time lines may have been reported. However, it is my contention that the relationship between culture distance (see Chapter Three, pp. 49-50) and adaptation (being the totality of language, building social networks, and adaptation to daily life) can still be mapped. Taking the adaptation with the longest time line from Figure 32, p. 208 (incidences of the values conflicts within cultural dimensions faced by research participants), the relationship between maximum adaptation level reached and the number of value conflict incidences from Figure 37 are mapped in Table 36 below.

Milly experienced 23 cultural values conflicts and also took the longest time to reach satisfactory overall adaptation: some seven months. Felicity experienced 17 cultural values conflicts and took almost six months to reach satisfactory overall adaptation. Anna experienced 12 cultural values conflicts and took a little under four months to reach satisfactory overall adaptation. Kirby shows a similar number of conflicts to adaptation-time ratio. In contrast, Masha, Pippo, Al, and Damon faced far fewer values conflicts. The time taken to reach satisfactory overall adaptation in the case of Damon, appears to be affected by the time taken to learn the local language (Table 27, p. 204), and for the others, the time taken to establish a network of local friends (Table 26, p. 203).

Table 36: Incidences of recorded value conflicts/time taken to reach maximum adaptation relationship

<i>Sojourner</i>	<i>Number of values conflicts</i>	<i>Months to max. adaptation</i>
Milly	23	7
Felicity	17	6
Masha	3	5
Anna	12	4
Pippo	3	4
Kirby	5	4
Al	3	4
Damon	2	3
Kai	1	5
Gabe	1	3

The theory of SI and phenomenography together in practice can support adaptation and the learning of IcC

By understanding the external horizons of context of adaptation experiences that cause adaptation stress, SI and phenomenography together in practice can support adaptation and the learning of IcC. SI is described in Chapter Two, and phenomenography and variation theory is the subject Chapter Four. A SI theory/phenomenography experiential learning process model that supports my notion is introduced and explained below. A 'process model' is described as depicting a "sequence of events comprising development" of something (Newman & Robey, 1992, p. 252).

To summarise SI theory, people internally communicate to register their perceptions of experiences and to form a way of understanding things in the world. In familiar, often-repeated experiences, such as encountering familiar symbols and common rituals, the person responds according to pre-supposed and previously experienced meanings and contexts (Blumer, 1969/1986). However, in unfamiliar situations meaning must be established from the experience itself. Thus, in the situation in which a sojourner in a different culture finds themselves, they establish a way of understanding an unfamiliar experience from their immediate perceptions, rather than simply responding to pre-supposed and previously experienced meanings and contexts (Blumer, 1969/1986).

The process of establishing a way of understanding is aided by our ability to imaginatively rehearse alternative actions before we act, and by our ability to think about our perceptions and adjust our reactions accordingly (Mittapalli & Samaras, 2008). As repeating experiences are re-interpreted, reflected on, and ways of understanding re-construed, pre-supposed meanings and contexts can change (Claxton & Murray, 1994). Because a human being is able to figuratively stand outside of the interaction as an 'observer' to reflect on and interpret the interaction, they can review and revise their perceptions and understanding of previous experiences

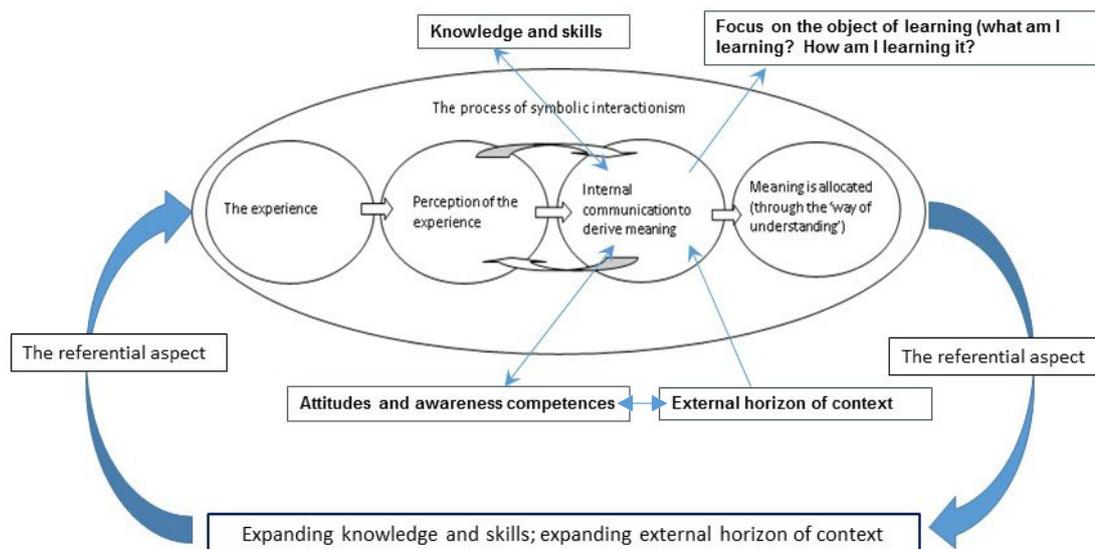
(phenomenography's referential aspect) and construct a new meaning (Blumer, 1969). Thus, over the course of multiple interactions, a sojourner forms changed ways of understanding.

I contend that in a cross-cultural context by taking an ethnorelative approach to contexts through reflexivity and internal communication, one constructs interculturally competent knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness. If one "checks, suspends, regroupes, and transforms meaning" (Blumer, 1969/1986, p. 5) when establishing a way of understanding a situation that is different, and puts the situation into an **ethnorelative** context before taking action, then they are engaging the process of SI theory in an interculturally competent manner, thus supporting the development of IcC. Thus, I posit that my SI theory/phenomenography process model can be consciously used as an approach to learn IcC.

Figure 38 below, my SI theory/phenomenography process model for experiential learning of IcC, illustrates the joint process of SI theory and phenomenography together with the elements of IcC. Referring to the 'internal communication' aspect of the model, an individual uses their knowledge and skills, as well as attitudes and awareness to assist them in deriving a way of understanding. In the case of a cross-cultural experience, 'awareness' refers to an awareness of cultural symbols, rituals and values. 'Attitudes' refers to IcC, and in regarding the external horizon of context (which includes cultural knowledge, skills and awareness) in an ethnorelative manner.

In a situation where one is learning from an experience (or experiences), one's focus should remain on the **object of what they are learning** (the internal horizon of focus), and not solely on the context. In repeats of the same experience, one can develop a new and enhanced way of understanding and expanded knowledge (and skills if the experience involves a developing skill, such as the greeting ritual), thus taking these and a more informed external horizon of context with them to the next experience. Accordingly, due to repetition, one is controlling **how** they are learning something. Figure 38 illustrates:

Figure 38: The integrated SI theory/phenomenography process model for experiential learning of lcC



Using the example of the greeting ritual, an analysis of the following two research participants' comments (edited for clarity) illustrate my contention:

- 1) *Here it is basically kissing people on the cheek when you meet them. It confuses me so much. I never know who to do it to, when to do it, etc. I'm better than I was at first though. I know the head movements now whereas before people would lean in towards me and I'd have a panic about what I was meant to do.*
- 2) *I don't feel comfortable getting too close with others so a hand shake is enough.... I don't feel comfortable when they kiss me on the cheek. I don't like constant touching and I'm trying to avoid situations where many people are hugging/kissing me. That's just too different, too personal.*

In comment 1), the sojourner is clearly focusing on the object of learning (internal horizon of focus), the local greeting ritual (what is being learned). It is also clear in the phrase *I'm better than I was at first though*, that, with each greeting experience, knowledge and skills are developing. The sojourner also has an ethnorelative attitude as there is no suggestion in the comment of resistance to the ritual but rather a willingness to adapt (how the greeting ritual was being learned).

In comment 2) however, the sojourner appears to be focusing on the context and the perceptions rather than object of learning. Thus, **resistance** to the ritual itself, and to developing the required knowledge and skills, remains to the fore. I argue that if the sojourner focuses on the object of learning, takes an ethnorelative attitude (which needs an awareness of the community's greeting ritual norms), the sojourner will overcome resistance sooner and thus adapt quicker.

Comment 3) below describes what the sojourner has learned, as well as a changed perception and way of understanding over the course of multiple interactions (the how aspect) with the greeting ritual. The knowledge and skill learned is described:

- 3) *Hug: That's amazing way to say hello or communicate with people. I got to know how and when I can hug. I had never hugged people before I came to NZ, so that made me really bedazzled. NZ-style handshake and hugging are impressive. Even after going back to Japan I'll keep hugging people.*

Pre-departure preparation and supported learning of IcC

The above further suggests, as is referred to constantly in the literature and is my contention as mentioned previously, there is a role for **supported** learning of IcC in study abroad sojourns. AFS sojourns, while there is some pre-departure preparation, rely mainly on experiential learning. As was described in the literature review (Chapter Two, p. 36), experiential learning can be likened to discovery-based learning, and pre-departure preparation to 'scaffolding'. I propose that scaffolded learning of the cultural symbols and daily rituals that sojourners are likely to encounter, cultural dimensions and values, as well as adaptation and culture shock mitigation techniques be included in the pre-departure preparation. Both **what** the sojourners will learn, and **how** they can learn it should also be covered in pre-departure sessions.

What the sojourners will learn from their cross-cultural experiences is the knowledge and skills, and develop the attitudes and awareness that will support their overall development of IcCs. **How** they can learn is by consciously using the SI theory/phenomenography process model described above: by approaching discovery-based learning ethnorelativity, focusing on the object of learning that arises in each symbolic interaction experience, and supported by a better informed external horizon of context.

Contributions

In this section contributions of this research are outlined. One contribution is that learning IcC does not flow along a general continuum as depicted in most literature, but varies according to cultural dimension. Indeed, the Shaules (2007) 'Deep Culture' model is one that departs from the linear continuum concept and alludes to such variation. Another contribution is that resistance to some aspects of difference does not mean that IcC will not develop. This research also contributes to the field of phenomenography, as well as to cultural and IcC research, as described below.

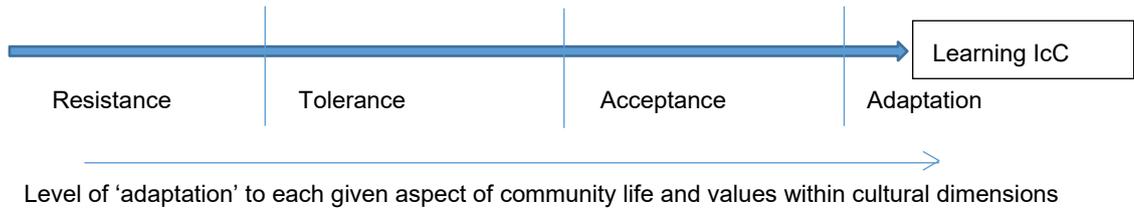
An innovative contribution is that learning IcC involves the process of SI theory and phenomenography together in practice, as posited in the previous section. If this combined process is consciously used it will support the learning of IcC.

A further contribution may be as a potential approach or contribution to an assessment regime for experientially learned IcC (see Porto, 2013). This can be a subject for future research. Also a subject for further research is the culture shock model normally hypothesised as a U-curve (see Ward et al., 2001) versus my 'wave' notion: the 'ups-and-downs' of a sojourn (See Figure 34, p. 216).

lcC learning is not a general continuum as depicted in the literature but rather varies according to a number of factors

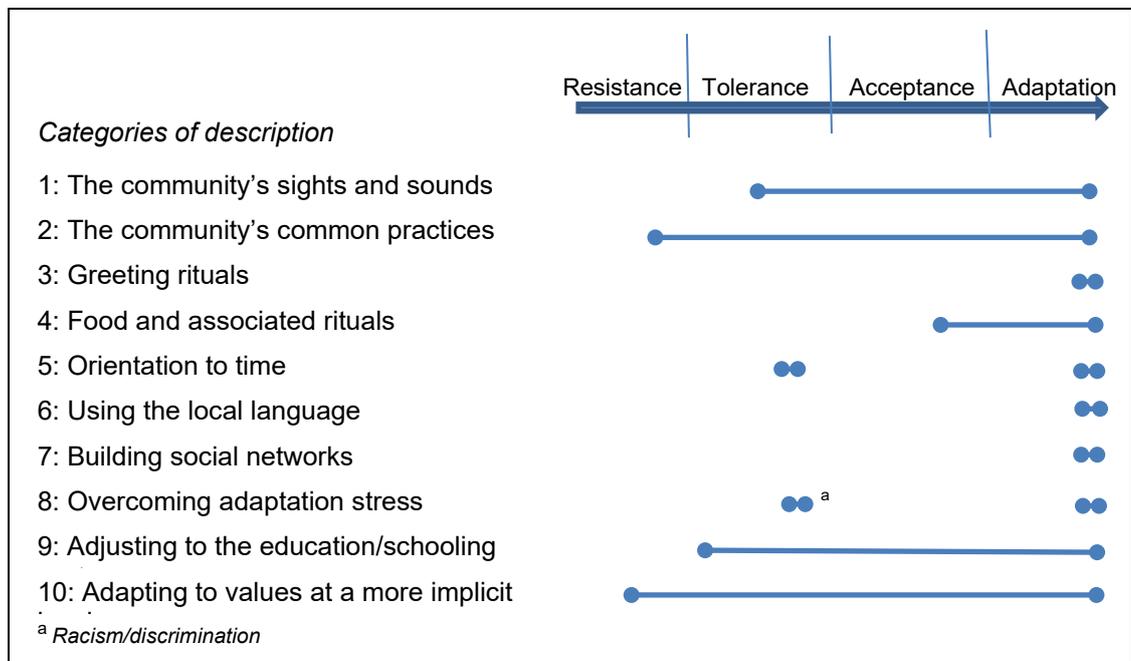
What I call the adaptation continuum (Figure 36, p. 216), and reproduced in Figure 39 below, is adapted from the horizontal continuum of increased cultural empathy in Shaules' (2007) 'Deep Culture' Model. It depicts the levels of adaptation to each given aspect of community life and to values indicated by the research participants. 'Tolerance' has been added.

Figure 39: The adaptation continuum of research participants' levels of adaptation and thus of lcC learning



The research participants' adaptation process followed such a continuum. As has been mentioned, the findings of this research are more representative of Shaules (2007) model than of Bennett's (1993, 2003) DMIS model (Chapter Two, pp. 37-38). While this remains the case, each category of cultural difference **warrants its own lcC learning continuum**, as has been portrayed in Chapter Five: the Outcome Space. This continuum has been utilised in my research findings by evaluating the level of adaptation to each given aspect of community life and the values within the categories of description. This is depicted in Figure 29, p. 191, and repeated here as Figure 40:

Figure 40: Summary of levels of adaptation reached by all research participants



Resistance indicated by research participants does not mean non-development of IcC

Some resistance, that is resistance that was retained, was indicated in Categories 2, 9 and 10. In Category 9, only one research participant retained resistance to some aspects of the education and schooling system, while accepting or adapting to others. In Category 3, only one participant indicated an unwillingness to conform to local practices:

I'd go to the dairy in barefoot, shorts, pyjamas, whereas they wouldn't – they would get totally dressed up and stuff.

In the viewpoint of the researcher, this sojourner was resisting the local dress practice, thus retaining an ethnocentric attitude **to this aspect of community practices**. The same sojourner indicated resistance to another norm:

It wasn't really accepted for males to help out in the kitchen. But I did eventually, I managed to wing my way in there.

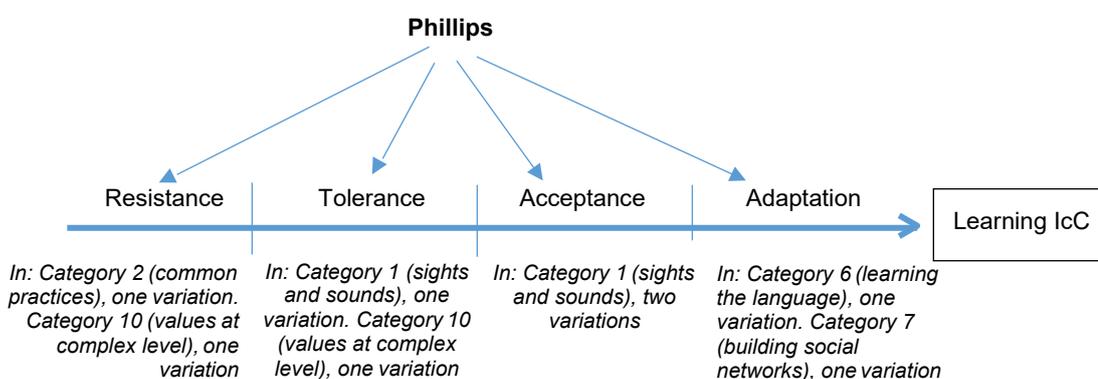
This sojourner, however, in his ways of understanding many other experiences, showed a mix of resistance, tolerance, acceptance, and some adaptation. For example, he expresses understanding in the comment:

The first shocking thing was coming out of the airport and it just being so filthy, like dust, cats in the street, rubbish, and this is in the airport, and I stepping on a half-eaten sandwich and this is so foreign to us.

Understanding is expressed in the expression that *this so foreign to us* ('us' being the sojourner group).

Phillips also expressed resistance to what he described as *horrendous violence* at school. The researcher concluded, however, that in this situation, Phillips could not be expected to adapt. Phillips also commented that *school was hard to adapt to and [had] no structure*. The researcher further concluded that Phillips tried to adapt. However, as he stated himself, he needed a structure, especially in his schooling but did not recognise one (refer Chapter Five, p. 165). Figure 41 illustrates Phillip's final levels of adaptation within the categories in which he has recorded comments.

Figure 41: An illustration of Phillips' adaptation



The viewpoint of the researcher therefore is that this sojourner cannot be described as being ethnocentric overall, just as it cannot be said that IcC was not being learned.

Contribution to phenomenography

In the field of phenomenography and variation theory, an innovative contribution of this research is the adoption of symbolic interactionism (SI) as the underpinning theory. SI is concerned with interaction experiences and the construction of meaning from those interaction experiences. The methodology that follows is, therefore, necessarily qualitative (Furlong & Marsh, 1995/2010). SI explains how people fit their individual reactions to the activities that they confront (Blumer, 1969/1986). As was outlined in Chapter Two (p. 17), people studying people need to have regard of the intersubjective nature of human behaviour: the worldviews of those who are being studied; the meanings that they attach to themselves and to symbols (in the broad sense); the ways people do things; the attempts people make to influence, to accommodate, and to resist the viewpoints of others; the relationships people develop with others and how they maintain these relationships; as well as the processes that influence the build-up of experiences over time (Prus, 1996). These seven points are an examination of **experiences**, peoples' **perceptions** of those experiences and the development of meanings based on their **way of understanding**. This, then, is ideally suited to phenomenography. Phenomenography is a study of the perceptions of the experiences and the way that what just happened is understood by the person who has had the experience.

A further methodological contribution is the combining of phenomenographic analysis techniques with other data analysis methods. I required a finely detailed and documented data analysis that classic phenomenographic analysis lacks. I noted that Box (2012) resolved this same issue "by going beyond the orthodoxy of phenomenography" (Box, 2012, p. 330), as did Eckerdal (2009) and McKenzie (2003). Thus, I utilised the constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) and continuous refinement process of categorising and coding data (Wellington, 2000). Furthermore, the data was reduced to short passages of text referred to as 'stanzas', a technique borrowed from narrative analysis, so as to focus on the perspective of each comment within the longer narrative (Gee, 1986; Huberman & Miles, 2002; Riessman, 2007). A stanza became the unit of analysis.

Contribution to cultural and IcC research

A characteristic of this research was that, in most cases, the sojourner perceptions and understanding of interaction experiences that were examined were recorded by the participants immediately, or as soon as possible after an experience event occurred. In that regard, this aspect of the research is noteworthy

In the field of cultural studies and IcC, a contribution of my research includes the examination of sojourner adaptation to living in another culture by exploring the understanding of interaction experiences with cultural practices during adaptation to the different culture's values. There have

been many studies relating to values differences within cultural dimensions, as was seen in Chapter Two. This research adds to that body of research by focusing on the day-to-day adaptation experiences, including the adaptation stresses of sojourners living in a culture that is sometimes significantly different from their own.

Other research contributions in the area of cultural research include the following:

- My findings corroborate research that found that;
 - a. Sojourners suffer the most severe adjustment problems in the **initial** stages of their sojourn (Ward, Bochner, and Furnham (2001) when responses to difference are at their highest and the resources for coping are likely to be at their lowest; and
 - b. The level of depression and negativity among sojourners was highest during the entry period (Ward et al., 1998; Ward et al., 2001; Ward & Kennedy, 1996).

Therefore, there is no 'honeymoon stage', and the 'highs and lows' of a sojourn is not U-curved but come in waves.

- This thesis examines and refines a plethora of elements of IcC from a number of sources, namely Byram (1997, 2003, 2012), Deardorff (2006), Fantini, (2000, 2006, 2012), Howard-Hamilton et al. (1998) and Sercu (2005a), and brings these together in a comprehensive table (Table 1, Chapter Two, pp. 34-35).
- Understanding values (at the highest level of the hierarchy of categories) is critical to adaptation. Understanding and reconciling to values is underpinned by the complexity of a given category of values, and thus the complexity of adaptation.

How my findings compare to existing research

In this section I provide comparisons between research outlined in Chapter Two and Chapter Three with my findings in Chapter Five: The Outcome Space. Included are the development models outlined in Chapter Two (Bennett, 1993, 2003 [p. 37]; Shaules, 2007 [p. 41]) and other 'static' models (Berry, 1980, 1990 [p. 59]; Deardorff, 2006 [p. 33]; Kim, 2001 [p. 57]. IcC definitions also outlined in Chapter Two (Byram, 1997, 2003 [p. 30]; Fantini, 2000, 2006, 2012 [p. 31]; Sercu, 2005 [p. 32]) are included, along with adaptation demands (Pearson-Evans, 2006 [p. 53]) and culture shock (Church, 1982; Oberg 1960) discussed in Chapter Three (p. 50). Dimensions of culture discussed in Chapter Two (pp. 23-29) (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Trompenaars and Hampton-Turner's 1998) are also considered.

Bennett's (1993, 2003) DMIS and Shaules' (2007) Deep Culture Model

While Bennett's DMIS was less useful in describing an individual's IcC development, Shaules' Deep Culture model more accurately reflects my findings. Unlike the DMIS, the Deep Culture model depicts 'mixed states', thus more accurately addressing the cultural adaptation and IcC learning in the various categories of adaptation experiences portrayed in my findings.

The DMIS continuum, from its ethnocentric viewpoint through the various stages that a sojourner goes through to reach the state of ethnorelativity, was useful in assisting with data analysis by providing a basis for assessing progress in the learning and development of IcC **for each given category of adaptation experience**. Shaules' model was more useful in that the model addresses the situation that a sojourner may have accepted, or even adapted to, some aspects of the host culture, but be in a state of resistance to other aspects. Furthermore, my findings provide the deeper layers of cultural adaptation demands, within the context of this research, that Shaules' model depicts.

Layers of culture (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Shaules, 2007; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998)

The cultural onion metaphor depicting 'layers of culture' was verified by this research as being about symbols (visual elements of culture), rituals (ways of doing things), and values, including the beliefs upon which values are grounded. Thus, the Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) onion model was found to be the most indicative of the findings of this research as it more clearly illustrates a culture's visual elements and practices: the symbols (the outer layer) and rituals (an inner layer) of a culture, which are driven by a culture's values and belief systems (at the heart of the 'onion'). The Hofstede and Hofstede onion, however, contains a 'heroes' layer between symbols and rituals, which I have determined is also symbols of a culture. Acknowledged is Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's description of symbols being the visible elements of a culture. See Figure 5, p. 23 (SI and layers of culture), which uses my version of the layers of culture onion metaphor.

Dimensions of culture (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Trompenaars and Hampton-Turner's 1998)

The dimensions of culture outlined in Chapter Two (pp. 23-29) significantly informed the development of the phenomenographic categories of description from the data. There is a plethora of evidence in the data collected and analysed that support the majority of the dimensions of culture discussed in Chapter Two being significant factors in cross-culture adaptation. This is also supported in research by Rienties and Tempelaar (2013) (see p. 62).

Knowledge, skills, attitudes, awareness and education (Byram, 1997, 2003; Deardorff, 2006; Fantini, 2006, 2012; Howard-Hamilton, 1998; Sercu, 2005a)

As discussed in Chapter Two (pp. 29-31), knowledge, skills and attitude, Byram's (1997, 2003) *Savoirs*, along with awareness, were significant in the categories of description hierarchy. Along with Byram's education *savoir*, all played a significant role in the sojourners' IcC development (see Table 30, p. 209 and Table 31 p. 210).

The relationship between learning the language, building a social network of friends, food and successful adaptation (Kim, 1998; Pearson-Evans, 2006; Whorf, 1988)

My research corroborated the relationship between learning the language, building a social network of friends and food-associated rituals with the successful adaptation to the local community, as discussed in Chapter Three (pp. 53-55). The relationship of food itself with adaptation advocated by Pearson-Evans and Whorf, however, was not so evident.

Culture shock and the 'honeymoon' period (Church, 1982; Kim, 1998; Oberg, 1960; Ward & Kennedy, 1996; Ward et al., 1998; Ward et al., 2001; Weaver, 1993)

My research contradicted the 'honeymoon period' of a sojourn (Oberg, 1960): that sojourners suffer the most severe adjustment problems in the **initial** stages of their sojourn. Furthermore, my research contradicts Oberg's U-curve adjustment model depicting the entry honeymoon stage period falling away then 'rising' again as a result of gradual cultural adaptation. Rather, my research found that adjustment 'ups and downs' come in waves (see Figure 34 p. 215) (see Ward & Kennedy, 1996; Ward et al., 1998; Ward et al., 2001). Culture shock itself was a significant adaptation stress (see Category 8, p.147) thus corroborating adaptation stress research (Church, 1982; Oberg, 1960, Weaver, 1993).

The 'Berry Boxes' model (Berry, 1980, 1990; Ward, 2008)

The 'Berry boxes' model (Ward 2008) (see Figure 13, p. 59) proved useful in ascertaining stages of sojourners' adaptation and development of IcC. While Berry's model has its critics (see, for example, Burnett & Gardener, 2006), my findings concur with Ward's (2008) research that confirmed that Berry's (1980, 1990) model, given that 'integration' is the most preferred strategy, can, and does in my findings, predict successful adaptation.

Deardorff's (2006) pyramid model of IcC and Kim's (2001) model of factors influencing cross-cultural adaptation

Both Deardorff's (2006) pyramid model of IcC (see Figure 8, p. 33) and Kim's (2001) model of factors influencing cross-cultural adaptation (see Figure 12, p. 57) informed my research as well as correlated to my findings, notably:

- Requisite attitudes (Deardorff, 2006);
- Environment factors and Predisposition (Kim, 2001).

Both models are corroborated by my research as the models are able to depict the sojourners' experiences.

Students from collectivist cultures had higher levels of adaptation difficulties in individualist countries (Rientiesa & Tempelaar, 2013)

The analysis of my findings corroborate Rientiesa & Tempelaar's (2013) research that students from collectivist-oriented cultures had higher levels of adaptation difficulties in individualist-oriented countries than did their individualist-oriented peers. My analysis also shows the converse: Research participants from collectivist-oriented countries also had higher levels of adaptation demands in individualist-oriented destinations than those from collectivist-oriented cultures, although not as severe.

Limitations and challenges of this research

Data set limitations

While the data that was collected was extensive, there was lack of equivalency in the data received from each of the participants. Three of the 21 participants contributed to 57.33% of the relevant data collected, while six participants contributed 4.25% (See Table 24, p. 192). The remaining 38.42% was spread across the remaining 12 participants. Not all journals were completed, and some research participants did not attend the end-of-sojourn interview, therefore not all incidences of cultural dimension/values conflicts, building social networks and adaptation time lines may have been reported. However, based on my long experience with AFS, both with hosting and with returned sojourners, I am confident that, generally, the most important adaptation issues were found and addressed.

The three participants who provided the most data (57.33% of total data), all left for their sojourn from economies rated by the UN as major-developed or developed with their sojourn in a developing rated economy (United Nations, 2018). Of six participants who provided the least data (4.25%), four are from developed or major-developed economies and sojourning in developed economies, with two going from a developed economy to a developing economy. From a cultural viewpoint, two of the top three departed from individualist-oriented cultures to collectivist-oriented cultures. One departed from Japan, a collectivist-oriented culture but regarded by other Asian nations as being individualist (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005) and sojourning in an individualist society (New Zealand) (see Podsiadlowski & Fox, 2011). Of the six who contributed 4.25% of the data, three are from individualist-oriented cultures sojourning in individualist-oriented cultures, with one from Japan (as mentioned above) sojourning in an individualist-oriented culture. Two are from individualist-oriented cultures sojourning in a collectivist-oriented culture, with one of these being from a collectivist-oriented minority culture within that individualist-ranked country (see Podsiadlowski & Fox, 2011).

As previously considered on p. 193, apart from one of the low data-contributing group, the environment that the others departed from has a narrower culture distance than the participants who contributed more data, thus suggesting that they adapted sooner and had no significant cultural adaptation difficulties to report in their journals and/or interviews. Worth noting, then, are

two Japan-to-New Zealand sojourners, one in the group contributing the most data and one in group contributing the least data. The participant who gave substantial data, however, recorded in their journal that they underwent a family change during their sojourn. It is apparent from the sojourner's comments regarding their host family that support for their adaptation difficulties was lacking, as well as an ethnocentric-oriented attitude by their hosts, as evidenced in this comment:

*Every time they get stuck with another car they swear at driver saying "Asian driver!!"
Even if ... people don't like Asian, they shouldn't insult [them], especially in front of me.*

Additionally, as noted on p. 152, and evidenced in their journal, this sojourner tried to discuss incidents of racist taunts with their host family. The host family, however, appears to have taken an ethnocentric approach by blaming the situation on the sojourner's culture rather than taking a contextual approach. Thus, the sojourner in the top three provided much more data related to resulting adaptation stress than did the sojourner from Japan in the bottom six. It must also be noted, however, that the interview transcript of the sojourner from Japan in the bottom six is not complete, with the transcriber noting that much of the audio was too quiet to hear.

Methodological challenges

Phenomenography's conventional method of data analysis, repetitive close reading and the sorting and re-sorting of the data (Åkerlind, 2005), was limiting for the finely granulated data analysis that I required for coding and categorisation of the wide spectrum of data that was collected. The methodological challenges that I faced were associated with my research question being broad, especially for a phenomenographic approach. This necessitated the support of the constant comparative method of analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and the continuous refinement process of categorising and coding data advocated by Wellington (2000) as explained in Chapter Four (pp. 84-88) to assist with the development of the categories of description.

Other limitations

It could be argued that recording their experiences in journals caused participants to reflect deeper on their reactions and, as a result, speed up their adaptation, thus distorting the outcome. However, there was no specific indication in any of the journals that this was the case. The participants were not asked to **reflect** on their experiences, but rather to record their experiences as they happened and their immediate reactions to the experience. Furthermore, the time lines to their maximum level of adaptation are commensurate with anecdotal information from my experience with AFS programmes.

While there was one instance where having religious views was mentioned as helping with building their social network, neither religion-based conflicts, nor personal morals, were directly commented on by the research participants. Rather, they focused on culturally based symbols and rituals differences and the conflicts between their and their hosts 'right' ways of acting (values). This is perhaps surprising; however, again, participants were not asked to make judgements in their journals.

Recommendations for further research and for practice

Recommendations for further research include studies to pinpoint **specific** knowledge and skills required for successful adaptation within each of the categories of description identified in this research: for example, the specific expectations, protocols and skills of different greeting rituals. Awareness, being a significant element of IcC, and the development of interculturally competent attitudes through ethnorelative internalisation to derive ways of understanding should be incorporated into research about adaptation to cultural difference. This should include critical reflective practices as an integral part of the IcC learning process.

As already argued, I advocate that sojourn pre-departure preparation include imparting knowledge about values differences within the cultural dimensions described within this thesis, along with strategies for overcoming the cultural stresses associated with reconciling these contrasting values with one's own. Pre-departure preparation for cultural-immersion should also include scaffolded learning, the SI theory/phenomenography process model of developing IcC (as described earlier in this chapter), as well as ethnorelative reflexivity techniques and pre-requisite attitudes. This would result in considerably increasing the ease and speed of IcC development, both during the sojourn and as a result of internalisation following the sojourn. Sessions such as these would also be extremely valuable for host families as this would develop awareness about what adjustment demands, difficulties and conflicts their hosted sojourner are likely to face.

A further recommendation is that there be more targeted learning of the relevant host community language. Generally, all study abroad students have some degree of knowledge of the language of their host. In some cases, the study abroad student has only elementary knowledge of the language, usually based on just a short period of language study immediately prior to departure. In this research, this was generally the situation for the New Zealand English-speaking student research participants. However, the inbound research participant students in New Zealand, an English speaking country, had a more comprehensive understanding of English as their second or other language. In this regard, the researcher recommends more focused and comprehensive learning of the relevant language by EPL students departing for non-English speaking countries.

As stated above, ESL research participants had, overall, a better command of English than the EPL participants did of their host language. This may suggest that English as primary language societies have an ethnocentric approach to other language learning. Indeed, New Zealand has falling rates of enrollment into second language classes (Tan, 2016), and while learning a foreign language is a requirement in European countries it is not in the USA (Devlin, 2015). This is perhaps an area for research.

Another area for further research is that the 'honeymoon stage' and the U-curve hypothesis was not proven in this research. The 'honeymoon stage', if such a stage even exists, does not come at the beginning, but rather after the sojourner has passed through the initial resistance to

differences following their arrival. Furthermore, the highs and lows of a sojourn can be likened to a wave, not a U-curve (see Ward et al., 2001).

In relation to the religious views and personal moral limitation expressed above, a further area of research, thus, would be to determine if moral judgements are set aside, or if moral values are lessened due to cross-cultural adaptation issues. Finally, using a research approach similar to that used in this research, a study could be made of the adaptation continuum of people away on overseas teaching and job postings. The findings could be used for a comprehensive guide to adaptation and IcC learning in these situations.

Summary

This final chapter closes this thesis with a holistic overview of the adaptation experiences, demands and difficulties that the research participants faced, and how they overcame these. In answering the overarching research question, RQ1, learning the local language, building a social network, adapting to foods and associated rituals, adopting an ethnorelative approach to reconciling values conflicts and developing critical knowledge, skills, attitudes, and awareness were discussed. The ways of understanding that enhance or detract from IcC, and the phenomenographic dimensions of variation that give life to IcC, were discussed in answering RQ2 and RQ3.

I then presented and discussed other observations drawn from the findings in the research outcome space. Discussed were the roles of personal confidence as well as how host family support affects the time taken to adapt: specifically that the 'honeymoon stage' does not come at the beginning but after the sojourner has passed through the initial resistance to differences following their arrival, and further that it is a 'wave', not a U-curve; that the less complex levels of the categories of description in the hierarchy invoked stronger initial reactions, but the process of adaptation to these was faster; and that the more complex the category, the longer it generally took to reach the maximum level of adaptation that was possible during their sojourn.

I have described the contributions of this research to the development continuum of IcC, the fields of phenomenography, and to cultural and IcC research, and I have outlined the limitations of this research. I have presented and explained a proposed SI theory/phenomenography-based IcC experiential learning process model that I believe will enhance adaptation during cultural-immersion sojourns. I also discussed recommendations for both research and practice.

Closing remarks

This thesis analyses the adaptation experiences of my research participants and presents a rationale for the enhancement of IcC learning during a study abroad, cultural-immersion sojourn. It is based on many, many hours spent by the research participants having and recording adaptation experiences, forming perceptions and constructing meaning, overcoming stress, in some cases severe stress, and, as Alred (2003. p. 27) puts it, being "astonished, enthralled,

bedazzled, confused, contradicted, unaccepted, alienated, misunderstood, welcomed, accepted, understood”.

There are many, many things that are different between peoples of different cultures: too many to cover in a thesis such as this. Within these pages I have attempted to say that to achieve the 'peace and understanding' referred to in Chapter One, and to achieve the IcC needed for adaptation to living in another culture, one needs: knowledge about other cultures and their different ways of doing things; skills to participate in local rituals; an attitude of acceptance of other ways of thinking (an ethnorelative attitude); ethnorelative reflexivity and internalisation; and, most of all, an awareness of other values systems in the context of one's own.

As previously argued, resistance to some aspects of a culture does not necessarily mean that the sojourner is not developing the overall IcC necessary for adaptation to a given community or culture. Some resistance or cultural clashes may be based on legitimate moral confounds, human rights issues, or the cultural practices may be abusive, coercive or abhorrent to an outsider. A sojourner needs knowledge and awareness of the aspects of host culture that they are resisting. And, through reflexivity, develop an understanding of the context of their adaptation experiences and thus come to know what they are resisting, and why. They should focus on the object of learning, and not solely on context, but use the context as the referential aspect to build their knowledge and develop skills. However, there are aspects of culture, as was seen in this research, that some will always feel resistance towards. There are things that some people can tolerate but not accept. Nevertheless, there are many, many more things that sojourners can develop understanding and acceptance of, and even adaptation to other cultures, and thus learn the knowledge, skills attitudes and awareness that is intercultural competence.

*Our karma we must carry as our lot,
Let's stop decrying heaven's whims and quirks,
Inside ourselves there lies the root of good,
The heart outweighs all talents on this earth.*

(Nguyễn Du; *The Tale of Kiều*, c.1807)

References

- AFS Intercultural Programs. (n.d.). *Main page*. Retrieved from <http://www.afs.org/>
- AFS New Zealand. (n.d.). *Main page*. Retrieved from <https://www.afs.org.nz/>
- AIESEC. (2012). *About AIESEC*. Retrieved from <http://aiesec.org/>
- Åkerlind, G. (2005). Variation and commonality in phenomenographic research methods. *Higher Education Research & Development, 24*(4), 321-334. doi:10.1080/07294360500284672
- Alfieri, L., Brooks, P. J., Aldrich, N. J., & Tenenbaum, H. R. (2011). Does discovery-based instruction enhance learning? *Journal of Educational Psychology, 103*(1), 1-18. doi: 10.1037/a0021017
- Alred, G. (2003). Becoming a 'better stranger': A therapeutic perspective on intercultural education and/as education. In G. Alred, M. Byram, & M. Fleming (Eds), *Intercultural experience and education*. Languages for intercultural communication and education (2 series). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Alred, G., & Byram, M. (2006). British students in France: 10 years on. In M. Byram & A. Feng (Eds), *Living and studying abroad: Research and practice*. Languages for intercultural communication and education (12 series). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Alred, G., Byram, M., & Fleming, M. (2003). Introduction. In G. Alred, M. Byram, & M. Fleming (Eds), *Intercultural experience and education*. Languages for intercultural communication and education (2 series). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Alsop, G., & Thompsett, C. (2006). Making sense of 'pure' phenomenography in information and communication technology in education. *ALT-J: Research in Learning Technology, 14*(3), 241–259. doi:0.1080/09687760600837058
- Amster, R., & Böhm, C. (2016) Improving intercultural competency in global IT projects through recognition of culture-based behaviors, *International Journal of Information Systems and Project Management, 4*(2), 5-20. <http://www.sciencesphere.org/ijispm>
- Aneas, M.A., & Sandín, M. P. (2009). Intercultural and cross-cultural communication research: Some reflections about culture and qualitative methods. In *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 10*(1), Art. 51. <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0901519>
- Anderson, P. H., & Lawton, L. (2015) Student motivation to study abroad and their intercultural development. *Management Faculty Publications, 23*(11-2015). <http://ir.stthomas.edu/ocbmgmtpub/23>
- Ashkanasy, N., Gupta, V., Mayfield, M.S., & Trevor-Roberts, E. (2004). Future orientation. In R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman, & V. Gupta (Eds), *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Baker-Smemoe, W., Dewey, D. P., Bown, J., & Martinsen R. A. (2014). Variables affecting L2 gains during study abroad. *Foreign Language Annals*, 47(3), 464-486. doi:10.1111/flan.12093
- Ball, R. (2001). Individualism, collectivism, and economic development. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 573, 57-84. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1049015>
- Ballestas, H. C., & Roller, M. C. (2013). The effectiveness of a study abroad program for increasing students' cultural competence. *Journal of Nursing Education and Practice*, 3(6), 125-133. <http://www.sciedu.ca/jnep>
- Barnard, A., McCosker, H., & Gerber, R. (1999). Phenomenography: A qualitative research approach for exploring understanding in health care. *Qualitative Health Research*, 9(2), 212-226. doi:10.1177/104973299129121794
- Bender-Szymanski, D. (2000). Learning through cultural conflict? A longitudinal analysis of German teachers' strategies for coping with cultural diversity in schools. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 23(3), 229-250. doi:10.1080/02619760120049120
- Bennett, J. M. (2009). Cultivating intercultural competence: A process perspective. In D. K. Deardorff (Ed.), *The SAGE handbook of intercultural competence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Bennett, J. M. (2015). *The SAGE encyclopedia of intercultural competence*. J.M Bennett (Ed). Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publications.
- Bennett, M. (1993). Towards ethnorelativism: A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. In R. M. Paige (Ed.), *Education for the intercultural experience*. Boston, MA: Intercultural Press, Inc.
- Bennett, M., & Hammer, M. (1998). *The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity*. Hammer Consulting, LLC (Hammer Holdings, Inc), Olney, MD. Retrieved February 15, 2007 from <http://www.intercultural.org/pdf/dmis.pdf>
- Bergiel, E. B., Bergiel, B. J., & Upsom, J. W. (2012). Revisiting Hofstede's dimensions: Examining the cultural convergence of the United States and Japan. *American Journal of Management*, 12(1), 69-79. <http://www.na-businesspress.com/ajmopen.html>
- Berglund, A. (2005). *Learning computer systems in a distributed project course: The what, why, how, and where* (Doctoral dissertation). Uppsala dissertations from the Faculty of Science and Technology, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. ISBN 91-554-6187-5. Stockholm, Sweden: Elanders Gotab.
- Berglund, A., & Thota, N. (2014). *A glimpse into the cultural situatedness of computer science: Some insights from a pilot study*. Paper presented at the International Conference on Learning and Teaching in Computing and Engineering (LaTiCE), April 2014, Kuching, Malaysia. Retrieved from <http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/6821835/?reload=true>

- Berry, J. W. (1980). Acculturation as varieties of adaptation. In A. M. Padilla (Ed.), *Acculturation: Theory, models, and some new findings*. Boulder CO: Westview Press for the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).
- Berry, J. W. (1990). Psychology of acculturation: Understanding individuals moving between cultures. In R. W. Brislin (Ed), *Applied cross-cultural psychology*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Biddle, C. (2012). Individualism versus collectivism: Our future, our choice. *The Objective Standard*, 7(1). <https://www.theobjectivestandard.com/issues/2012-spring/>
- Blasco, M. (2012). On reflection: Is reflexivity necessarily beneficial in intercultural education? *Intercultural Education*, 23(6), 475-489. doi:10.1080/14675986.2012.736750
- Blumer, H. (1969). *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and method*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall. Inc.
- Blumer, H. (1969/1998). *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and method* (1998 edition). Berkely, CA: University of California Press.
- Bochner, S. (1982). The social psychology of cross-cultural relations. In S. Bochner (Ed.), *Cultures in contact: Studies in cross-cultural interaction* (vol. 1). Oxford, England: Pergamon Press.
- Bochner, S., Hutnick, N., & Furnham, A. (1985). The friendship patterns of overseas and host students in Oxford student residence. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 125(6), 689-694. doi:10.1080/00224545.1985.9713540
- Boghossian, P. (2001) What is social construction? *Times Literary Supplement*, February 23. <http://www.the-tls.co.uk/>
- Booth, S. A. (1992). *Learning to program: A phenomenographic perspective*. Göteborg Studies in Educational Sciences, 89. Göteborg, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). *Distinction: A social critique on the judgement of taste*. London, England: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Bowden, J. (2000). Experience of phenomenographic research: A personal account. In J. A. Bowden & E. Walshe (Eds), *Phenomenography*. Melbourne, Australia: RMIT Publishing.
- Bowden, J. (2005). Reflections on the phenomenographic team research process. In J. A. Bowden & P. Green (Eds), *Doing developmental phenomenography*, Qualitative research methods series. Melbourne, Australia: RMIT University Press.
- Box, I. (2012). *Cowboy, cataloguer, Methodist, magician, and master: Gestalts of analysis and design* (Doctoral thesis). Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology, University of Technology, Sydney, October 2012.
- British Council. (2015). *About language assistants*. Retrieved from: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/language-assistants/about>

- Broch, G. (Ed). (1997). *The AFS Story: Journeys of a lifetime 1914*1947*1997*. Lausanne, Switzerland: AFS Norway.
- Bruce, C. (1994). Research students' early experiences of the dissertation literature review. *Studies in Higher Education*, 19(2), 217-219. <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cshe20>
- Bruce, C. (1997). *The seven faces of information literacy*. Adelaide, Australia: Auslib Press.
- Bruce, C., Pham, B., & Stoodley, I. (2002). *The Collective consciousness of information technology research: Ways of seeing information technology research, it's objects and territories*, Final report. Retrieved from:
https://www.academia.edu/2463419/The_Collective_Consciousness_of_Information_Technology_Research_Ways_of_Seeing_Information_Technology_Research_Its_Objects_and_Territories
- Brumann, C. (1999). Writing for culture: Why a successful concept should not be discarded. *Current Anthropology*, 40(S1), S1-S27. <http://www.jstor.org/>
- Bruner, J. S. (1961). The act of discovery. *Harvard Educational Review*, 31(1) 21–32. Retrieved from <http://psycnet.apa.org/psycinfo/1962-00777-001>
- Burnett, C., & Gardner, J. (2006). The one less travelled by...: The experience of Chinese students in a UK university. In M. Byram & A. Feng (Eds), *Living and studying abroad: Research and practice*. Languages for intercultural communication and education (12 series). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Burns, J. (1994). Extending critique within phenomenography. In R. Ballantyne & C. Bruce (Eds), *Proceedings of phenomenography: Philosophy and practice*. Brisbane, Australia: QUT Publications and Printing.
- Byram, M. (1997). *Teaching and assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Byram, M. (2003). On being 'bicultural' and 'intercultural'. In G. Alred, M. Byram, & M. P. Fleming (Eds), *Intercultural experience and education*. Languages for intercultural communication and education (2 series). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Byram, M. (2011). Intercultural citizenship from an internationalist perspective. *Journal of the NUS Teaching Academy*, 1(1), 10-20. <http://journaldatabase.info/journal/issn2010-3441>
- Byram, M. (2012). Language awareness and (critical) cultural awareness – relationships, comparisons and contrasts. *Language Awareness*, 21(1-2), 5-13.
 doi:10.1080/09658416.2011.639887
- Byram, M. (2014). Twenty-five years on – from cultural studies to intercultural citizenship. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 27(3), 209–225. doi:10.1080/07908318.2014.974329

- Byram, M., & Feng, A. (2006). Introduction. In M. Byram & A. Phipps (Eds), *Living and studying abroad: Research and practice*. Languages for intercultural communication and education (12 series). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Cambridge Online Dictionary; (n.d.). *Dictionary*. Retrieved from <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/>
- Carl, D., Gupta, V., & Javidan, M. (2004). Power distance. In R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman, & V. Gupta (Eds), *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies*. Thousand Oaks, CA; Sage Publications.
- Charmaz, K. (1996). Foreword. In R. Prus (Ed), *Symbolic interaction and ethnographic research: Intersubjectivity and the study of human lived experience*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Charon, J. (1998). *Symbolic interactionism: An introduction, an interpretation, an integration* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Chen, P., & Partington, D. (2004). An interpretive comparison of Chinese and Western conceptions of relationships in construction project management work. *International Journal of Project Management*, 22, 397- 406. doi:10.1016/j.ijproman.2003.09.005
- Choo, S. S. Y., Rotgans, J. I., Yew, E. H. J. & Schmidt, H. G. (2011) Effect of worksheet scaffolds on student learning in problem-based learning. *Advances in Health Sciences Education*, 16: 517. doi: 10.1007/s10459-011-9288-1
- Church, A. T. (1982). Sojourner adjustment. *Psychological Bulletin*, 91(3), 540-572. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/bul/>
- Clark, R. E., Yates, K., Early, S., & Moulton, K. (2010). An analysis of the failure of electronic media and discovery-based learning: Evidence for the performance benefits of guided training methods. In K. H. Silber & R. Foshay (Eds), *Handbook of training and improving workplace performance: Volume 1, Instructional design and training delivery*. New York, NY: John Wiley and Sons.
- Claxton, R. P., & Murray, J. B. (1994). Object-subject interchangeability: A symbolic interactionist model of materialism. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 21(1). 422-426. Retrieved from <http://www.acrwebsite.org/volumes/7628/volumes/v21/NA-21>
- Clear, T. (2017). Meeting employers expectations of DevOps Roles: Can Dispositions Be Taught? . *ACM Inroads*, 8(2), 19-21. doi:10.1145/3078298
- Clear, T., & MacDonnell, S. G. (2010). Beyond 'Temponomics' – the many dimensions of time in globally distributed project teams. In *ICGSE 'Proceedings of the 2010 5th IEEE International Conference on Global Software Engineering*. IEEE Computer Society, Washington, DC.
- Cohen, A. (1985/2000). *The symbolic construction of community*. London, England: Routledge.
- Cohen, L., & Manion, L. (1980/1994). *Research methods in education*. London, England: Routledge.

- Coleman, J. A. (1997). Residence abroad within language study. *Language Teaching*, 30(1), 1-20. doi:10.1017/S0261444800012659
- Condon, J. C. (1974). Introduction: A perspective for the conference. In J. C. Condon & M. Saito (Eds), *Intercultural encounters with Japan: Communication and conflict. Perspectives from the international conference on communications across cultures held at International Christian University in Tokyo*. Tokyo, Japan: The Simul Press Inc.
- Cope, C. (2004). Ensuring validity and reliability in phenomenographic research using the analytical framework of structural awareness. *Qualitative Research Journal* 4(2), 5-18. Retrieved from <https://search.informit.com.au/browseJournalTitle;res=IELHSS;issn=1443-9883>
- Cope, C. (2006). *Beneath the surface: The experience of learning about Information Systems*. Santa Rosa, CA: Informing Science Press.
- Covert, H. (2014). Undergraduate students' perceptions of developing intercultural competence during a semester abroad in Chile. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 18(2), 162-169. doi:10.1177/1028315313497590
- Cranshaw, R. (2006). Foreword. In M. Byram & A. Feng (Eds), *Living and studying abroad: Research and practice*. Languages for intercultural communication and education (12 series). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Crows Nest, NSW, Australia; Sage Publications.
- Dall'Alba, G. (2000). Reflections on some faces of phenomenography. In J. A. Bowden & E. Walshe (Eds), *Phenomenography*, Qualitative research methods series. Melbourne, Australia: RMIT University Press.
- de Luque, M. S. (2004). Uncertainty avoidance. In R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman, & V. Gupta (Eds), *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Deardorff, D. K. (2006). Identification and assessment of intercultural competence as a student outcome of internationalization. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 10 (3), 241-266.
- Den Hartog, D. N. (2004). Assertiveness. In R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman, & V. Gupta (Eds), *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Devlin, K. (2015). *Learning a foreign language a 'must' in Europe, not so in America*. PEW Research Center. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/07/13/learning-a-foreign-language-a-must-in-europe-not-so-in-america/>
- Di Silvio, F., Donovan, A., & Malone, M. E. (2014). The effect of study abroad homestay placements: participant perspectives and oral proficiency gains. *Foreign Language Annals*, 47(1), 168-188. doi:0.1111/flan.12064

- Douglas, M. (1966/2001). *Purity and danger: An analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- D'Souza, C., Singaraju, S., Halimi, T., & Sillivan Mort, G. (2016). Examination of cultural shock, inter-cultural sensitivity and willingness to adapt, *Education + Training*, 58(9), 906- 925, doi:10.1108/ET-09-2015-0087
- Eckerdal, A. (2009). *Novice programming students' learning of concepts and practise* (Doctoral dissertation). A doctoral dissertation from the Faculty of Science and Technology, Uppsala University. Digital comprehensive summaries of Uppsala dissertations from the Faculty of Science and Technology. Available at <http://user.it.uu.se/~annae/FullAvh-Spikenheten.pdf>
- Eklund, E., & Hansson, E. (2012). *Do u understand mzungu*?: Volunteers' conception of ICC development* (Bachelor's thesis in education). Blekinge Institute of Technology, Section of Management, Programme in Social Science for communication and learning, Karlskrona, Sweden. Retrieved from <http://www.diva-portal.se/smash/get/diva2:832649/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL). (2003). *Mobility of secondary school pupils and recognition of study periods spent abroad* (Report), R. Ruffino & E. Hardt (Eds). European Federation for Intercultural Learning, Brussels.
- Fantini, A. (2000). *A central concern: Developing intercultural competence*. Report by the Intercultural Communicative Competence Task Force (1994). Brattleboro, VT, World Learning. Retrieved from <https://agustinazubair.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/6-developing-intercultural-competence1.pdf>
- Fantini, A. E. (2006). *Exploring and assessing intercultural competence: Final report*. Battleboro, VT, Federation EIL. Retrieved from: https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1001&context=worldlearning_publications/
- Fantini, A. E. (2012). Language: An essential component of intercultural communicative competence. In *The Routledge handbook of language and intercultural communication*, Abingdon, England: Routledge.
- Fine, G. A. (1993). The sad demise, mysterious disappearance, and glorious triumph of Symbolic Interactionism. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 19 (1993), 61-87. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2083381>
- Fischler, C. (1988). Food, self and identity. *Anthropology of Food*, 27(2). 275-292. doi:10.1177/053901888027002005
- Fiske, A. P. (1992). The four elementary forms of sociality: Framework for a unified theory of social relations. *Psychological Review* 99(4), 689-723. doi:10.1037/0033-295X.99.4.689
- Flanagan, J. C. (1954). The critical incident technique. *Psychological Bulletin*, 51(4), 327-358. doi:10.1037

- Fram, S. M. (2013). The constant comparative analysis method outside of Grounded Theory. *The Qualitative Report*, 18(1), 1-25. Retrieved from <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol18/iss1/1>
- French, W., & Bell, C. (1979). *Organization development: Behavioral science interventions for organization improvement*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Freese, L. (1980). Formal theorizing. *Annual review of Sociology*, 6, 187-212. <http://www.jstor.org/>
- Fukuyama, F. (1995). *Trust: The social virtues and the creation of prosperity*. London, England: Hamish Hamilton Ltd (Penguin Books).
- Furlong, P., & Marsh, D. (1995/2010). A skin not a sweater: Ontology and epistemology in political science. In D. Marsh (Ed), *Theory and methods in political science* (3rd ed., 2010). Basingstoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Galletta, A. (2013) *Mastering the semi-structured interview and beyond: From research design to analysis and publication*. New York, NY: NYU Press.
- Gee, J. P. (1986). Units in the production of narrative discourse. *Discourse Processes*, 9(4), 381-422. doi:10.1080/01638538609544650
- Geeraert, N., Demoulin, S., & Demes, K. (2014). Choose your (international) contacts wisely: A multilevel analysis on the impact of intergroup contact while living abroad. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 38(2014), 86-96. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2013.08.001
- Gibbons, P. (2015). *Scaffolding language scaffolding learning: Teaching English language learners in the mainstream classroom* (2nd ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinem.
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967), *The discovery of Grounded Theory: strategies for qualitative research*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Goldini, F. (2013). Students' immersion experiences in study abroad. *Foreign Language Annals*, 46(3), 359–376. American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. doi:10.1111/flan.12047
- Green, E., Deschamps, J. & Páez, D. (2005). Variation of individualism and collectivism within and between 20 countries: A typological analysis. *Journal of Cross Cultural Psychology* 36(3), 321-339. doi:10.1177/0022022104273654
- Gregor, S. (2006). The nature of theory in Information Systems. *MIS Quarterly*, 30(3), 611-642. <http://www.jstor.org/>
- Gutiérrez-Almarza, G., Durán-Martínez, R., & Beltrán Llavador, F. (2015). Identifying students' intercultural communicative competence at the beginning of their placement: Towards the enhancement of study abroad programmes. *Intercultural Education*, 26(1), 73-85. doi:10.1080/14675986.2015.997004
- Hall, E. T. (1959/1981). *The silent language*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Hall, E. T. (1976/1981). *Beyond culture*. New York, NY: Random House.

- Hall, S., & Toll, S. (1999). *Raising intercultural awareness in preparation for periods of residence abroad: A review of current practice in UKHE*. Retrieved (January 20, 2011) from <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/users/interculture/reports.htm#sp1>
- Hammer Holdings (2018). *IDI Products, licensing and pricing: The Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC™)*. Retrieved from <https://idiinventory.com/products/the-intercultural-development-continuum-idc/>
- Hammer, M. (n.d). *Assessment of the impact of the AFS study abroad experience. Executive Summary, overall findings*. Hammer Consulting, LLC. <https://afs.org/education/education-research/>
- Hammer M. R. (2009). The Intercultural Development Inventory. In *Contemporary leadership and intercultural competence*, M. A. Moodian (Ed.), pp. 203–218. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hammer, M. R. (2012). *The Intercultural Development Inventory: A new frontier in assessment and development of intercultural competence*. Retrieved from <https://idiinventory.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/HAMMER-IDI-STUDY-ABROAD-ARTICLE-2012.pdf>
- Hammond, R. A., & Axelrod, R. (2006). The Evolution of ethnocentrism. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 50(6), 926-936. doi:10.1177/0022002706293470
- Hansel, B. (1988). Developing an international perspective in youth through exchange programs. *Education and Urban Society*, 20(2), 177-195. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ371441>
- Hansel, B. (2008). *AFS long term impact study report 2: Looking at intercultural sensitivity, anxiety and experience with other cultures*. AFS International Research Office. Retrieved (October 10, 2009) from <https://afs.org/education/education-research/>
- Hansel, B. (2009). *Using the IDI for impact assessment: Findings, strengths, challenges and practical considerations*. Paper presented at the 6th Biennial Conference of the IAIR (International Academy of Intercultural Research) Conference, Honolulu, Hawai'i, August 15-19, 2009.
- Hansel, B., & Grove, C. (1985). Learning by doing: What a high school student can learn from a homestay abroad. *The Journal of College Admission, Spring*, 26-31. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ319576>
- Hansel, B., & Grove, N. (1986). International student exchange programs - Are the educational benefits real? *NASSP Bulletin*, 70(487), 84-90. doi:10.1177/019263658607048718
- Harder, P. (1980). Discourse as self-expression: On the reduced personality of the second-language learner. *Applied Linguistics*, 1(3), 262-270. doi:10.1093/applin/1.3.262
- Harris, L. R. (2011). Phenomenographic perspectives on the structure of conceptions: The origins, purposes, strengths, and limitations of the what/how and referential/structural frameworks. *Educational Research Review*, 6, 109-124. doi:10.1016/j.edurev.2011.01.002

- Hasselgren, B., & Beach, D. (2006). Phenomenography – a “good-for-nothing” brother of phenomenology?: Outline of an analysis. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 16(2), 191-202. doi:10.1080/0729436970160206
- Hes, H., Williamson, K., & Lloyd, A. (2007). Critical incident technique. In S. Lipu (Ed), *Exploring methods in information literacy research. Topics in Australasian library and information studies, number 28*. Centre for Information Studies, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, N.S.W. Retrieved from <http://eprints.qut.edu.au/17545/1/17545.pdf>
- Hitchcock, L., Vu, Q., & Tran, D. (2010). Intercultural competence in practice: Reflections on establishing cross-cultural collaborative education programmes. *ACM Inroads*, 1(3), 85-93. doi:10.1145/1835428.1835447
- Ho, C. L. (2017). Using phenomenography to investigate the enacted object of learning in teaching activities: the case of teaching Chinese characters in Hong Kong preschools. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 61(2), 169–186. doi:10.1080/00313831.2015.1119728
- Hofstede, G. (2001). Culture's consequences second edition: *Comparing values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across nations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hofstede, G. (2011). Dimensionalizing cultures: The Hofstede model in context. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1), 1-26. doi:10.9707/2307-0919.1014
- Hofstede, G. J. (2009). The moral circle in intercultural competence. In D. K. Deardorff (Ed.), *The SAGE handbook of intercultural competence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hofstede, G., & Bond, M. H. (1988). The Confucian connection: From cultural roots to economic growth. *Organization dynamics*, 16(4), 5-21. doi:10.9707/2307-0919.1014
- Hofstede, G., & Hofstede G. J. (2005). *Cultures and organisation: Software of the mind*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.
- Holmes, P., Bavieri, L., & Ganassin, S. (2015). Developing intercultural understanding for study abroad: Students' and teachers' perspectives on pre-departure intercultural learning. *Intercultural Education*, 26(1), 16-30. doi:10.1080/14675986.2015.993250
- House, R.J. (2004). Illustrative examples of GLOBE findings. In R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman, & V. Gupta (Eds), *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- House, R. J., & Javidan, M. (2004). Overview of GLOBE. In R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman, & V. Gupta (Eds), *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hov, R. (2007). *Nursing care for patients on the edge of life: Nurses' experiences related to withholding or withdrawing curative treatment, in the contexts of ICU and nursing home* (Dissertation). Faculty of Social Life Sciences, Nursing Science, Karlstad University Studies,

- 2007:33. Retrieved from <http://swepub.kb.se/bib/swepub:oai:DiVA.org:kau-1141?tab2=abs&language=en>
- Howard-Hamilton, M. F., Richardson, B. J., & Shufurd, B. (1998). Promoting multicultural education: A holistic approach. *College Student Affairs Journal*, 18(1), 5-17. Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/openview/1e907625f86d7a419f31746665e28446/1?cbl=47847&pq-origsite=gscholar>
- Hsieh, H., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(9), 1277-1288. doi:10.1177/1049732305276687
- Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B. (2002). Narrative Analysis. In A. M. Huberman & M. B. Miles (Eds), *The qualitative researcher's companion*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Inda, J. X., & Rosaldo, R., (2001). A world in motion. In J. X. Inda & R. Rosaldo (Eds), *The anthropology of globalisation*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Javidan M., House, R. J., & Dorfman, P. W. (2004). A nontechnical summary of GLOBE findings. In R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman, & V. Gupta (Eds), *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- JET Programme. (2017). *The Japan Exchange and Teaching programme*. Retrieved from <http://jetprogramme.org/>
- Jokikokko, K. (2005). Interculturally trained Finnish teachers' conceptions of diversity and intercultural competence. *Intercultural Education*, 16(1), 69-83. doi:10.1080/14636310500061898
- Kang, H., & Chang, B. (2016). Examining culture's impact on the learning behaviors of international students from Confucius culture studying in western online learning context. *Journal of International Students*, 6(3), 779-797. <https://files.eric.ed.gov>
- Karp, D., & Yoels, W. (1979). *Symbols, selves, and society: Understanding interaction*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Karp, D., & Yoels, W. (1986). *Sociology in everyday life*. Long Grove, IL: F.E. Peacock Publishers.
- Keessing, R. (1974). Theories of culture. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 3: 73-97. doi: 10.1146/annurev.an.03.100174.000445
- Kim, Y. Y. (1998). *Communication and cross-cultural Adaptation*. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Kim, Y. Y. (2001). *Becoming intercultural: An integrative theory of communication and cross-cultural adaptation.*: Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Kramsch, C. (2010). *The symbolic dimensions of the intercultural. Plenary Speeches: Lang. Teach.* (2011), 44(3), 354–367. doi:10.1017/S0261444810000431

- Kruse, J. A., Didion, J., & Perzynski, K. (2014). *Utilizing the Intercultural Development Inventory® to develop intercultural competence*. Springer Open online. doi:10.1186/2193-1801-3-334
- Kuchinke, K. P., Ardichvili, A., & Lokkesmoe, K. J. (2014). Developing cross-cultural awareness through foreign immersion programs: Implications of university study abroad research for expatriate development. *University Forum on Human Resource Development (UF-HRD)*, 2014. Retrieved from <https://www.ufhrd.co.uk/>
- Kuckartz, U. (2002). *Qualitative text analysis: A guide to methods, practice & using software*. London, England: Sage Publications.
- Larsson, J., & Holmström, I. (2007). Phenomenographic or phenomenological analysis: does it matter?: Examples from a study on anesthesiologists' work. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being*, 2, 55-64. doi:10.1080/17482620601068105
- Larzén, E. (2005). *In Pursuit of an intercultural dimension in EFL-teaching: Exploring cognitions among Finland-Swedish comprehensive school teachers*. Biskopsgatan, Finland: Åbo Akademi University Press.
- Leech, N. L., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2011). Beyond constant comparison qualitative data analysis: Using NVivo. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 26(1), 70-84. doi:10.1037/a0022711
- Lewin, K. (1936). Some socio-psychological differences between US and Germany. In K. Lewin (Ed), *Principles of topological psychology*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Lewis, R. D. (2006). *When cultures collide: Leading across cultures* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Nicholas Brealey International.
- Linehan, D. (2014). *Intercultural leadership: Variations in Chinese Canadian perspectives of career mobility into senior leadership roles* (Doctoral dissertation). Faculty of Social and Applied Sciences, Royal Roads University, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/10170/794>
- Litchfield, A. T. (2005). *Modelling tribal genetics for information systems design and development* (Masters thesis). Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand. Retrieved from <http://aut.researchgateway.ac.nz/>
- Lo M. L., & Marton, F. (2011). Towards a science of the art of teaching: Using variation theory as a guiding principle of pedagogical design, *International Journal for Lesson and Learning Studies*, 1(1), 7-22, doi.org/10.1108/20468251211179678
- Lokkesmoe, K. J., Kuchinke, K. P., & Ardichvili, A. (2016) Developing cross-cultural awareness through foreign immersion programs: Implications of university study abroad research for global competency development. *European Journal of Training and Development*, 40(3), 155- 170, doi:10.1108/EJTD-07-2014-0048

- Logan, P. M. (2013). On culture: Edward B. Tylor's *Primitive Culture*, 1871. D. F. Felluga (Ed.), Extension of *Romanticism and Victorianism on the Net*. Retrieved (April 21, 2013) from http://www.branchcollective.org/?ps_articles=peter-logan-on-culture-edward-b-tylors-primitive-culture-1871
- Lustig, M., & Koester, J. (1999). *Intercultural competence: Intercultural communication across cultures* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.
- Ma, G. (2015). Food, eating behavior, and culture in Chinese society. *Journal of Ethnic Food*, 2(2015), 195-199. doi:10.1016/j.jef.2015.11.004
- MacKinnon, G. (2005). Symbolic interactionism: A lens for judging the social constructivist potential of learner-centered chemistry software. *International Journal of Technology in Teaching and Learning* 1(20), 89-102. doi:10.1.1.521.5371
- Manasatchakun, L., & Zaphiris, P. (2017). Using phenomenography to understand cultural values in Facebook. In: P. Zaphiris & A. Ioannou (Eds), *Learning and collaboration technologies. Novel learning ecosystems, LCT 2017*. Lecture Notes in Computer Science, vol 10295. Springer. doi:10.1007/978-3-319-58509-3_18
- Marton, F. (1981). Phenomenography - describing conceptions of the world around us. *Instructional Science*, 10, 177-200. doi:10.1007/BF00132516
- Marton, F. (1986). Phenomenography - A research approach investigating different understandings of reality. *Journal of Thought*, 21(2), 28-49. <http://www.jstor.org>
- Marton, F., & Booth, S. (1997). *Learning and awareness*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Maxwell, J. W. (2006). Re-situating. constructionism. In J. Weiss, J. Nolan, J. Hunsinger, & P. Trifonas (Eds), *International handbook of virtual learning environments* [Springer e-Books version]. Retrieved from <http://www.springer.com/gp/book/9781402038020>
- McKenzie, J. (2003). *Variation and change in university teachers' ways of experience in teaching* (Doctoral thesis). University of Technology, Sydney, Australia. Retrieved from <https://opus.lib.uts.edu.au/bitstream/10453/20187/2/02whole.pdf>
- Mittapalli, K., & Samaras, A. (2008). Madhubani art: A journey of an education researcher seeking self-development answers through art and self-study. *The Qualitative Report* 13(2), 244-261. Retrieved from <http://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol13/iss2/7>
- Moltote, A. (2015). *An investigation of intercultural relations through adult education: In the case of Enewary and surrounding communities in North Shewa Zone of the Amhara National Regional State* (Masters thesis). Department of Curriculum & Teachers Professional Development, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Retrieved from <http://etd.aau.edu.et/handle/123456789/11357>

- Munroe, R. L., & Munroe, R. H. (1980/1997). A comparative anthropological perspective. In J. W. Berry et al. (Eds), *Handbook of cross-cultural psychology (Vol. 1), Theory and method* (2nd ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Neuman, W. L. (2003). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (5th ed.) Boston, MA: Pearson Education.
- Newman, W. H., Summer, C. E., & Warren, E. K. (1977). *The process of management*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Newman, M., & Robey, D. (1992). A Social process model of user-analyst relationships. *MIS Quarterly*, 16(2), 249-266. <http://www.jstor.org>
- Nguyễn, D. (c.1807/1983). *The tale of Kiều* (Bilingual ed.). Translated and annotated by Huỳnh Sanh Thông. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Oberg, K. (1960). Culture shock: Adjustment to new cultural environments. *Practical Anthropology*, 7, 177-182. doi:10.1177/009182966000700405
- O'Neil, D. (n.d [2002-2006]). *What is culture?* Retrieved April 8, 2013 from http://anthro.palomar.edu/culture/culture_1.htm
- Ornek, F. (2008). *An overview of a theoretical framework of phenomenography in qualitative education research: An example from physics education research*. Asia-Pacific forum on science learning and teaching 9 (2, Article 11). Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/9db3/acc504599223cde8bdb6f403a29f45cc4dcf.pdf>
- Oyserman, D., & Uskul, A. K. (2015). Individualism and collectivism: Societal-level processes with implications for individual-level and societal-level outcomes. In F. van de Vijver, D. A. van Hemert, Y. H. Poortinga (Eds), *Multilevel analysis of individuals and cultures* [Google eBooks version]. New York, NY: Psychology Press, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Pang, M. F. (2003). Two faces of variation: On continuity in the phenomenographic movement. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research* 47(2), 145-156. doi: 10.1080 /00313830308612
- Pan'kova, T., & Pavlyuk, I. (2014). Ukrainian customs and traditions. In *Developing Intercultural Competence through English: Focus on Ukrainian and Polish cultures*, A. Niżegorodcew, Y. Bystrov, & M. Kleban (Eds.), pp. 87-96. Krakow, Poland: Jagiellonian University Press.
- Papert, S., & Harel, I. (1991). Situating constructionism. In S. Papert & I. Harel (Eds), *Constructionism* (Ablex Publishing). Retrieved from: <http://www.papert.org/articles/SituatingConstructionism.html>
- Parker, B. & Myrick, F. (2011) The grounded theory method: deconstruction and reconstruction in a human patient simulation context', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 10(1): 73–85. <http://journals.sagepub.com/home/IJQ>

- Parsons, C. (2010). Constructivism and interpretive theory. In D. Marsh (Ed), *Theory and methods in political science* (3rd ed.) Basingstoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Pascale, C. (2011). *Cartographies of knowledge: Exploring qualitative epistemologies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Peace Corps. (2013). *Peace Corps: About us*. Retrieved from <http://www.peacecorps.gov/>
- Pearson-Evans, A. (2006). Recording the journey: Diaries of Irish students in Japan. In M. Byram & A. Feng (Eds), *Living and studying abroad: Research and practice*. Languages for intercultural communication and education (12 series). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Pinter, A. (2010). *Sojourner parents' perspectives on their children's adaptation processes during their first year in the UK* (Working paper). Centre for Applied Linguistics, University of Warwick. Retrieved from:
http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross_fac/globalpeople/resourcebank/researchpapers/processes_of_adaptation.pdf
- Plummer, K. (2000). Perspectives on cultural and social analysis. In B. S. Turner (Ed.), *The Blackwell companion to social theory* (2nd ed.). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- Podsiadlowski A., & Fox, S. (2011), Collectivist Value Orientations among Four Ethnic Groups: Collectivism in the New Zealand Context. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, 40(1), 5-18. Retrieved from 2011<https://www.psychology.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/Padsiadlowski.pdf>.
- Pope-Davis, D., Breaux, C., & Liu, W.M. (1997). A multicultural immersion experience: Filling a void in multicultural training. In D. B. Pope-Davis & H. L. K. Coleman (Eds.), *Multicultural counseling competencies: Assessment, education and training, and supervision*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Porto, M. (2013). Language and intercultural education: an interview with Michael Byram, *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 8(2): 143-162, doi: 10.1080/1554480X.2013.769196
- Prawat, R. S. (1996). Constructivisms, modern and postmodern, *Educational Psychologist*, 31(3-4), 215-225. doi:10.1080/00461520.1996.9653268
- Prus, R. (1996). *Symbolic interaction and ethnographic research: Intersubjectivity and the study of human lived experience*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Qi, X. (2011). Face: A Chinese concept in a global sociology. *Journal of Sociology*, 47(3), 279-295. doi:10.1177/1440783311407692
- Qian, J. (2009). *Host communication competence and mass media use among a sample of Chinese ESL students* (Doctoral thesis). Faculty of Education, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada. Retrieved from <https://qspace.library.queensu.ca/handle/1974/2577>

- Richardson, J. (1999). The concepts of methods and phenomenographic research. *Review of Educational Research*, 69(1), 53-82. doi:10.3102/00346543069001053
- Rienties, B., & Tempelaar, D. (2013). The role of cultural dimensions of international and Dutch students on academic and social integration and academic performance in the Netherlands. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 37(2013), 188–201. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2012.11.004
- Riessman, C. K. (2006). Narrative Analysis. In V. Jupp (Ed.), *The SAGE dictionary of social research methods*. Retrieved from <http://srmo.sagepub.com/view/the-sage-dictionary-of-social-research-methods/n124.xml>
- Risager, K. (2005). Foreword. In L. Sercu (Ed.), *Foreign language teaching and intercultural competence*. Languages for intercultural communication and education (10 Series). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Ryan, P. M. (2003). Searching for the intercultural person. In G. Alred, M. Byram, & M. Fleming (Eds.), *Intercultural experience and education*. Languages for intercultural communication and education (2 Series). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Saldaña, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. London, England: Sage Publications.
- Schussler, D. L. (2006) Defining dispositions: Wading through murky waters, *The Teacher Educator*, 41(4): 251-268, doi: 10.1080/08878730609555387
- Schwartz, S.H. (1994). Beyond individualism/collectivism: New cultural dimensions of values. In U. Kim, H. C. Triandis, C. Kagitcibasi, S. Choi, & G. Yoon (Eds.), *Individualism and collectivism: Theory, method and applications*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Schwartz, S. J., & Zamboanga, B. L. (2008). Testing Berry's model of acculturation: A confirmatory latent approach. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 14(4), 275-285. doi:10.1037/a0012818
- Schneider, J. W. (1985). Social problems theory: The constructionist view. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 11: 209-229, doi:10.1146/annurev.so.11.080185.001233
- Searle, J. R. (1998). Social ontology and the philosophy of society. *Analyse & Kritik*, 20(2), 143-158. doi:10.1515/aok-1998-0201
- Sercu, L. (2005a). The future of intercultural competence in foreign language education: Recommendations for professional development, education policy and research. In L. Sercu (Ed.), *Foreign language teaching and intercultural competence*. Languages for intercultural communication and education (10 Series). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Sercu, L. (2005b). Teaching foreign languages in an intercultural world. In L. Sercu (Ed.), *Foreign language teaching and intercultural competence*. Languages for intercultural communication and education (10 Series). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

- Shao, Y., & Crook, C. (2015). The potential of a mobile group blog to support cultural learning among overseas students. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 19(5): 399-422. doi: 10.1177/1028315315574101
- Shaules, J. (2007). *'Deep Culture': The hidden challenges of global living*. Languages for intercultural communication and education (2 Series), Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Shiri, S. (2015). The homestay in intensive language study abroad: Social networks, language socialization, and developing intercultural competence. *Foreign Language Annals*, 48(1), 5-25. doi:10.1111/flan.12127
- Siisiäinen, M. (2000). *Two concepts of social capital: Bourdieu versus Putnam*. Paper presented at ISTR Fourth International Conference "The third sector: For what and for whom?", Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/10535/7661>
- Sin, S. (2010). Considerations of quality in phenomenographic research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 9(4), 305-319. doi:10.1177/160940691000900401
- Sjöström, B., & Dahlgren, L. O. (2002). Applying phenomenography in nursing research. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 40(3), 349-345. doi:10.1046/j.1365-2648.2002.02375.
- Spencer-Oatey, H. (2013). Critical incidents a compilation of quotations for the intercultural field. *GlobalPAD core concepts*. <http://go.warwick.ac.uk/globalpadintercultural>
- Spitzberg, B. H., & Changnon, G. (2009). Conceptualizing intercultural competence. In D. K. Deardorff (Ed.), *The Sage handbook of intercultural competence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Starr-Glass, D. (2016). Institutional asymmetry regarding inbound and outbound student migration: Assumptions, implications, and policy. In K. Bista & C Foster, (Eds), *Global perspectives and local challenges surrounding international student mobility*. Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference. doi:10.4018/978-1-4666-9746-1
- Stoodley, I. (2009). *IT professionals' experience of ethics and its implications for IT education* (Doctoral thesis). Faculty of Science and Technology, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia. Retrieved from <http://eprints.qut.edu.au/26105/>
- Strandmark, M., & Hedelin, B. (2002). Phenomenological methods reveal an inside perspective on health and ill health. In R. Hallberg (Ed.), *Qualitative Methods in Public Health Research*. Lund, Sweden: Studentlitteratur.
- Stryker, S. (1987). The vitalization of symbolic interactionism. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 50(1), 83-94. <http://www.jstor.org/>
- Stryker, S. (2008). From Mead to a structural symbolic interactionism and beyond. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 34, 15-31. doi:10.1146/annurev.soc.34.040507.134649

- Stryker, S., & Vryan, K. (2003). The symbolic interactionist frame. In J. Delmater (Ed.), *Handbook of social psychology*. New York, NY: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.
- Suanet, I., & van de Vijver, F. (2008). Perceived cultural distance and acculturation among exchange students in Russia. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 19, 182–197. doi:10.1002/casp.989
- Svensson, L. (1997). Theoretical foundations of phenomenology. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 16(2), 159-171. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cher20>
- Tan, L. (2016, April 26). Fewer pupils learning languages. *New Zealand Herald*, Retrieved from <http://www.nzherald.co.nz/>
- Tarp, G. (2006). Student perspectives in short-term study programmes abroad: A grounded theory study. In M. Byram & A. Feng (Eds), *Living and studying abroad: Research and practice*. Languages for intercultural communication and education (12 Series). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Thota, N., & Berglund, A. (2012). *At the crossroad of computer science and intercultural interactions: A framework for analysis and interpretation*. Paper presented to EARLI SIG 9 Conference on Phenomenography and Variation Theory, Jönköping University, Sweden, 27-28 August, 2012. urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-180897
- Thota, N., & Berglund, A. (2016). Learning computer science: Dimensions of variation within *What Chinese students learn*. *ACM Transactions on Computing Education.*, 16(3), 1-27. doi:10.1145/2853199
- Ting-Toomey, S. (2009). Intercultural conflict competence as a facet of intercultural competence development. In D. K. Deardorff (Ed.), *The SAGE handbook of intercultural competence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Törner M., & Pousette A, (2009). Safety in construction – a comprehensive description of the characteristics of high safety standards in construction work, from the combined perspective of supervisors and experienced workers. *Journal of Safety Research*, 40(6), 399-409. doi:10.1016/j.jsr.2009.09.005
- Triandis, H. C. (1995). *Individualism and collectivism*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Triandis, H. C. (2004a). Foreword. In R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman, & V. Gupta (Eds) *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Triandis, H. C. (2004b). *Culture and social behaviour* (Reprint ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.
- Triandis, H. C., & Gelfand, M. J. (1998). Converging measurement of horizontal and vertical individualism and collectivism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74(1), 118-128. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.74.1.118

- Trompenaars, F., & Hampton-Turner, C. (1998). *Riding the waves of culture: Understanding diversity in global business* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Trompenaars, F., & Woolliams, P. (2009). Research application: Toward a general framework of competence for today's global village. In D. K. Deardorff (Ed.), *The SAGE handbook of intercultural competence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Trumbull, E., Rothstein-Fisch, C., & Hernandez, E. (2003). Parent involvement in schooling: According to whose values? *The School Community Journal*, 13(2), 45-72. <http://www.adi.org/journal/fw03/>
- Tylor, E. B. (1871/1929). *Primitive culture: researches into the development of mythology, philosophy, religion, language, art, and custom* (Vol. 1). New York, NY: Brentano's.
- Uljens, M. (1996). *On the philosophical foundation of phenomenography*. Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321275167_On_the_philosophical_foundations_of_phenomenography
- United Nations. (2018) *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2018*. Retrieved from https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/publication/WESP2018_Full_Web-1.pdf
- Valsiner, J. (2007). *Culture in minds and societies: Foundations of cultural psychology*. New Delhi, India: Sage Publications.
- van Deurzen, E. (1998). *Paradox and passion: An existential approach to therapy and counselling*. Chichester, England: Wiley.
- van Ek, J. (1986). Objectives for foreign language learning (Vol. 1). Project No. 12; *Learning and teaching modern languages for communication Council for Cultural Co-operation Council of Europe* (1st ed.). Retrieved from: <http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Communication%20in%20the%20modern%20languages%20classroom%20web.pdf>
- Walker, C. (1998). Learning to learn: phenomenography and children's learning. *Education and Child Psychology*, 15(3), 25-33.
- Wang, T. (2008). Intercultural dialogue and understanding. In L. Dunn & M. Wallace (Eds), *Teaching in transnational higher education: Enhancing learning for offshore*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ward, C. (2008). Thinking outside the Berry boxes: New perspectives on identity, acculturation and intercultural relations. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 32(2), 104-114. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2007.11.002
- Ward, C., Bochner, S., & Furnham, A. (2001). *The psychology of culture shock* (2nd ed.). East Sussex England: Routledge.

- Ward, C., & Kennedy, A. (1996). Crossing cultures: The relationship between psychological and sociocultural dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment. In J. Pandey, D. Sinha, & D. Bhawuk (Eds), *Asian contributions to cross-cultural psychology*. New Delhi, India: Sage Publications.
- Ward, C., & Kennedy, A. (1999). The measurement of sociocultural adaptation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 23(4), 659-677. doi:10.1016/S0147-1767(99)00014-0
- Ward, C., Okura, Y., Kennedy, A., & Kojima, T. (1998). The U-curve on trial: A longitudinal study of the psychological and sociocultural adjustment during cross-cultural transition. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 22(3), 277-291. doi:10.1016/S0147-1767(98)00008-X
- Watson, J. R., Siska, P., & Wolfel, R. L. (2013) Assessing gains in language proficiency, cross-cultural competence, and regional awareness during study abroad: A preliminary study. *Foreign Language Annals*, 46(1), 62–79. American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. doi:10.1111/flan.12016
- Weaver, G. (1993). Understanding and coping with cross-cultural adjustment stress. In R. M. Paige (Ed.), *Education for the intercultural experience*. Yarmouth, ME: Maine Intercultural Press, Inc
- Weber, S. (2003). A framework for teaching and learning "Intercultural Competence". In G. Alred, M. Byram, & M. Fleming (Eds), *Intercultural experience and education*. Languages for intercultural communication and education (2 Series). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Wellington, J. (2000). *Educational research: Contemporary issues and practical approaches*. London, England: Continuum.
- Whorf, B. L. (1988). The Relation of habitual thought and behavior to language. In Coupland N., Jaworski A. (Eds) *Sociolinguistics*. Modern Linguistics Series. Palgrave, London. doi:10.1007/978-1-349-25582-5_35
- Wihlborg, M. (2005). *A Pedagogical stance on internalising education*. (Doctoral dissertation), Lund University Department of Sociology: Lund, Sweden. ISBN 91-628-6593-5.
- Willis, A. (2017). The efficacy of phenomenography as a cross-cultural methodology for educational research. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 6 Feb 2017, pp. 1-17 doi: 10.1080/1743727X.2017.1283398
- Willis, A., & Allen, W. (2011). The importance of cultural humility in cross cultural research. *International Journal of Innovative Interdisciplinary Research*, 1, 111-119. b <http://iiead.com.au/journal.html>
- World Learning. (2017). *World Learning: Global development and exchange*. Retrieved from <http://www.worldlearning.org/>
- Yamamoto, S. (1998). Applying the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity in the Japanese context. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, 2, 77-100.

- Yashima, T. (2009). The effects of international volunteer work experiences on intercultural competence of Japanese youth. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 34, 268-282. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2009.12.003
- Yates, C., Partridge, H., & Bruce, C (2017). Exploring information experiences through phenomenography. *Library and Information Research*, 36(112), 96-119. <https://www.lirjournal.org.uk>
- Zaharna, R.S. (2009). An associative approach to Intercultural Communication Competence in the Arab world. In D. K. Deardorff (Ed.), *The SAGE handbook of intercultural competence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Zarate, G. (2003). The recognition of intercultural competences: From individual experience to certification. In G. Alred, M. Byram, & M. Fleming (Eds), *Intercultural experience and education*. Languages for intercultural communication and education (2 Series). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Appendix A: Ethics Documents and Participant Information Sheets



MEMORANDUM

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

To: Sharon Harvey
From: **Madeline Banda** Executive Secretary, AUTEC
Date: 24 October 2008
Subject: Ethics Application Number 08/220 **Attaining intercultural competence: A phenomenographic analysis of a cultural immersion study abroad programme.**

Dear Sharon

Thank you for providing written evidence as requested. I am pleased to advise that it satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) at their meeting on 13 October 2008 and that I have approved your ethics application in stages. This delegated approval is made in accordance with section 5.3.2.3 of AUTEC's *Applying for Ethics Approval: Guidelines and Procedures* and is subject to endorsement at AUTEC's meeting on 10 November 2008.

Your ethics application is approved for a period of three years until 24 October 2011.

This approval is for the initial stage of the research only and full information about the interview and later stages needs to be provided and approved before they occur.

I advise that as part of the ethics approval process, you are required to submit the following to AUTEC:

- A brief annual progress report using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/about/ethics>. When necessary this form may also be used to request an extension of the approval at least one month prior to its expiry on 24 October 2011;
- A brief report on the status of the project using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/about/ethics>. This report is to be submitted either when the approval expires on 24 October 2011 or on completion of the project, whichever comes sooner;

It is a condition of approval that AUTEC is notified of any adverse events or if the research does not commence. AUTEC approval needs to be sought for any alteration to the research, including any alteration of or addition to any documents that are provided to participants. You are reminded that, as applicant, you are responsible for ensuring that research undertaken under this approval occurs within the parameters outlined in the approved application.

Please note that AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval from an institution or organisation for your research, then you will need to make the arrangements necessary to obtain this.

When communicating with us about this application, we ask that you use the application number and study title to enable us to provide you with prompt service. Should you have any further enquiries regarding this matter, you are welcome to contact Charles Grinter, Ethics Coordinator, by email at charles.grinter@aut.ac.nz or by telephone on 921 9999 at extension 8860.

On behalf of the AUTEK and myself, I wish you success with your research and look forward to reading about it in your reports.

Yours sincerely



Madeline Banda

Executive Secretary

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: Leo Hitchcock leo.hitchcock@aut.ac.nz

Participant Information Sheet



Date Information Sheet Produced:

November 12, 2008

Project Title

Attaining Intercultural Competence: A phenomenographic analysis of a cultural immersion study abroad programme.

Aims

To examine and analyse the effects of the experiences of study abroad exchange students on the development of Intercultural Competence.

An Invitation

My name is Leo Hitchcock and I am currently enrolled in a doctoral programme (PhD) at AUT University. My research project focuses on the effects of a study abroad student exchange. I invite you to take part in this project by contributing information about the cross-cultural experiences you have that influence your “ways of seeing” aspects of your host culture and of your own culture.

Your participation in the research is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw from the process anytime before the data collection process is complete in January 2010. If you do this you can request that any data you have contributed be destroyed and not included in the final thesis.

What is the purpose of this research?

It is expected that this research will;

1. Contribute to knowledge about study abroad experiences and the understanding of how intercultural competencies are developed.
2. Help future study abroad students with their development of competencies in living and studying in a different culture.
3. Contribute to knowledge regarding the assessment of intercultural competence leading to a possible qualification (as a bi-product of this research project).

How was I chosen for this invitation?

You were chosen for this research because you are a successful AFS exchange applicant about to depart on your exchange programme.

What will happen in this research?

I will be asking you to keep a record of the significant experiences that you have relating to the culture you are in and your “ways of seeing” (your perceptions of) that experience. You may choose how you do this; either in a paper-based

journal, or electronic mp3 recorder (you will be provided with this), or by entry to a secure online 'blog'. You will be given an assistance sheet to help you.

It will be necessary to send me copies of the data you record every month or so. We can work this out at our participant recruitment session.

I need to make contact with you on a 2-monthly or 3-monthly basis by email or telephone to clarify any issues you may have about this research. I also need to interview you on your return to New Zealand/just prior to your departure from New Zealand.

What are the discomforts and risks?

It is possible that some discomfort might occur from the recall of any culture shock that may be associated with the experience being recalled. We can discuss this at our recruitment and agreement interview.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

If it becomes too uncomfortable for you we can consult your AFS support person. If, after reflection, you do not subsequently wish your views of any incident to be publicly known then you may request that this particular comment be struck from the records.

What are the benefits?

This research will deepen understandings of the experiences of study-abroad exchange students. In addition, it will advance the existing literature and knowledge in the field of Intercultural Competence, the impacts of study abroad programmes, and the assessment of intercultural competence.

Will my privacy be protected?

Your privacy will be protected at all times as all the information you give me will be regarded as absolutely confidential. No identifiable real names will be used in any reports resulting from this research. Any identifiable personal information will be deleted to ensure your privacy and confidentiality

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There are no financial costs in this research project. However, I do understand that you will be giving up some time in order to contribute to this project. I estimate no greater than two hours per month at the start, reducing to 30 minutes per month in the middle stages, and one hour per month in the final stages.

The interview on your return to New Zealand will take no longer than 1 hour, 30 minutes.

There are no other anticipated costs or inconveniences related to this project. You will be provided with all the materials needed to record your experiences e.g.. a journal into which you can handwrite the information, or an mp3 recording device for electronic recording, or a log-in to a secure online blog.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation and participate in the research?

Please take a week or so to consider your involvement as a participant. If you are interested in participating in this project please reply to me by email [provided] – or text or telephone me on [provided]. In any case I will contact you after one week.

If you do agree to participate in this research, you should complete and sign the attached Consent Form and return it to me.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

When this research is finished I will send you a brief (a few pages) summary of my findings. You will also be able to request an electronic version of my completed PhD at that time.

Please note that in addition to reporting the results of this research in my PhD thesis, I also intend to publish articles relating to the results of this research in academic fora such as journals and conference presentations and proceedings. You will also be able to request an electronic version of such articles.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr. Sharon Harvey, School of Languages and Social Sciences. [contact details provided]. Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEK, Madeline Banda, [contact details provided].

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Researcher Contact Details: Leo Hitchcock, [contact details provided].

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 24 October, 2008. AUTEK Reference number 08/220.

Consent Form for Participation in Research



Project title: Attaining Intercultural Competence: A phenomenographic analysis of a cultural immersion study abroad programme.

Project Supervisor: Dr Sharon Harvey

Researcher: Leo Hitchcock

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated November 12, 2008
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that I am required to record my experiences relating to the culture I find myself immersed in, and the perceptions I form from those experiences using the data recording instrument provided by the researcher and according to the prompt sheet provided.
- I understand that I will need to send progress data to the researcher regularly according to what is agreed.
- I understand that I will be interviewed on or before my return from my exchange programme, that notes will be taken during the interview, and that I will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself and/or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of the write up of the findings, without being disadvantaged in any way. If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be deleted and/or destroyed.
- I understand that all information I provide to the researcher will remain strictly confidential between me and the researcher and his supervisors.
- I understand a brief summary of the findings (results) will be sent to me on completion, and that I will be able to request a copy of the full PhD thesis and any other relevant publications at that time.
- I agree to take part in this research.

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:.....

Email address (or other contact details):

Date:

*Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 24 October, 2008.
AUTEC Reference number 08/220.*

Data recording prompt sheet



Research title: Attaining Intercultural Competence: A phenomenographic analysis of a cultural immersion study abroad programme.

Intercultural experience is unavoidable. We all have experiences that we learn something from; by being astonished, enthralled, bedazzled, confused, contradicted, unaccepted, alienated, misunderstood, welcomed, accepted, understood, overwhelmed, awestruck, shocked, outraged, disgusted, etc. Or maybe feel that aspects of other social systems are unnecessary, immoral, backward, crazy, or outmoded, or, on the other hand, maybe we feel that they are better than our own!

Whenever you feel one of these emotions or feelings please record it. Additionally, please comment on anything that you may consider as being different culturally, and your reaction to it, that may **not** invoke any particular emotion. Follow these prompts:

1) What happened (the experience or observation)?

2) What are your reactions to that (your perception)?

Please date your entry.

Here are some examples from Bronwyn Horton, an AFS exchange student to Thailand in 1984 (Horton, Bronwyn; 1995, *Letters from Thailand*. Intercultural Encounter Series. AFS Australia, Sydney):

a) What happened?

We looked into the water and saw it was full of rubbish. Children play amongst rubble and rubbish

a) Reactions to the experience

The smell was dreadful. It's hard to imagine living in these crowded conditions...

b) What happened?

In the street we saw people cooking in woks rice and concoctions for sale including turkey heads and feet. Then they slap this food into dubious looking plates.

b) Reaction

I can't imagine how they can make their living this way.

c) What happened?

One purchase at the market really held my attention. A little plastic bag, neatly tied with what looked exactly like an oversized cockroach speckled with brown, and quite meaty inside!

c) Reaction

I was more intrigued than disgusted. Apparently I had eaten it before in a curry and this was the reason they had bought it. And by the way, you only eat the inside, not the whole thing.

d) What happened?

Remember when I first came here and told you about this dirty, under-privileged country?

d) Reaction

Well, this country has become my home. Now I no longer see the dirt, but instead a wonderful race of people. I'll be leaving only because I have to.

Researcher: Leo Hitchcock

leohitchcock@orcon.net.nz

Guidelines for interviews: Final for sojourn returnees

This interview should take place following a review of the participant's journal. Journal entries should be analysed for acculturation indicators, and shifts in attitude away from an ethnocentric viewpoint. Look for entries that indicate an ethnocentric viewpoint with no indication of any shift and highlight these.

Max. interview time: 1 hour 30 mins. Face to face (preferred) or Skype phone.

1. Thank participant for their involvement.
2. Clarify (read journal first) any ambiguous, anomalous or unclear entries in the journal.
3. With regard to <highlighted entry/ies> ask the participant if their attitude toward <this particular experience> changed during their sojourn
4. If the journal is sparse, ask the participant if there are any other significant experiences they wish to add.
5. If the journal is lacking in references to the significance of **language, social networks, and food rituals**, question the participant as follows:
 - a. How proficient are you in the local language (or local dialect) – how did becoming proficient affect your adaptation?
 - b. How did you form associations; are your social networks with local people or your like-group? How did forming associations affect your adaptation?
 - c. Same for food rituals: Did you adapt to local food and associated rituals or favour familiar (home) foods? How did this affect adaptation?
6. **If significant** (i.e. culturally), similarly question about:
 - a. Views of Time
 - b. Use of space
 - c. Accordance of status - Status of the female
 - d. Individualism/collectivism
 - e. Specific vs. diffuse (specifics ahead of relationships, that is, the segregation of the **task-in-hand** from relationships with the individuals involved)
 - f. Significance of **rules** versus relationships with people
 - g. Neutral versus affective (the range of feelings expressed)
 - h. Any other cultural constructs
7. How open were **you** before you went away to adapting to another culture (predisposition?). How open was the host community to accepting you? Was there pressure to conform/assimilate?
8. Ask about what adaptation aspects were covered in their pre-departure preparation.
9. Tell participant they will receive a summary of the overall data analysis. Leave a line of communication open should anything further need to be clarified.

Appendix B: AFS International MoU

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING Between AFS Intercultural Programs, Inc. & Leo Hitchcock

This Agreement is effective as of **December 1st, 2008**, (the "Agreement") between AFS Intercultural Programs, Inc., (with its affiliate organizations, collectively referred to "AFS"), a not-for-profit corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of New York, United States of America, and Leo Hitchcock (collectively referred to as the "Parties").

WHEREAS, Leo Hitchcock is doing a research project, as part of his PhD at AUT University, Auckland, New Zealand, that focuses on how study abroad students perceive their cultural immersion experiences;

WHEREAS, AFS is a project partner named in the research project and both Parties share the aim of developing mutual understanding between their roles and responsibilities regarding the Project as detailed in Annex A, herein attached; and

WHEREAS, the Parties desire to reiterate any oral agreement previously made and define their respective rights and obligations in connection with this collaboration;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises, covenants and agreements contained herein and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, the Parties agree to the following:

1. Definition

- (a) "Primary Data": refers to information collected from AFS participants and alumni which will be compiled by Leo Hitchcock.
- (b) "Secondary Data": refers to the Primary Data which will be anonymised by Leo Hitchcock.
- (c) "Findings": refers to the analyses and conclusions emanating from the Secondary Data completed by Leo Hitchcock as presented in the Final Report.
- (d) "Derivative Works": shall mean published books or articles published in magazines, newspapers, internet, or in another tangible form.
- (e) "Final Report": shall mean a word document summarizing the key and material findings.

2. Term of this Agreement

This Agreement shall continue in full force and effect from **December 1st, 2008** ("Commencement Date") to **December 31st, 2016**.

3. Responsibilities of AFS

- (a) AFS agrees to support Leo Hitchcock's Project as described in Annex A, throughout the length of the Project.
- (b) AFS agrees to provide access and knowledge to Leo Hitchcock to further the Project.
- (c) AFS agrees to allow Leo Hitchcock or AUT University, under the responsibility of Leo Hitchcock, to physically hold both the Primary Data and Secondary Data in its business residence.

4. Responsibilities of Leo Hitchcock

- (a) Leo Hitchcock agrees to provide AFS with a full analysis of the Secondary Data for the entire pool of participants.
- (b) Leo Hitchcock agrees to comply with all the local and international data protection and privacy laws with regard to the Primary and Secondary Data of the participant and alumni it will hold and process from its business residence.
- (c) Leo Hitchcock agrees to provide AFS with the Final Report of the Project, at the date stipulated in Annex A.
- (d) Leo Hitchcock agrees to use the Data gathered exclusively to further his Project, as described in Annex A attached.

5. Intellectual Property

- (a) The title to the "Primary Data", "Secondary Data" and "Findings" shall reside with Leo Hitchcock. Leo Hitchcock shall not sell or distribute the "Primary Data" to AFS or any third party, in accordance with New Zealand Data Protection law. Leo Hitchcock's Derivative Works from the Primary and Secondary Data and Findings shall be owned by Leo Hitchcock. Leo Hitchcock hereby grants to AFS a non-exclusive, perpetual, worldwide license to use the "Secondary Data" and the "Findings" for any non-commercial activity such as for marketing, fundraising and promotional purposes of AFS programs as well as for internal organization development purposes such as training.
- (b) AFS's Derivative Works from the "Secondary Data" and/or "Findings" shall be owned by AFS, with appropriate acknowledgement given to Leo Hitchcock. Derivative Works resulting from a collaboration of Leo Hitchcock and AFS shall be owned jointly by Leo Hitchcock and AFS.
- (c) When presenting the "Secondary Data", "Findings" or "Derivative Works" to third parties, in either a tangible or intangible form, Leo Hitchcock and AFS shall take reasonable measures to protect the identity of AFS participants, alumni and under no circumstances may the legal names of the AFS participants, alumni be disclosed nor should Leo Hitchcock or AFS disclose personal data which identifies specific individuals who participated in the study as respondents or host families.
- (d) Both AFS and Leo Hitchcock may use the "Findings" for marketing and promotion of their services.

6. Miscellaneous

- (a) This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the Laws of the State of New York, United States of America, and the Parties hereby agree to submit to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the New York State courts.
- (b) This Agreement may be modified or altered only upon the express written consent of the Parties hereto, which consent must be signed by the Parties or their duly authorized agents.
- (c) This Agreement shall continue in force until its expiration or terminated in writing by either Party on 60 (sixty) days' written notice to the other party.
- (d) Both Parties agree to keep the details of the Project confidential during the Term of this Agreement.
- (e) Each Party is responsible for its respective obligations herein described.

- (f) Leo Hitchcock can be contacted via email at: leohitchcock@orcon.net.nz, +64-9-921 9999 ext. 5421 or +64 21 033 8970.
- (g) AFS Intercultural Programs, Inc., can be contacted via email at: Betsy.Hansel@afs.org or (+1) 212.807.8686.
- (h) This Agreement is not intended to create any benefit, claim or rights of any kind whatsoever enforceable by any person who is not a party to this Agreement.
- (i) This Agreement contains the entire understanding between the Parties hereto and supersedes all prior agreements and understandings relating to the subject matter hereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this Agreement has been duly executed by the Parties.

Leo Hitchcock

AFS Intercultural Programs, Inc.

By: _____

By: _____

Name: Leo Hitchcock

Name: Dr. Bettina Hansel

Title: Doctoral Candidate

Title: Director of Intercultural Education and Research

Date: _____

Date: _____

27/11/2008

1 December 2008

Appendix C1: Milly's Journal (edited)

Milly's journal increasingly from mid-way through her sojourn was written in Spanish, much of which she later translated back to English.

26 February 2009

Slums as you arrive in... from the airport. They follow the river which is filled with rubbish. Reaction: I was shocked – I have never seen real life slums before. The houses were made of scraps and the rubbish was everywhere so it can't be very healthy. I [would] find it hard to live with[out] electricity let alone the other utilities.

People with hoses watering public gardens. Reaction: At first I thought it was stupid – why not use sprinklers, but then I realised it creates jobs and while they can't be paid much at least it's something.

People selling things at traffic lights like newspapers, coke [coca-cola], bread. Reaction: More convenient than having to run into the supermarket because they are so busy and parking is hard to find. I did laugh because in NZ we have window cleaners but [this country] has stuff for sale!

Graffiti everywhere and fences all have spikes or wire. Reaction: It's scary to think I am not as safe as at home especially because I would already be an easy target because I don't know where I am or what to do and I don't speak Spanish. I don't think I would ever be allowed to walk by myself down the road in P...A... [the city where I am living] so that it feels like a loss of independence.

27 February 2009

Experience: 2 courses served at lunch: one salad, the other a hot dish similar to NZ. Reaction: I ate all my salad first day and was happy with what I had eaten – then they brought out the second dish and I didn't eat anything and I felt rude for not touching it. Lunch is the biggest meal of the day here which is smarter because you have the time to burn off the energy where in NZ dinner is normally the biggest meal [in the evening]. Though we all get starving around 4 in the afternoon though I think that's more to do with time difference.

Experience: No breakfast – tea and coffee [only]. Reaction: I don't know how they do it. I was starving and lunch is not until 2pm so I really wanted a proper breakfast.

Experience: My host mother offered me "tea, coffee, or cigarettes". Reaction: I'm not comfortable with people smoking but here I think everyone smokes! It's bad for your health though so I don't understand its popularity.

Experience: Baskets on top of poles for your household rubbish. Reaction: They look silly but it makes sense because otherwise all the dogs would get into the rubbish.

Experience: Kissing on the left cheek as a greeting or farewell. Reaction: I do it with some of my girl friends and family at home, but I get a shock when boys do it or I have never met the person before. Kiwis tend to have a no touching policy but I think it's great to be able to greet someone without being "in love" with them, and it makes me feel accepted...!

Experience: When someone says 'thanks' for something you say 'de nada' which is sort of 'you're welcome' or 'no problem'. Reaction: They are so polite and I always forget to say it and feel rude, or I say 'gracias' (thanks) back because that's what I would do in English and the girls in class laughed at me.

3 March

Experience: School is from 8-4 with two 2 15min breaks and 45 mins lunch. Reaction: It's a really long day especially when you are constantly struggling to grasp what is going on. Also not speaking Spanish means breaks are really boring, but as my Spanish improves it will be great to socialise!

Experience: There is no choice of subjects, you must do [9 subjects are listed] and maybe some others.
Reaction: I wouldn't take the majority of these subjects in NZ but because it means to remain in the same class that makes it easier to make friends, and why not try something new!

Experience: Lunch is in the cafeteria and my mum brings me a cooked lunch every day. Reaction: It's nice to eat with your entire class at one table and while you sit in your groups you can still talk to the others...

Experience: Roads that are not main roads in [the city where I am living] are gravel. Reaction: It's a little bumpy but all the roads come off main roads so it's never too long... But in a city of 140,000 I thought there would be entirely sealed roads.

Experience: School is more relaxed – people walk in and out of class, talk, burn things – my teacher turns up 15 mins late. Reaction: I like the relaxed feeling because I don't feel bad for not doing work because I don't understand anything – but I do wonder how much people learn.

Experience: My mum packs me a toothbrush and toothpaste with my lunch. Reaction: Because everyone does it it isn't awkward and I enjoy having clean teeth and not having to worry about your breath or if there's food on your teeth after lunch!

5 March

Experience: My dad and sister don't get home from work until like 9pm. Reaction: They do come home for 2 hours or so at lunch time, but it means I don't see them too much because I need to sleep around 9pm because I am so exhausted!

10 March

Experience: Personal space is a lot smaller than NZ. Reaction: It's a little scary when someone at school you don't know like hugs you to get past, as kiwi physical contact isn't too common but here it is totally normal around strangers.

Experience: Boys let girls go first through the door, always 'gracias' (thank you) and 'de nada'. Reaction: It's great! But it takes a lot of getting used to. When I am trying to concentrate on what someone is saying I forget [to say gracias] and then later feel rude.

14 March

Experience: Public bathrooms don't have the paper in the stalls, you take it in when you go in, then [after use] put it in the bin beside the toilet because the system can't handle it. Reaction: It grosses me out; I don't like the idea of not flushing the paper away, but they clear the bins frequently, and as far as the paper being outside the stall it's no big issue, you just have to remember to take it in!

I am feeling a little overwhelmed at the moment. School is so confusing and draining, and it is so hard not being able to talk with anyone and I am tired half of the time, and that makes me worry I am not learning anything – and I feel I am that awkward 'tag-along' who doesn't speak. Plus I can hardly talk to my family because when I get home in the afternoon I am too tired to understand what they are saying. I guess in a somewhat childish way I thought the language would just come to me, but it is so much hard work because I can't do anything, and I miss home where I know my place and what is required of me.

20 March

Experience: We went to the Museum – 20 students, one teacher, 20 mins walk in the rain. Reaction: It was crazy – in NZ that wouldn't have happened due to so many health and safety rules; we didn't even have parental

consent. They are just so much more relaxed and rules/laws are general guidelines that no one really pays attention to.

Experience: Houses are smaller. Reaction: It's often a little bit cramped at friends' houses and that can be uncomfortable especially when everyone is smoking, but otherwise it's fine – I enjoy my personal space but I am sure I can get used to it, it will just take, like most things, a little adjustment.

Experience: Roads in NZ widen at intersections but [here] they don't so your stopping distance and turning radius is a lot tighter. Reaction: So glad I'm not driving, there are no many times that I have had mini panics because we have been so close to hitting another car...

26 March

Experience: School is relaxed – if you don't finish something no one cares, you can sit and talk, the teachers are often late. Reaction: [As] I don't understand much that goes on I can practice my Spanish and no one cares because I am working more than anyone else!

Experience: You pretty much always pay in cash. Reaction: I personally feel uncomfortable carrying too much cash, but it is better that you get a small amount of cash stolen than the limit on your credit card! And it does make things a little faster when you don't use a card.

Experience: Everyone over the age of 14 in [this country] must have ... an identification card and during applying for it they take your fingerprints. Reaction: It's good! The process took a long time but having all my information on one card means I don't have to carry around my passport for ID making it safer and also they have every permanent and semi-permanent [citizens'] fingerprints making it easier to detect criminals.!

Experience: Everyone has two last names. Reaction: It's more to remember, but as my [host] mother said she didn't go through pregnancy to have them be only her husband's children, but [me] only having one provided a lot of confusion filling out documents because people a like "what is your other lastname"

Experience: No one wears a seat belt, and motorists don't observe zebra crossings. Reaction: I feel a little unsafe without a seat belt, and it's frustrating [at pedestrian crossings] because I still find it hard to recognise which way the traffic is coming, and in NZ I hardly look before I cross, so it is hard to realise that traffic doesn't often stop.

Experience: Your [ID] card is attached to your credit card. Reaction: It means that you cannot use [a credit card] at ATMs if you are not the [cardholder], which I suppose is always a good thing (at home I and my sister sometimes use my mother's credit card for food shopping).

Experience: Bed time is at like 1 or 2 am for the majority of the family. Reaction: I can't stay up that late because I am just so tired but it makes sense because they work later and eat later.

8 April

Experience: Easter is a 3-day weekend (and no red meat over the three days). There is no Easter Monday.

Experience: AFS students did a tour of central Santiago – in a bus because it was too dangerous to walk. Reaction: I was a bit annoyed, the buildings were so beautiful – it would have been nice to take your time and get some good photos but I understand that [for] a group of teenagers who don't speak a lot of Spanish it could be dangerous.

Experience: People put heaps of sugar and salt to everything, and at school they sell chocolates, lollies and ice cream. Reaction: People laugh at me for not [adding sugar or salt] so sometimes I feel stupid. They don't have many healthy choices at school – juice and maybe fruit. I don't understand why there is not so much of

an issue here [about healthy food]. There are children who have just started school and they should be taught to eat healthily.

Experience: The evening meal is really social, you don't eat much and what you do is eat slowly with tea and coffee. Reaction: It is really nice to sit down with everyone but it does get to me when I have had a long day it is a mission keeping up with the conversation.

Yesterday at school we had a special day because of Easter – it was a day of reflection and we did things like write down a good and bad experience then we stuck them on the wall and it was really nice and once again it struck me how open and honest the [local people] are – the girl next to me was sharing about I could gather was her parents' divorce openly in front of the class. Students are informed and talked about problems involving the school and them, whether the class should be split among the younger classes for Easter or stay together. ... [The students' speak and the teachers sit and listen and reach a decision]. [I think] it evens the playing field and leaves the student feeling more in control.

Experience: At school people are hesitant to talk about their future plans despite it being their last year of high school. Reaction: They seem so young and scared of the future. In NZ there is pressure to know what you want to do by the time you start NCEA [generally Year 11, but could be earlier depending on the student and the school] and by [Year 13] you should know the Uni degree you want to do. Maybe the pressure to know doesn't really exist here and they are more relaxed [about it] and that's the reason they don't really talk about it because they don't know and they don't feel the need to know.

Experience: It was a school night and I got home at 11pm. Reaction: I couldn't believe my [host] parents were cool about it. I could not believe [they] did not mind at all.

12 April

Experience: Both arms are always on the table. Reaction: I find it uncomfortable esp. when I have finished eating I automatically put my arms down, but my host family don't mind so I only have to remember at other people's houses.

Experience: My host mother re-arranges my room tidies it, and finds clothes she thinks need washing. Reaction: I am used to my own room being mine and no one touches it so it is sometimes annoying and everything has been moved, or looking for an item of clothing and your host mum has washed it

Experience: Touching or hugging, or kissing on the cheek, what we would consider flirting, is socially acceptable here. Reaction: It confuses me because I can't tell when a guy likes me more than a friend, I am just not used to it and it still sends me into the "wow, too far buddy" but it's not a bad thing, in fact it's good to be able to ... show you appreciate someone and show affection [this way].

Experience: My younger sister (16 yrs old) got annoyed at my friend for letting me take a collective (a taxi that works like a bus system) home on my own. Reaction: My friend explained to the driver what was going on and I knew where I was going and because there is a set fare the driver could not overcharge me and I don't know [all of the town] or a lot of Spanish, but I was fine, I am not a child [and] it's nice that she is protective, but I really want my independence because I don't do anything by myself and even around the house I hardly get to do anything to help.

26 April 2009

Experience: School on Tuesdays and Thursdays is open until 6pm for extra curricular activities which means you can do homework, talk with friends and they do have sports. Reaction: It's a cool idea especially because

a lot of work here is assessed in group presentations so it offers a good opportunity to work on it. And for me a good opportunity to talk with others to improve my Spanish and also learn a little of the local dance style!

Experience: Tests are multi choice and there are a lot of presentations. Reaction: For me multi choice means I may get a few questions right but I don't think it makes you think as much as having to think for yourself and write a response. But I do like the idea of presentations because I know so many of my friends don't do speeches in English because they don't want to speak in front of people – and jobs may require that of people so [local people] don't seem to have that same fear which is good!

29 April 2009

Experience: No one likes being alone or doing things alone. My sister won't stay in the house alone and she is 16 and is religious. Today when asked in what order you would put being solo, in a large group or in a small group, everyone said being in a group of some sort first and second. Reaction: Makes sense why people are surprised when I want to do things on my own but personally I really like my independence and it's weird to think that people view that as a little abnormal.

Experience: People are always late. My friend said she would be here at 4pm – she wasn't here until 6pm and the same friend a day later was 45 minutes late. Reaction: I get annoyed at a friend in one like this so although it's a little annoying I can't be made at her because everyone is like that here and I am not used to it, but I am sure I will like living on my own time! In NZ I thought I was relaxed but I always kept appointments for seeing people!

Experience: You don't preplan things – you just call up a friend an hour before going out and ask if they want to come. Reaction: I find this annoying because I like to know what's going on so I can fit everyone in and don't have to turn anyone down and it means that sometimes I sit around doing nothing because no one has called and I don't have any ideas of what to do.

04 May 2009

Experience: People eat in the supermarket what they are purchasing. Reaction: Shows the relaxed point of view but I personally don't do it because I don't feel it's mine until I have paid and am out of the store.

Backtracking a little – reading my diary and filling in blanks

05 May 2009

Experience: School 'ball' had all high school years. Reaction: There isn't the segregation between age groups like I find at school in NZ. Sure you may have one or two friends in the years above or below but here you know everyone, part of being a small school I suppose.

Generally realizing that I miss home and that there is more I have learnt to appreciate like simply knowing when I can and can't go out, etc.

14 May 2009

Experience: People tend to assume I am trying to say something instead of listening to what I actually say. Reaction: It's annoying as I have to keep explaining things but on the flipside good Spanish practice.

Experience: In the English text book was an activity to disguise the difference between different letters like of complain, asking for advice, and there was one from a girl saying she had fallen in love with her 'girlfriend'. Reaction: Found it entertaining but couldn't help but think that NZ is too PC to have something like that in a text book, sure we address the 'issues' in a special class, but not as a normal subject!

Generally I feel I am making progress with friends and everyone is making sure I am always involved which is good as my other class didn't really, though at home I am not sure if my younger host sister like me. Never invites me out or talks to me at home or school. Also missing my independence as

- 1) No one goes anywhere alone and
- 2) My Spanish is not too good! Plus I don't know if I can, I just want to do things like walk to the beach or go buy shampoo at the supermarket. Though it's a bit of .. I don't think I can do it...

17 May 2009

Feel useful finally. Got to help out at the school's disco for the littlies. I feel like it's always everyone else helping instead of me but I finally got to be of help

8 May 2009

Experience: The roof is leaking – and really leaking like a bucket is full in an hour or so and no one is really worried. I told my support person and he was like 'yeah that's [this country]'. Reaction: I was worried – that's bad in a house in NZ and my family are by no means poor but it's totally normal here to have structural problems with your house! We are getting it fixed though and in the process we are converting upstairs into an apartment for my sister and painting the entire house...

Experience: ... My ID card has a number which you have to remember because you use it for everything. Reaction: It took me 3 years to learn my cell phone number so it's hard for me to learn a 10 digit number in Spanish. But it's good because all those things you normally have to fill out on forms like address, date of birth, etc. you don't have to because it's sorted against your [ID] number.

14 May 2009

Experience: Computers at school are ancient – like 10 years old at least and they are in our library which is one classroom with very few books. Reaction: The computers are annoying to use because they are so slow and I was hoping that I would be able to find picture books because they are good for learning a new language but even if they were to have any (which they don't) you cannot borrow books because there are not enough and the majority are text books!

Experience: It's the school's birthday so we have been doing cool activities all month! We have had dance competitions, sporting events, even 'breakfast ' at school of fizzy and cake, a ball and everything in between. Reaction: It has been really cool – this year all the activities have been bigger because it's the school's 20th birthday but I have been able to see a lot of [this country's] culture from the dancing and the religious side, like a mass that was held at school, and it has been a welcome relief from not understanding anything in class.

22 May 2009

Today's lunch argument was who eats corn the weirdest! And people – well my family keep laughing at me for doing things – like mama at lunch today when I used my salad plate for lunch despite M... doing the same! It is really entertaining watching M... show Mama's yoga moves in jeans!

I feel bad about going on the North Tour in 2 weeks. I sort of viewed it as my 3 month reward for when I got to the three month stage of being able to communicate, and sure I can 'communicate' I can convey what I need or want and can question and answer but I can't really explain or tell stories. I took 'communicating' as know everything, just having to convert things to English etc but it makes sense and while it's frustrating it's not as bad as it could be, and as A... said, I have started from scratch it's allowed to take me a little longer!

23 May 2009

I don't know what to do...I am so f..... sick of being in the house sitting around watching TV. No one freaking text me back. Mama when I ask her if I can go out and Na... when I ask if she wants to do anything. I have been trying to cook for the last three weekends but Mama won't take me to the supermarket, and I ask constantly. I have tried 'let's go' and that gets a 'later' reply. I have tried 'next time' and that doesn't get me anywhere and 'can I go on my own' gets no reply. I have no one's cell phone numbers to ask if they want to go out. I just want to do something or get out of the house. And I don't know if people misunderstand me, forget or don't understand at all. I am trying, I just don't know what else to do.

24 May 2009

I have decided I like to do things for myself and don't really like to rely on others or take things from others...

25 May 2009

Went for a really nice walk yesterday night along the beach. Felt good to get out of the house and also be with the family. Mama y yo tengo un conversande and we are both (I think) feeling more comfortable with each other...

27 May 2009

We don't do anything, though I wouldn't mind if we did, then a movie in language, Hamlet which I was struggling to understand a little but Hamlet himself is very witty and I ended up enjoying it. Andy my language teacher only marked me for what I did in the last prueba which is nice.

The smallest things can knock my confidence – like this afternoon when I had to do work in ingles. That in itself is not a problem but the fact that I had an hour and a half to read a 4 page children's story and answer a couple of questions and I couldn't do it. Then this afternoon there was a baby here and [the baby's] mum (although I didn't realise it at the time) came in and sat down. Neither of us knew what to say, and I couldn't figure out who she was so it made thinking of questions hard because I couldn't figure out what would be bloody obvious answers or offensive to ask. She would have been sure what I would understand so I tried to over compensate by formulating long answers, but they were just a jumbled mess of things that didn't make sense because my Spanish was wrong or I forgot what to say next, or my answers ended up trailing into interesting stories. I don't know, she made me nervous and I wasn't really thinking and thought that she couldn't (though I didn't know for sure) speak English had me worrying about that, where in reality it wasn't the end of the world if she didn't understand. I made a mistake because she would understand that my Spanish wasn't perfect!

I have had a roller-coaster of a day – speaking Spanish with more confidence to my friends and family, but someone new and I freaked. I am learning that as much as I didn't want to I had expectations about the exchange. I thought it would be more exciting, and, I don't know, like maybe I expected to travel every weekend and for school to be really thrilling, but it's not like that, school can be boring like school in NZ, especially when you don't understand everything. My family have lives, and not money growing on trees so they can't travel every weekend. Maybe I thought I would feel more special – more of a celebrity. L... said at the end of the day it's just another year of your life – yes, there are many things: friends, family, culture - but that doesn't mean you will find the perfect life, you have to work for it.

29 May 2009

I think my host mum understood me when I said I wanted to cook this weekend. She didn't last time, instead thought that I wanted her to cook what I was going to cook and I didn't realize until the next day when we had Chinese for lunch. I figured out why my history teacher was surprised when I said I was going alone to the fiesta de gala – he thought I was going with A.... And he doesn't even teach 4 deg. Media! It clicked when one

of the girls in 2 deg media asked if I was going alone – when answering yes she said she thought I was going with A...!

Almost cried today when I was on the computer – but stopped myself as it's such a public place. I had just been talking with J... and she was talking about all the existing things she is doing – and it made me teary because I am not there for it and I feel like I am doing nothing here.

After the conversation with J... though I got to talk to L... and she found me turning up at the wake unexpected - funny so that made me feel better! But I am getting sick of everyone asking about language – I can't say anything different. I only know a tiny bit more and no big improvements.

I think I have given up on getting a bank account here. When we couldn't apply online Papa was no more help and just told me that I don't have an ... (ID number for [this country]) and that my ... doesn't work, but it was in Spanish so I don't think I picked up on the fact that if we went to the bank the same thing would happen. And S... 's counsellor told her not to bother because it was too hard, so it's now take the cash out on my visa. And although it's not ideal having to have the cash sitting in the house it may work out cheaper in fees and in the fact that it's easier to switch it when the exchange rate is good!

M... and C... were surprised at how much is bought - here you go shopping and buy one thing. In NZ I tend to not go shopping too often so I need to buy a lot! Really cool though because when I got home the family and P... and his wife were here and everyone was making like the dough for empanadas and deep frying it. Just everyone together and working together is super nice! Of course mama and Nb... started arguing over how to refine the sugar. Funniest thing I have seen is Mama trying to make castor sugar with a hand-held blender thing then an actual blender that started leaking out the bottom ...after both of those it was the pestle and mortar but in newspaper! All of that and Nb... accidentally puts it in with the normal sugar.

I have to say it's the coolest here that you can put any amount of money on your phone at the chemist!

Papa calls me hija like by sisters! Honestly he is the man, we don't talk a lot but he total treats me like one of his girls.

01 June 2009

So I feel a little stupid. Mama told the hair dresser I didn't understand/speak Spanish and he took her way to literally asked easy questions like 'come se uama y quantos arios benes' 'what is your name, how old are you? Of my Mama and like when he had finished washing my hair said please because it made the point of moving just not in the right words but ones he knew but it did save me from small talk with the hairdresser which I never like! But Mama told him I eat nothing which is now getting annoying but then I had to laugh when she told him all I do is drink water and take panadol!

And I have a Spanish speech tomorrow.

Experience: School finishes at lunch due to so few people at school – there's a really bad flue going around here. Reaction: It makes the day so much easier for me because it's not so long but also is good because when people are sick they don't come to school. In NZ because of NCEA's constant assessments that you can't re-sit, you have to go to school, here you miss a day or two it's no biggy.

Experience: Dr when sick – like have a cough or cold and it's off to the Dr. Reaction: I never go in NZ, broken bones and really sick. I don't really like doctors but it's probably smarter to be on the correct medication and not having to worry about it being something worse than it is.

Experiences during North ... tour 5-15 June 2009:

Customs on the side of the road. Reaction: It's a lot easier for NZ to control borders due to being an island, where [this country] shares borders with three other countries. I found it really cool though because our bus remained in [this country], they weren't worried. Customs is on the main highway south and actually misses cities like A... so the cultural difference in those cities is huge due to [the neighbouring countries] not having to enter customs and also the reason that in A... there are massive markets ... with so much fresh produce. I loved it [the markets], a shame that it was mid-day ... so it was difficult to buy things that would last, but talking with the people was so good.

Every town and city has markets, not food like A... but jewellery, clothes, souvenirs, etc. Reaction: I love them, such a good way to shop as you can talk with the people and there are heaps of great things that are not very expensive!

Signs translated into English that haven't quite worked out, like at a pool 'no one with any illness may swim' when in Spanish it's 'infectious skin diseases'. Reaction: They are funny when you understand the Spanish to know where they went wrong.

Little villages of like 200 in the middle of the desert like literally the middle of nowhere. Reaction: They are so charming in the way that I seem to think having less possessions makes you more thankful in life but I cannot understand what their source of income is. A few had chillies out drying in the sun but the work it must take to transport them is crazy.

I am so white and so foreign in the north. There are a lot of people from [neighbouring countries] who have darker skin and I stick out. A... and I had our picture taken in the mall in I... (A... is from the USA). It's funny because a tourist visits NZ and you hardly know or care but there [here] it's so exciting. The tall blonde Germans got mobbed by young girls a number of times due to the difference.

My favourite part of the tour was going to an Art & Music School in I.... The culture is amazing. They sang, danced, got us to join in and really just welcomed us. There were four NZ students and two NZ teachers on the trip and we did a haka for them (twice because of demand) but I felt so proud to be able to share a bit of NZ with them. In the beginning I had a hard time with conversation because I didn't want to always talk about NZ but I realized I have to be proud of it, it's a talking point and part of being an exchange student. This has opened my eyes up to a bigger world and can do the same for others.

Stereotyping of NZers is common – for example, my friend's dad had an exchange student from NZ who like to bbq – so assumed I knew how to. Reaction: It's normal, we all stereotype consciously or sub-consciously but there are some pretty funny things that people assume all kiwis do because I do! Admittedly I often don't help as I tell them everyone does it!

I am so foreign. I had my picture taken in the mall. I got drawn in a class picture with yellow hair and blue eyes. My friends keep telling me I am a model. People obviously stare as I walk down the street. Reaction: Depends in what mood I'm in. Sometimes I just find it entertaining that I provide entertainment. But sometimes I just wish I fit in.

I have to blow dry my hair every time I wash it. My mama gets really annoyed otherwise and says it will make me sick. Reaction: I find it annoying. I like to wash my hair at night let it dry overnight then straighten it in the morning, but mama won't let me, instead I have to spend 10 minutes blow drying my hair.

In physical size my class room at school is smaller, 6 desks across the room with one desk space between groups of 6. Then all that fits in the room is our desks and a cupboard. Reaction: It's nice to have the space

to re-arrange and work how and where you want, but my school is a really small school and we don't have the choice of extending buildings due to there being houses around us.

The way guys normally touch you, it's not sexual it's like a sibling. For example at the disco my guy friend had his hands on my waist, but not because he was making a move on me, but more as a protective thing. Reaction: I think it's really nice. Like in the example above it just made me feel more comfortable with my environment. As kiwis I think we are a little scared of physical contact and it's great to be in a culture where it means you are friends rather than 'he loves' you.

Generally at the moment I am finding it hard being away from home. Think I am really feeling homesick now as I miss the ease and understanding at home. I am no longer given the excuse of 'she is foreign she doesn't know' so more is expected of me, like going out without being invited by friends. We are currently on 3 weeks of holiday and I don't always have a lot to do. For one it's cold, so you just don't feel like going out a lot. I don't know where to go or who with and when I go out alone I always get hassled by my family because of it. At home in NZ I do go out a lot alone but here no one does. I don't think it would worry me too much but because I am not in the world's best head space, the little things are getting to me.

Slowly finding my place though I was discussing with an exchange student we had saying I didn't feel like a part of the family, more an awkward outsider. She explained she never felt like part of our family but she felt at home.

Also learning I have been a little stereotypical and everything my family do I have assumed is the entire population. Like my sister and brother go out to discos most weekends and that's about it. I don't really like the discos so I hadn't had too much to do. But I spent the weekend with a friend. We went for a walk round town, went to see a cover band at a bar and watched Disney channel. It was the best weekend I have had not because it was 'so exciting' as it was very relaxed but because it was more what I enjoy. Embracing the culture doesn't mean changing your interests, it's great to say 'yes' and try things but that doesn't mean you always have to do them.

It's weird, no one here knows me, I could totally reinvent myself, but more and more I am finding I like who I am. Slightly hard when your self-image is a little lower due to home sickness and culture shock.

Also realized that I am not F..., A...'s sisters' biggest fan. We were at the regional finals for basketball and she was telling everyone to move, but none of my friends were moving but she got annoyed at me. So being home I am not stoked, not feeling bad in fact very content, but I am not stoked. My weird huge improvement in Spanish has been great but I am still lost in class and conversation.

I don't really believe a week and a half of speaking English most of the time helped so I think it's being more relaxed and confident about it, but I am totally having conversations with friends and family, even talking with my teachers and wanting to participate, actually paid attention in Chemistry this afternoon and realized the teacher does like me! Had a wee chat with my philosopher yesterday, and man he speaks quickly! But I totally managed to keep up. Also set myself a new goal to learn something new about my friends every day because I have to say I don't know much about them, and it means they get to know me as well. Despite being here 3 going on 4 months I bet they don't know much about me!

19 June 2009

I had a really good chat with S... (USA) about why we found it so hard. We were looking at the type A personalities who were saying they were having the best times with boyfriends and heaps of friends and speaking the language more because they weren't worried about making mistakes. And it made me realize

more about who I am. I am a bit of a perfectionist. I really don't like showing or doing things until they are finished and perfect and even when they are finished I always think I could do better. S... brought up that like her, I was used to being intelligent, if the teacher asked a question or someone wanted help in NZ I was the person they would go to, but here I don't even understand the question let alone the answer and I miss it. I miss knowing the answer and being able to help to carry out an intelligent conversation or debate. I also like to be relatively self taught, probably due to the fact that I don't like to ask for help. I love being self reliant. It's a downright pain that I don't understand enough Spanish to look deeper into what we are studying, I love knowing everything, reading the information and absorbing it all.

20 June 2009

I got to watch the ABs (the 'All Blacks', NZ's national rugby team) this morning. ABs vs France in Wellington. I was on the computer and Papa came and told me. We won 14-10 but played pretty crap... and in NZ a win is not enough.

4 was my favourite once again, tall not bad looking and definitely had a manliness about him which I don't find as much here. I couldn't hear what he was saying so I was like, 'I speak English', and he was like 'dance' so I felt like a bit of a dick! I was pretty tired by this point but he was fun and I taught him some moves – the whole twirl me so that my back is against his chest, arms crossed over me. Each time he tried to repeat it though, we had to release hands! Slightly panicked though and thought I didn't know how to say 'no' in Spanish! He did try [to] make out with me but was good about it so I was tempted to as I left but everyone was looking and the lights were on. No cheap grabs for my ass which is different from NZ. ...

Chemistry helps with dancing though 1 and 4 were awkward at some points without it. It's horrible that I don't have the intelligence to remember names!

22 June 2009

His name is Y... (not sure of spelling) and he has received the nickname as my PA boyfriend though N... says 'no sex' because I'm 'pequena Milly' In thinking I was everyone's entertainment on Saturday I was definitely talk today!

Made the mistake of telling my Quimica teacher that I understood what was going on on Friday, and today when she told us we need 4 not 6 in a group N... told her I didn't count but she then told N... I understood.

So mum doesn't like driving in the snow which is understandable so we took a collective into centra but it was so freaking cold and none were free. But mum tried to tell that the reasons she wears heels is their grip in the snow. Almost didn't get my package today because the first person was like 'no we don't have it' then the second dude had no clue I was the reason we got it.

I have to say I have been slightly grumpy and quiet the last couple of days, deep in thought but not extremely conscious though. I stood in the shower 20 minutes and don't know what happened.

27 June 2009

Safe to say I have been grumpy all week and then extremely sick yesterday with a fever, massive headache, extremely achy, bad cough which brought on a sore throat and chest. Nb... was sick as well so I think mama couldn't be bothered waking me for school because F... came in about 5pm asking what I'd been doing all day and that if I was sick I need to tell mama. So don't think she knew I was sick

Nd... had a chat with me today ... She explained that my family did not like my attitude. I would come home be on the computer or in my room and never go out. For the first two months apparently I was good but the last two months mas o menos. I said I don't speak Spanish or know [the city] and constantly feel awkward. She

said I need to speak with my friends about it and they will help. She is right and it just shows that I have set mental barriers in trust and fear that they don't understand me. She [Nd...] has done a lot. I still don't really know what I'm meant to do though... still don't know what to talk about.

I am such a selfish person. really not liking myself at the moment. I really do suck.

4 July 2009

Car provided awkwardness on the way home, something is going on this afternoon. Nc... asked discretely if I was invited and F... flat out said 'no'. I don't mind not being invited especially because my friends are better and nice r but it hurts to be said 'no' to [that] way.

7 July 2009

Getting better. Took a wee trip to the supermarket to buy chocolate and peanut butter. Peanut butter wouldn't be my first choice but there was no nutella..

After Thursday or Friday last week having to wake someone up to take me to school, I decided I would walk today (and we didn't have a car). Man I am a speed walker, took me less than 5 minutes!

8 July 2009

... harped on a little about me being ok and eventually I started crying and babbled about it being hard not understanding much and he just reassured me. I feel a little of a failure though, so many people see a problem Papa brought home the cutest puppy though no one in my family can believe it. I think I am being converted to dogs – but still don't like the smell.

Got up early this morning to make toast. I bought peanut butter yesterday and we had normal bread, but there was no bread left this morning!

Moved upstairs because M... is home tomorrow. And moved everything including what was on the walls. M... wanted his room the same! Nice upstairs though there isn't a door.

9 July 2009

Okay – grumpy about being kept home. I had a pretty good day today.

I think you notice more when you are alone that people stare and walking home so many randoms tooted. I think I was the excitement of the army today. I will have to ask why they are always wondering around centro they stared, and one or two turned to say something then thought better of it!

The lady I bought sobres off was lovely, asked if they had any and she ask 'big or small' – yes I am gringa!

I managed to buy a card asking the lady for help, and boots as well with not much of a problem though due to mine being a foreign card, the lady had some question I didn't understand so the other assistant save me!

So conversation at Cina was 'M... refuses to take Nd... anywhere', like yesterday refused to take her to zona franca despite him going there too. So I am in as he even invited me to stay in V....

Positivity helps – understand more at Cina because I felt I could!

Na... is taking me out tomorrow! Haven't seen her in days, it will be good to hang out because we haven't in a while

So either papa notices, was told or just did it for the sake of it, but whistled at me. Originally thought it was because of the boots but then mama said he never notices a thing!

So one of my semi goals was to have people know me in Centro, and I am a step closer to achieving it. Today one person! Haha.

12 July 2009

Went and got 'Nesbucks' as in Nescafe and Starbucks because we don't have a Starbucks.

Afterward, knowing what I now know is her stepdad, we went to her house. It reminded me how small people's houses are, like the size of their house is even smaller than a bach in NZ, and I thought my house was small, but I think could explain why families are closer. Went out to a tocarta which was nice, like 15 people and 2 bands but it's so much more my thing!

15 July 2009

So that's all changed. I am worked up a little but I am back down to being a little upset.

Set myself the rule of going out every second day which so far I have done. Yesterday made plans to bake and watch Disney channel with Nacha and I was excited, to bake, to see her and show my brother I had friends, but she couldn't come?

Got asked by a couple what colectivo was for el mall – sad I wasn't of more help as that is now my new goal to help a stranger! So that's my day.

20 July 2009

Had a rough couple of days at the end of last week. N... couldn't hang out as she was with her Nana and I don't think anyone is receiving my texts so didn't go out with anyone but Mama shopping – which means I know the best place to buy chorico and with Nd... to C... (mi primas) house. I really just felt horrible with not much to do, but camping with Na... on Saturday night helped! Really relaxed. Played pool, ate and sat in front of the fire, but it was so good! First [local] BBQ and it was epic. A good 15kg piece of meat not to mention sausages and chorico, over an open fire – inside the house! Chodipan (note the spelling) is so good – chorico, pan, mayonasa Na... y Yo found out we suck at pool. We had like a 10 year old kid kick our butts but learnt a new game which is placing the balls round the outside and you sink them in number and colour order! Fun especially when we were so bad!

The thing I loved was being in a 'normal' situation – I camp at home so it seemed like something I finally know plus Na... 's family are so nice, they look after me so well.

Reminds me I should make a bit more of an effort with my family! I was away for one night but it seemed longer! Didn't get much sleep though! Slept between Na... and one of her bros, 6 people on a double y uno single mattress! And I got up at the crack of eight - that actually helped as it was so hot! Then when Na... 's stepdad finally went to bed there is his snoring! But it was one night so I don't mind!

Also the ladies there told me I had good Spanish which rocks! There were 4 couples with about 3 or 4 kids each and we all slept in the dining hall as it's warmer! Crazy! Good times I wish my family did things like that, but I understand it's hard with older kids and A... 's diabetes!

N... is going to be my tourist guide now tonight! We are to visit the big parque (forgotten the name) Mueso y ella tener una prima en Porto Natales y nosotros queremos visitor! Muy Buena!

21 July 2010

So got my libro 'the lovely bones' today only to realize I'm an idiot and ordered the audio version – I am a little annoyed as I was really looking forward to reading a good book, especially in the winter holidays and I am not sure if I can return it due to the fact that you can't after having the receipt for 5 days, and I think that means the electronic one, though I did email to ask!

Haven't done much but slept and eat too much. Yesterday I ate 3 packets of biscuits, 2 bits of fudge, coke, 2 lunches and cena.. so freaken bad...

29 July 2009

Had an awful end to last week – I called N... about 9 times over 3 days, M... over 5 times in 2 days and R... and co couldn't make sushi. I really did just feel awful as no one ever picks up the phone to explain or contacts you later to tell you why they didn't, though N... did in the end and her auntie died. All her family seem to be dying. Did get cheered up a little more when Nb..., Mama y Yo cocina tarta de lemom! Originally we didn't have a recipe so started making my apple pie dough to find a recipe on the harina so we switched half way through so it tasted a little too much like egg but it was good all the same! Then got a call from Na... at 8.30pm saying you want to come over for the night. Then ended up spending the next four days with her!

1 August 2009

5 months: scary

Talked to Mum and Dad (natural parents) and realized that I have a positive outlook. Good to talk to them as M... said I am happier after speaking ingles y especialmente con ellos!

Talk about my friends' issue and not having them take me anywhere, about my frustration at the organization and no one explaining why they can't do things or why plans fall through, about learning to be myself and not worrying about what I do, like going out alone.

Unlike last time when I cried getting off the phone I actually feel really hopeful. Mum reminded me that Ba... said he didn't understand a thing for the first 6 months. I feel my progress has been so slow. Mum thanked me for the depth in my letter

I feel the friend situation will get better with time, Mum reminded me that those things take time and it's hard when you only have a year to do it. I don't know, she made me feel more human than a failure, I really feel like she gets it, at least what I am going through now and I suppose she does, although she never did an exchange , she did move to England and also other cities. I can now imagine how hard it must have been moving so often for her, especially when she didn't work and when in Auckland it wasn't as easy as getting to know your neighbours or childrens' friends' parents. Talked mostly with Mum, weird how being so far away I feel our relationship is still getting stronger. I feel a stronger connection to NZ now. I am more proud of where I am from and want to learn more about its history and Māori...

Had the funniest conversation to which P... who is 34 said the currency in NZ was the Aus Euro!

I knew before I left that family was important, but realizing now that they are the greatest blessing in my life. Also learning how amazing my parents are and that they are so human but so loving, encouraging and forgiving.

What I have learnt about myself:

- I don't like asking questions
- I like to be self taught
- I enjoy my personal space
- Takes me a while to make friends. I tend to want to know if they are worth my while
- That I need to trust my gut, stop waiting to know for sure
- I can get through anything and life is what I make it.

4 August 2009

So school was good today – talked a lot more than normal which is always good. D... apologized for not calling though I think most peoples' vacations were similar to mine! The new girl from the States is nice! I felt so weird being put in a situation where I acted as translator more than once today! She ... has good Spanish but just misses things when spoken quickly etc! She is here for one year and there are also two other boys, one from Australia and the other, Italy.

Went out with N... this afternoon too – I came home to ask Mama if I could and she said 'no' now rationally speaking she always changes her mind when Nb... asks but I got a little annoyed, I am not actually used to hearing 'no' but Mama didn't give me a reason. In the end she agreed but told me I couldn't travel home alone and that's what made me more annoyed. I don't know why. I am capable and not an idiot, unfortunately I didn't help by getting flustered, therefore my Spanish understanding and spoken suffers. There is probably a valid excuse like she understood it would be dark when I wanted to come home and I feel bad as one of the reasons she said 'no' to begin with was I hadn't had lunch and when I arrived home I found the plate in the fridge.

Afternoon with N... was nice. We met up with her friend C... who is really nice and funny, it was good as it was normal! Walk through centro and got something to eat, they ended up feeding the dog in the plaza chocolate cereal! Planned to all go to la casa de la Nacho Manana y yo ire con K... para café en centro pero yo no preguntar mi mama yet as I am nervous.

5 August 2009

Vas a salir con la K... (nueva estudiante de intercambio) y ella es muy simpatico – hablar mucho pero mas de tienopo en ingles. Comer charroe y brownie con ella! And now I feel sick, but K... is really nice, good to talk to and sure beats sitting around [waiting] for M... and N... to call when they never did! Had a bit of a walk around town as of course K... hadn't seen much so it's good that I can be for her what I never had, and fortunately R... her [host] brother is adorably sweet and so is her mama! Arranged to show her a little more of PA on Sunday. Good to be able to talk, would have stayed longer pero ayer mi mama dice no viajar sola y - no quiero get on her bad side...

Both her abuela y primo were asking after me!

8 August 2009

Talk – and this is where we get emotional. Talked about my situation with Nb... I said it's interesting to note Nb... cried and I bet she wouldn't when I left. Also said Nb... only talks when she needs to and when I try it's never much, which reminded me about our conversation two months ago and I realized Nb... talked to me because Mama told her to as she hasn't talked to me since to see how I am doing, didn't try comfort me. When she did it and when I tried to talk to her she told me to talk to Na... or M... Na... brought up the idea of changing family and I said I have no issue with the rest of my family but I think they are lovely and that I don't know if I exactly fit in.

Ended up at M...s at like 11.30 when we were meant to be there at 8pm. Firstly it started snowing so we didn't want to go out to centro and then by the time we got round to it J... was home and said he needed the supermarket. In typical fashion didn't leave until 10pm!

I was quiet all night and the following morning due to thinking about my situation, and I was tired – slept on like a two person couch with D... and it wasn't actually that bad – slept until 11 only waking up a couple of times to M..., I think sleep talking and when my legs went numb – about the same as sleeping on a bus.

Talked more with Na... and M... – they were so good saying they were always there and the discussion carried to the dinner table where M...’s entire family joined in. Her mama went on an exchange to the USA and said - really makes me feel I need to talk to mama and think seriously about changing families. She offered their house, if not for the entire time then a week or two, they are lovely but I don’t think I could handle their energy. M...’s grandmother is so adorable – quite like Nana I think, very talkative and opinionated, she gave me a little angel, saying she felt I needed it.

And then I got home and see mama, give her her present and she’s lovely but Nb... doesn’t say a word or even look at me so I know I have to talk to her.

A part of me views this as a failure and like I always do, I blame myself though I know I have tried and not everyone in this world will like me. They are a lovely family, but may be just not for me. I want the relationship my sister has with her host family and I remember what one of the girls who went to France said that now she could see that she should have changed family. I don’t want to let my fear of the unknown and of speaking up get in the way. Na... also pointed out that if I got to speak more at home she would think my Spanish would be better – and she is right. In the three weeks of winter vacation with the time I spent with Na... my Spanish improved so much.

Ayer en la noche a la casa de Meli’s todos ellas tias, abuela y mama were singing and dancing to Ricky Martin. Entertaining.

9 Agosto 2009

So that went ok, though I can’t help but feel pissed. Told Mama I feel weird in the house. She said: Make more friends (Na...and M.. are not enough). You can’t talk to Ma... as she isn’t here, Nb... “has another world”. I think she said her and Papa were around but for asking if I could go out. My teachers say I don’t talk and apparently I don’t talk to anyone at school. I need to tone down my writing (I assume letters), apparently I am cold e.g. no kisses and hugs. People think I am a bad person as my room isn’t clean. A lot of people in [this country] are bad so my Mama wants to talk to my friends (Na...). She actually hugged me. But she said I am being sent home if I don’t speak more and she will find me Spanish classes.

- ‘Nb... has another world I take for she doesn’t like me and Mama is not worried about that which worries me.
- I honestly thought I was trying with friends.
- True, I have not talked much in class but have more this Semester which Mama may not know.
- I am going to assume Mama got most of her info from Nb...

Just feel I was being attacked a little, though I may have gone in looking for a fight...sure I am not always hug, hug, kiss, kiss but that’s a cultural habit and I can’t switch that off and I still want to be myself, not possible for me to be totally [from this culture].

11 Agosto 2009

Aespues mis enicial ‘I am so pissed’. Things haven’t been too bad.

Talked normally con mi mama despues cena y la Nb... even talked to me in the short 30 second walk from la auto a colegio pero la conversacion termina cuando ella tiener una atra persona para hablar con. Pero colegio es mas major con hablar mas y la K.... Hoy vames a salir con K... y N... y todos es muy buena con conversa normal – sento mas humano y yo no lo se yo quiero cambiar familia pero sento mes major con vida en general, y colegio con todos tambien.

Finding that I am catching on to words a lot quicker too y especialmente los palabras de '[this country]' Vamos a salir con la Na..., K..., G... y su hermano mañana y problamente inviter los otra chicas como M... porque la D... es away para un semana.

Compro un poco de cosas para misar el pero mo pintar en zona franca para mi – yo quiero pintar mas porque yo soy aburrida mucho y la chinpleanos de R... es proxima semana!

Feeling better – feeling like I can handle this if it does get worse or stay the same.

12 Agosto 2009

Yo no entiendo mi mama – primero ella dijo 'tu no vas a salir' y hoy 'pero tu vas a salir ayer' .. I'm so confused.

18 August 2009

... [After the beach] went to the mall with M..., and C... and D.... M... talked for K... to the guy working in the 'youth zone' with dreds that K... had spotted the day before. He ended up coming to find her with his email name and number! She was so excited and he has been our joke ever since especially as ella preguntar 'cuantos arios tienes? – et dice vietye siete y ello dice yo soy dice y seis! ... After the mall when to K... 's house for tea and when I called my dad because I left a note, like my mother told me I could do, though now think she didn't mean it or she doesn't remember saying it. My papa obviously didn't seem happy with me, but like it goes no one explains or says no. Really nice tea at K... 's house, her family is really friendly and we talked about politics with her dad, and her brother is really cool. After I went to my house and looked for my uniform for an hour on my own, but couldn't find it. When my family got home I went to ask my mum and she yelled at me telling me to look on the sofa, and even though I told her I looked more than once, I went to look again, asked her again for help but she didn't so I went to bed knowing I at least had my PE uniform. For me that was it. I was scared of her and have never been talked to in that way in my life – so degrading and the thing that really pissed me off is it wasn't my fault and she was being so childish. Didn't sleep except for like two hours because I knew I had to talk to C... in the morning about it...

Went to school and arranged to talk to C... at lunch though started crying about an hour into school. Talking con la C... was hard, I got tongue tied, was crying and had a talk about my family situation with different people so often that I was over it. Thankfully M... and la Na... filled in the blanks and it was decided I would stay the night at Na... 's as I really, really didn't want to go home, only to find out at the end of school I was meant to go home 'act normal' and try by saying I wanted to stay at Na... 's house because it was her parents' anniversary. Got home to find Nb..., M... and G... in my mum's room – and I went to kiss her hello and she pretty much leaned away. When I asked she said yes but talk after I ate lunch – I am so one track minded that I had no clue that the entire room had gone silent once I entered – for me I was there for one thing only. Walking to the mesa, mama realized M... and Na... were upstairs in my room, she (mum) said 'you need to ask before inviting people into the house' which has never been a problem before – in fact is encouraged – so I ate as quickly as possible to go upstairs and find mama talking to M... and Na... – for me she had no right to involve them, she told them everything was my fault and AFS had set up a meeting to send me home. She said 'yeah Milly understands everything' but she wouldn't talk to me at all. Then when I kissed her goodbye and she said I needed to be home at 9-9.30. I was so scared – and worried for the rest of the night. Didn't say much but we went to Na... 's nana who asked when I was coming back, and after saying I didn't know, she said her house is my house. The Micro to her house was so dodgy due to the roads and being in a small bus, but really nice to see the, I suppose, poorer side of town. M... fell asleep on me on the way home and I felt like I belonged here. Went to Na... 's house and I ended up crying again con J... as I didn't want to go home, especially after I called to say I would be a little late and got Nb... who said 'it's her' handed it to mama who was none too happy with

me. Discussion as we left was I could stay with them until they found somewhere permanent and if mama speaks to me, don't listen, nod, say yes but don't listen.

No one spoke to me when I got home, I went straight to bed. Woke up this morning in a great mood – when I left the house not having to have talked to anyone and knowing I would only have to go back for my things. Talked to C... early in the day and she told me I have to be here another week despite me pleading and crying even harder. When she mentioned I would be here for the next week, she told me Na...'s house was not suitable which makes me think she made that decision and she believes I am not to be moved until I have a permanent home. Na... and M... tried all day to sort something else out but no one is listening – Na... sent an email to Dad to get him to call me, but I don't know how much help he will be or if he should – though he hasn't called...

Filled with dread going home though felt at ease knowing Nb... wasn't there – she had lunch at school and unbeknown to me, M... had asked if there was anything for me and she had simply replied 'no'.

Got home and mama was like 'hello, lunch?' and 'we are going out soon' and I was frankly scared shitless. I didn't know what it was – first: feeble attempt to right wrongs – second: AFS (which scared me if I had to speak in front of her) She did ask why I was wearing my PE gear and I of course said 'couldn't find my pants' to which she replied that I cannot wear my PE gear as it 'reflects badly on her' and apparently I didn't look for my pants and that they were on the railing going into the renovations upstairs – they were there as I noticed before lunch which makes me believe I would have noticed earlier and someone obviously went through my wardrobe... I say two faced bitch who really is just an older version of Nb... – she is being really falsely nice.

Been in my room ever since – Papa came up to look at the builder's work. I said 'hello' he said the same coldly just after he had done his normal cheery 'hello honey' for Na. Unfortunately got invited to dinner – not hungry but ate my soup, left after Nb. P... turned up and although he is a really nice guy I can't tell him what's going on because he doesn't know and he is likely to side with the family... so dodging that bullet by lying and looking really buzzy... I hate lying, yesterday not being able to tell the truth when people asked what was going on, so got scared when J... asked what happened today and told me not to lie – so I didn't, no one told me I couldn't tell anyone. Asked J... if she knew of a family which I think she took as her own, and said she would love to but her room is too small.

Thinking positively, I will be out of here soon, I have learnt a lot and to stick to my guns with what I want because I am a sucker for doing what others want. I have become so much closer to especially Na... and M and K... la J..., C... P..., R... y Y....

It's hard though every time I see notes passed in class, I get worried it's about me. Every movement in my house I am worried is in my direction or when I can hear bits of conversation like 'her' etc.

"Relax that's all" is what I keep getting told.

20 August 2009

Always makes you feel great when you know people are talking about you but you don't quite know what they are saying. Safe to say every conversation and movement in this house has made me uncomfortable.

Last two days have been better. Mum called at 12 on Tuesday – first three times didn't want to pick up the phone as it registers as a [local] number – I thought if it was AFS I didn't want to talk until the morning – explained to Mum what was going on and she said she would help from that end.

J... offered her house, though she has a small room, D... talked to her mama and today R... offered her house as well and that was definite and ideal as they also had the space, but AFS have decided no one from my class as it's a 'conflict of interests'

Talked to dad again yesterday =- he asked me to clarify todos, told me to be good to my host family here and thank them, send a 'facts' email for AFS NZ, explained that AFS were doing all they could and they had sent through a permission form saying I could stay with a family without their police clearance and they would take all responsibility. Dad told me to be brave and talk but I am not ignoring anyone, being polite...

Life is a mission – remembering to be empathetic but it's hard where to draw the line of being nice and being a push over.

Just listening in on the conversation downstairs – pretty sure R... said P... said I have a new family.

To explain and clarify the problems in my host family: no one was talking to me, whether to say I did something wrong or in general conversation. It was always the family then me alone. I was never invited anywhere including cena or told when people were going out. Generally felt like they didn't want me here. Everything was different for me – not treated like an equal but an inferior to Nb... by her and my host mother, who are the only people ever really home. And as I said my host mama acting so childish and actually scaring the shit out of me, really made me realize it. I am great for not acknowledging there's a problem and 'yes' in the first couple of months it was 'I don't speak any Spanish' and that carried on. Secondly, I always think things are my fault and never want to cause trouble, hence not talking to C... mas temprano (my own downfall) I felt like a failure admitting it wasn't working and also as L... had to change families I thought it wouldn't happen to me.

Safe to say I am exhausted though – so much emotion, thinking, talking. Another unfortunate thing was I had talked the situation through with others so many times that I really didn't tell C... much – she has done amazing for the little she had and all of two days ago I would have said she was doing nothing. I now see how 'easy' it is to get the ball rolling in changing families. I have to sign a form saying I understand the terms of changing family and I too will make more effort, etc! I understand that, but I am unsure as to why she told me to tell my Dad.

23 August 2009

Don't lie to yourself – that would have helped me realize this situation earlier and also have been more honest with others.

Mum and Dad called again last night and though only for 10 minutes, really did make me feel better again. Explained what had happened in the last two days – which isn't really much, Dad explained that the form I had to sign was normal and they realize those problems were created as I was driven to being alone, etc. and they know it's not me and sure I have to make an effort in the next family but that should be easier... Mum told me I was being really brave and she was proud of me for the gift basket, really nice to know they understand me and they don't believe all the things being said and they told me not to believe them or let them affect me.

It was very cool all sat and talked about what we drew. ... I am pretty sure Nb... took a cheap shot at me when explaining the 'dark' side of her mark as M... hugged me, though I wasn't really listening, my explanation provided a bit of entertainment so I am glad! Despues grupes nosotros hablar y answered preguntas. Soy con la V..., la Y..., la K..., el D... y yo nunca conocer el D... es esta 'mature' pero yo creo mi curso hacer problems mas grande como de division en el curso pero para mi el curso es mas un familia y no one hates each other or refuses to speak to each other, it's all perspectiv! Yeah I have to remember you have to go to

APS here, they don't come to you. Talked to C... today, seems they have run out of options and now (tonight) are going to interview R... 's family so we will have more news tomorrow.

I don't want to be here too much longer though, when I feel things are going okay there is something to bring me down. Like this afternoon I get home and no one is about so I serve my own lunch, but mum doesn't say 'hola como estas? Solamente 'did you already serve yourself rice?' Things are okay, but looking up, and at least the situation seems clear to me. I don't feel I have made a mistake and also because I am less emotional I understand C... is helping!

26 August 2009

Six months [here] today, and received news that I am changing families. AFS have not told me but R... did today! Move out tomorrow so that moved quickly! Have been in a good mood all day especially as I know this is ending, and in turn there is a new hope.

Spent the afternoon with K..., talked a little but I finished my application for my uni halls of residence and English homework, spoke with G... and I think we (K... as well) will all go to P... N... at the end of the week, but I don't know if I change family, etc, but I can ask my family or sisters if they want to come with us.

I am nervous. Dad sent an email saying AFS said I need to be careful about what I say about my host family, and need to make more effort in my new host family. Dad said he didn't feel I needed to be told but AFS have the obligation to say it. Did make me worry that I can't be perfect for my new family and that what has happened here was all my fault, I do think I have been quite good with what I have said about my host family – though I am worried that other people like M... and Na... could ruin that, but hopefully we will be fine. When R... came to speak to me this morning, she said it's a secret but I don't know if AFS want me to talk to my family or if they will tell them I think my family know because at lunch my host mother gave back all my socks.

K... 's family know because yesterday they spoke with ... (our chapter president) and asked what was happening with me, and she said I have a new family! For me this isn't a secret!

I am getting better at the collective thing, instead of sitting and thinking, I am looking for the wrong number, for example, today the second collective that passed was for me.

Actually that's what really worried me in the email was 'throw yourself more into the language' pero en mas major ingles! For me the language is a sore subject. The majority is mental barriers so I will get better. Jose wrote me an email on facebook, very very sweet and made my day better.

31 August 2009

So change last Thursday night and my mama was like why did you not talk to me about leaving. At the time I thought she meant in general, but now I think it might have just been saying 'I'm going tomorrow' or something. But she gave a little speech about being careful and adapting to the culture and shit. I had thought I had been getting along pretty well with them until that point. Have to buy a new phone for the one I accidentally broke and pay yet more for my uniform. I went with P... and C... who whispered about me in the front seat, so I was a little annoyed so hardly worried about meeting the family.

Family though are great, all my family is close and talk to me! Already feel at home, comfortable in silence but when we do talk I don't feel it's because they feel they have to, and I am in turn more than happy to continue the conversation!

My sisters are close, especially R... and Nc... which is so cool and as both Ra... and Nc... are similar in age they are good to talk to. So stoked about having lunch at school and despite the fact that Mama is away and Papa is cooking (who I am told can't) it's really good!

Thursday and Friday night was relaxed. Went shopping with Nc... and Ra... en zona franca igual en viernes. Also met my older two siblings who I think will be over quite often considering they are all really close and you just get the feeling they wouldn't be away for long.

I still feel like AFS blame me... the whole 'you can't talk about this as your old host family have a high standing in society' is just bloody annoying. I am not screaming it from the rooftops but I want to be truthful and not feel guilty when something sticks. Talked to ... [study abroad student hosted by my natural family in NZ] this arvo though and he was just like 'as long as you are happy in your family who cares'. I really wonder what it would have been like to live with him for the year. Admittedly I didn't really try with him as I was going away, wanted to be with my family and also not become attached I suppose!

Ayer fue al airoporte un hora tiempra no porque la Nd... thought she was right! Yeah so it's nice doing just those normal things like going to the airport y el supermercado which is all I did yesterday, although had un birthday cena para Viviana (no so como escribe) y la K... y la J... fue a la casa, normal y mi encanta 'normal' ahora!

Today went to J... 's house to meet her mum. I can't wait to meet her as she was about to go out and buy bunks for J... 's shoebox sided rooms I could stay there. Then all weekend she has be asking when I will come over.

My family make jokes as well and don't look at me stupidly when I join in or make jokes. They're planning a trip to Argentina in November for me and when we bumped into P... at the airport my family said 'yes she talks a lot and we love her, etc' all the things the other family never said.

I feel at home already, despite still learning the ropes!

Despite how I feel AFS view me vida es Buena y I am out to show them I am a better person than they think.

5 September 2009

So this week had tests every day to which I do not think I passed any!

Went to the mal con R... en M... para de celular y no I, y ero makes me nervous as I wanted to do it before my 'week' mark and we also have to go to a reunion with our parents esta unes y they will be there...but comer helado (que rico). Totally made by brownie when we got home, big hit as per normal y y creo la Ka... gave some to then ingles professoros porque ella preguntor la K... para the recipe! Good fun as Ra... quieren aprender mas para cocina!

Mierales Cumpleanos de Dani L Entonces fue el centro con la K... y R... para comprar y K... y yo compramos un reloc that was like a sweet stamp with a clock face.

Pero que rico de comida en la casa de la Dani. Comeste mucho y tostos de nosotros a la fin de noche muy silence! Y la nana de dani es muy simpatico igual. Had a nice wee chat with her as her sister is involved with AFS and D... had asked if I could live with them.

Jueves muy tranquil porque en clase nosotros hacer un entrance Universidad exam, pero English was myy comico con a video "On her way home she stopped to enjoy the view" and there is a guy. Of course no one else got it first time round except the profe...

13 September 2009

Friday: J... didn't bring me a costume so I didn't get to dress up for the qatea, but had empanadas for breakfast. We were all in the gym and there were tables for all the classes/students. I love that Independence Day is so celebrated here – NZ equivalent of Waitangi is often inclusive of 'this land is ours' and there has been a bit of that here with Mapucha en Antofagasta but it hasn't shrouded the point of it to celebrate your country. I am

beginning to think that us as NZers are only really proud of our country once we are overseas. but a lot of fun dancing. Have to point out that there were teachers dancing with students, it seems so normal here but wouldn't happen in NZ due to many rules and regulations. For example, we all formed a semi conga line and my (male) Spanish teacher joined on me behind me – hands on my hips. We are currently studying internal and external journeys in Spanish now, and Thursday he asked me about my cultural journey. The hardest parts – language and culture. Differences – physical touching and when I said I thought that was cool, the idea was brought forward that I may adopt those habits when I get back, I replied truthfully 'that I would like to but the world is not mine', and like if I kiss people on the cheek, a lot of people wouldn't understand, though I will definitely be more affectionate.

Being an exchange student is hard. Got told off in Spanish the other day because half my class was sleeping, and me as well, but after class we had to listen to the teacher's speech about what bad exchange students we were – the first time and I pay more attention than the majority of my class. The same in the other host family. Nb... had this, that and the other, and I had to do all that myself. It's hard to be a student as you are different in personality and CULTURE. Those simple things you have grown up with like not kissing your friends to greet them or doing your own washing get changed. There are some things I will never learn and some things like going out alone that people here just don't understand. It's hard to know where you are letting go of your culture and embracing another or sacrificing pieces of yourself.

Something simple like sharing their family history with me is really special.

Pretty sure I fly back on the 12th Jan now. My family are thinking of having my birthday celebrations in December so I have my birthday here.

21 September 2009

So at the tail end of last week– sick with the flu but Wednesday out for coffee con la R... y C.... Meant to be sushi but we didn't actually know where to buy it! After met with G..., ended up losing one of his stupid little screws for his earrings in Sanche y Sanches pero no importa porque mas lardes. Ka... lost the other somewhere in the house. Our house is now his second home.

Went to bed at 2am on Friday 18th Ma... y Mama was still cooking. The entire house smelt so good, she made her own empanadas

I was super excited about 18, the idea of spending the day with my family wasn't horrible like would have been in the old one – in fact I was excited! I ate too many empanadas of my nana and together with all my mum's family. It wasn't the most exciting day of my life but nice to be with the family, and I beat the boys at some street fight type game! I love how the kids' table was Nd..., K...y, R..., 13 year old cousin, 20 year old cousin and the 29 year old C...! when V... is sitting at the adult table and two others younger than him, but he deserves to be with us – like the majority of people were downstairs talking, but C... is playing play station with us 'youngsters'. He is truly hilarious with his Ingles...

I liked 18 – not as party as I think some other people normally are, it's a public holiday of drinking, but nice with family though...

Feeling better (though not 100%) On Sunday afternoon, fue un evento de bialar tradicional con Ra... y la familia de Javi-Talhed a lot about folklore and stuff with her Mum and she explained the dances. She talks a lot about how [this country] today embraces more of the traditional things For me that's a scary word but I am wondering if in all cases it is.

Found out to wear weddings bands in this country is not normal. I hadn't really noticed until K... pointed it out and on asking R... said it's not normal to, like her dad thinks it's gay to wear one, her mum just does not wear hers – it's hard to easily spot who is married or not in this country. I don't know why we always wear the wedding rings and they don't but I like our idea of having the rings to publicly and always show your commitment.

27 September 2009

Totally think I am Papi's favourite child at the moment. I love him, laugh at his lame jokes, am more than happy to do things with him which is the opposite stage that my sisters are at! He had the cutest conversation with me over breakfast, said it was sad we didn't have that much time left together.

I love my family and now know it will be hard to leave this, especially when it was for such a short time. But then even if I was here for a year I would still feel I was being robbed of time.

28 September 2009

Dude, having one of my quiet thinking days, the nice thing is people notice. I think I am worried.

... For me what I found interesting was one of our inspectors came in to talk to us and for once everyone in the class had agreed to keep their mouth shut – in NZ you would have the majority willing to make trouble and most likely twist the story for more trouble. Anyway, T... was like 'disrespect' of a teacher is automatic suspension, and for sure in NZ at ... you would get in trouble, but like a lunch time detention and anything else would be over long discussion. Also she said that we are below our teachers, which makes sense as far as authority but she said if we ever had any problems with a teacher, we had to get our parents to talk on our behalf, which I think is a little stupid as we aren't children and aren't we taught to fight our own battles? Makes me think that's a bit of the reason I had trouble with AFS being on my side for changing families.

Another thing that struck me as different as M... stayed to fight the teacher rather than giving into his authority or storming out.

Yesterday consisted of a lot of sleeping, watching the football with G... to which [this country] has qualified for the 2010 world cup, so there was celebration throughout [the country] as they get a little carried away with football – like last weekend there was two [local] teams playing and you watched the news that night to see that people were being beaten up due to supporting the other team, and like yesterday the crowd was split, there was the section for [this country] then on the opposite side is the Colombians. Sure us kiwis love our rugby but only occasionally have we drunken idiots, and as NZers I don't really think we celebrate achievements that well!

I am liking where I am right now, everything seems pretty darn normal, hard to point out the cultural differences, sure life isn't perfect, but it never is. I would love to be able to go out at night, but due to house rule, I can't, but that's a small sacrifice due to the fact that I love my family!

24 October 2009

Glad to get home on Thursday night, after being sick and everything that went on. Cried in papa's arms when I told him about my Nana, felt like they are really family. Yesterday while reading the emails from my family Nd... was there for me as well – I am not ashamed to cry with them. Good to be home, I felt I had been away so long and it was good to see K... as well. I truly missed home.

Oh the whole Nana thing... I feel helpless, not sure of what to do – but I will figure it out.

28 October 2009

It annoys me how in this country women are expected to make the first move. If you like someone you are expected to go for it, sure I like on the occasion to make the first move, but for me in general it's for the man to show he is interested by fighting for me..

Also realizing how little is expected of men in the home. My mama has been away for about two weeks and Na... my older sister has been doing the majority of the cooking, her and R... the housework and my Dad complains when he has to cook twice in the week. Sure I can kind of understand it when my mum's home due to the fact that she is a housewife (though figured it out finally papa is on a two year leave (paid) but my sisters who are both studying, doing the majority, is weird for me.

So got a short email about Nana's funeral from Dad, only grandchild not there which doesn't make me feel better. Dad said he would send the dvd of the funeral so maybe that will give me some closure. Finding it a little hard to deal with. Never dealt with death and always thought my family would be around for it. I can't even remember the last time I saw her and can't find ways here to remember her or pay tribute to her And reading Dad's emails they are very thin, he isn't saying too much as not to worry me, but that worries me. I know he isn't alright but it's hard to know to what extent.

I am stuck and don't know what to do to make it better especially because I am semi moping and don't want to think about it.

Fin de semana didn't hold much apart from hanging out with the family, K... y G...

3 November 2009

Viernes en la tardes fue a centro con la Javi, V... y R..., y fue a campianarto de pompoms sabado. Dude that was crazy, they all had their uniforms even the kids in kinder. M 's equipo won which was great – reminded me how much I enjoyed watching L...'s sport aerobics.

The wedding was nice – though didn't see too much, V... was beautiful and full of smiles though poor P... looked so nervous. One difference I noticed from a ceremony in NZ was that there wasn't a wedding party – when they signed the marriage certificate they both had a friend come up to sign it, but other than that, there wasn't anything else.

Haha Mum called me and I picked up the phone saying 'Quien es? Quien es? And she was like 'your mum' and it took me so long to understand her....

After we all trucked it to C... for the reception – same place as la fiesta de Gala, so the set up was very similar, really nice. V... did the waltz on behalf of mi abuela – she was super nervous, but it turned out well.

They don't have speeches from the wedding party either, when they eat the cake, people were invited to make speeches, so like the fathers did and some random cousins. Good night though, danced from like 1am until 5.30am. We got home just after sunrise. Made a new friend, ..., 24 year old electrical engineer student who I danced with all night, glad my family were watching like hawks, cause he would have made a move and I would have felt like even more of an idiot in the morning, when I found out he's engaged and his girlfriend left just after we ate – though no one will quit hassling me about him. I accidentally restarted the dvd of the wedding again and everyone was like 'oh just because you wanted to see him again'. So now men and dancing always have him brought up. Made a new friend who was like 'you dance different to what I thought'. On asking what that was, he thought I would dance the Haka!

Mum is so funny - asking if I can have another towel is the new highlight of the week. She is always like "oh just wait I have to go iron it!"

Starting to get a little itchy about the no going out at night rule, it's the easiest way to meet up with friends.

Life seems normal now, that's why it will be hard to leave – hearing everyone's plans for 4deg media next year and knowing I will be a world away. Sucks knowing that those people I have started friendships with may always be the 'started' friendships.

Sure I still feel a little different, but I also am [feeling I am a local], part of this family, a student in my class (not just the exchange student).

I have become a person of fewer words.. I am not scientifically minded, I don't believe that what I see is that everything can be explained or for that matter that it needs to be. It's not possible to put my life, this exchange into words. In a John Mayer song it says 'today I think I overcame trying to fit the world inside a picture frame....didn't have a camera by my side this time, hoping I would see the world through both my eyes". So often we get caught up in the photos and keeping a diary so we can remember it in future and forget to see it for its beauty trying to get the perfect picture, etc. Let it take your breath away by living it, taking it all in ... it's really hot but pretty.

2 December

Visited V... y V..., we walked pretty much the entire beach front, visiting a few malls and markets. Visited the castle over the water and took the horse ride around the centre of V... like real tourists. [The local people] are very good at 'playing' the tourists: horse ride, on the form said \$20,000 per person but we got a 'friend' rate of \$5,000each and I think because we spoke Spanish and we wouldn't pay \$20,000 which is \$60-\$70 NZ for a horse and cart ride for like 20-30mins. I think he doesn't ever have the intention of lowering it to make you think you're getting a deal but still a rip off of the foreigners by making them pay like \$10,000 each. Also another form talking to a guy about a tour on a launch and he was like 'friend's rate is \$1,500, so you walk down and on the wall is the price \$1,500!

S...'s parents all week would tell us to be careful – they don't exactly have a bartering system here, but there is a tourist price and [a local] price, so S...'s parents were like 'tell them it's too expensive' though I really don't like doing that, it feels rude.

So yeah, V... is super cute. It's Wellington, but without the wind and has sun! The houses are so cute, painted all different bright colours.

No night outing except the first one which was a bottle of beer on the beach! We discovered H... never drinks! S...'s dad is great conversation, very intelligent and wanting to know the differences between all our countries.

Elections here are really strict, the army run it, they carry big guns, all the official paperwork has to be done when you enter and on your form, because they have a problem with people trying to vote more than once.

17 December 2009

... Second round of elections. I am still semi confused at the political make up in this country. You vote for President, Senators (not like the ones in the USA) and deputies. Depending on the population base is how many are elected. Senators act like your local representative, but if you vote for them they will get into parliament, not like in NZ where that's up to the party. There is one stupid rule to do with that is that if you have a high percentage you can also get your lower scoring friend in the same party in – doesn't run exactly highest score gets in.

The cool thing is that half of [the country] votes for Senadors, the other for deputy, then for example my region is voting for deputies – in two years time they vote for their senador. It's to avoid complete change in parliament.

Like NZ whoever wants to run for president runs. This election we had four, now there are only two. Pre-elections are held for the deputy/senador as well as all the candidates. If a person in running for president wins 60% then it's automatic, or the two with the highest percentage go to second elections a month later.

[This country] is a little stupid. First round of elections are in the middle of December, second middle of January. Asked my mum if that changed and she said no – it's at a silly time, especially as everything is closed on election day as it becomes a bank holiday.

They are a lot stricter here too. My dad was explaining you are sent the location and also a table number in the mail. You turn up, go to your table, there are two people working, four more to make sure they are doing it right. They look up your name, you fill in a form which includes your thumb print and vote in front of the six people.

I am now feeling like it's about time to go home. I have achieved what I wanted to. I do not feel foreign, in fact I always make comments about the stupid tourists! I speak Spanish! Not as well as the Italians or Germans but they have a legs up in knowing how to learn languages and then the whole drama in my first host family did not help. I have an amazing family, sure I believe there will be things said about me behind closed doors, but I have realized that's always going to happen – not like I never did it with my family in NZ. I Have friends, who now that school's over seem to be planning things – they still need a push in the right direction, but we are getting there.

Before I said I didn't want to leave because I had a life here, well realizing now that that's the reason why I am ready to leave, there is nothing (that's exaggerated) left to achieve.

Over this year I have changed, grown up – but the realization that everything will hit home when I return to NZ. This year has taught me who I am.

Physically I am fatter (can't fit into two pairs of jeans) and have curls, but life is good.

To leave will be sad, but it's just the next step into a new part of my life.

24 December 2009

I have been really easy to annoy [lately], [so] close to going home – really got annoyed at G... this morning as well. He woke me up at 10.30am, and due to finding it hard to get to sleep at the moment, I was annoyed. He would go and buy his bus tickets on his own. I wasn't actually listening to his defence, but later S. reminded me his excuse of always being a child and having to be accompanied was that it was 'more fun'.

3 January 2010

Never explained what we did for Christmas 24th. All the family were around for dinner which was salad, meat and potatoes. Really nice. I got a special mention in the grace, I really do not only feel part of my immediate family, but extended too.

Then at midnight we had a toast then the two youngest (Ka... and E...) and I handed out the presents. Then everyone opened their presents, afterwards, we went around the circle showing what we all got!

Day 25 we went out with the family for a picnic. Had the big fire going to cook all our meat, slept a lot of the time in the car due to no sleep the night before and having to get S. in the morning. I really enjoyed Christmas here, relaxed and with family.

A relaxed week in between Christmas and New Year.

New Year was about the same. Dinner with immediate family, then everyone went to N...’s and we walked down to the beach to watch the fireworks, not much on the 1st. All woke up later than normal at like 2.30pm but went on an adventure along the beach and up some dodgy hills south of the airport.

30 December went to the Isla Magdelana, my parents paid. It was beautiful. Perfect day with sun and NO WIND! There were penguins everywhere and we got to also see two dolphins with their baby. Best thing we got to talk to lots of foreigners. I got invited out by an Israeli and also French and Italian couple.

It’s amazing how strangers can rock your whole. F... (the French woman) was one of the coolest people I have met = an AFS student in the USA, lives in Tahiti, then frequently visits NZ. Has lived in Thailand and so many other places as she is a translator! She was just so full of life – makes me feel that I am not doing enough to be honest – she inspired me!

There are no broadcasting laws in this country – so no name suppression and things like car crashes you see all the damage and, thank goodness, you have the bodies ‘fuzzy’ if they are not already covered. I think it would be nice to have families know before they see it on the news but it’s also refreshing to be told the truth.

I am going to miss the timetable here - getting up late, lunch being the main meal when everything is closed from 1-3pm, then going to bed late like 2 or 3am. It will be weird to get back to NZ and have dinner the main meal which like in my house always changes and is not always together as people are working, etc. but also doing things before lunch. Here I never go out before lunch!

Ends...

Appendix C2: Kirby's Journal (edited)

24/25 February 2009: Japan to New Zealand

I arrived at the airport in Christchurch with another AFS student from Japan to transfer to Auckland. Completely new place and lots of green made us silent. What a beautiful country! However I was feeling fearful rather than amazed about this year.

Arrival in Auckland, met host family. I got really relieved to meet host family who has been really nice to me and supportive.

Anxiety > curiosity

New School (2nd day)

International Dean expects too much of me because I'm one of the AFS students, which everyone believes is a really good organisation. I couldn't understand their English much and I need to do heaps of things for school because I came here to NZ later than usual. I got overwhelmed by everything at school – English, school system, club, the number of students, etc.

Culture shock: I feel like crying and saying to my host family how I'm feeling, but I can't tell them what I want to say. I'm feeling disappointed with myself.

Spend all night with host mum (3rd day). She spoke to me by saying "How are you feeling? Any problems you worry about?" I felt like I was saved mentally. I could say half of things I wanted to. She encouraged me by talking with me. I got relieved so much and became able to depend on/trust this host family much more than before.

Little holiday (one week) just for me. I got to know about my relatives after I visited each of them with host family. And also, getting to know about NZ and NZ lifestyle. They are all nice to me. Everything is nice and fresh to me. I have been quite excited to know about NZ, desire to do anything.

First week of school: We can choose 6 subjects of all we want to take in NZ school. For me, it sounds really lame because we never study other subjects but 6 ones. On the other hand, it has merit that it's easier to make a friend who likes what I like. Thanks to that I've got friends from the same classes. NZ School system is excellent for exchange students.

Without problems the first week was over. I've got lots of friends and got quite satisfied with NZ school. No more worries. Keen on my AFS year, I'm looking forward to going to school and having different new experiences through the school.

Getting used to NZ life-style: Really relaxed every day even in school and after school at home. Is it also because of the weather? Students all the time hang around outside during interval and lunch time. That's completely different to Japanese (I never see anyone outside after school) I really feel relaxed and comfortable with this life-style.

First AFS Chapter meeting: I've met everyone from lots of countries around the world. I got kind of relieved to see AFS students who also strive to settle in and make lots of effort to try everything they want to. I came to like chapter meetings.

NZ things are not as cheap as I expected, food, drink, clothes. I was shocked that NZ\$ is getting more expensive for me. NZ is quite similar to Japan. Developed country, isn't it? I just hope NZ won't screw up by polluting everything as Japan did...

Everyone but me is wearing clothes which look so cold and definitely they are (no sleeves...) I get really cold whenever I run across them just by looking at them. NZ people are tough. They exactly fit in this weather. I can't still take off my jacket. How come the temperature changes all the time?

I got puzzled at kiwi pronunciation. I'm used to hearing American English, but not kiwi. I can understand what they're saying but few seconds later. Funny as. I wanna be kiwi speaking with kiwi accent.

NZ sky: Overwhelmed, breath-taking. It's hard to find some constellations actually at night. I got scared to gaze up at the sky with millions of stars shining brightly. I don't know what to say...beautiful, amazing? Makes me a bit frightened. Lots of green, nature makes NZ clean and keeps giving us such an amazing view. But still scary.

Japanese things popular? Especially "sushi" I just come across them at parties, restaurant, dinner, etc.

Most cars are made in Japan. Japanese car companies are famous. Whenever I ask people 'what Japanese words do you know?' they answer the names of Japanese companies which are about cars mostly.

I never thought Sushi was worldwide and popular food. I got satisfied with Japanese nostalgic food and confident of it. It makes me feel really good and comfortable. I'm proud of being Japanese. I wanna be kiwi though. They give me opportunities to explain Japanese things to people who have stereotypes and prejudice. It makes me realise what Japan is like.

Easter egg was soooo sweet. As I expected, NZ people also celebrate "Easter". That's what I wanted to experience. I didn't do anything particularly (a bit depressed) but had a couple of eggs. They were soooo sweet.

Visited museum in Auckland city: I got to know about Māori culture and Māori perspective. There are lots of things which are really attractive to me to know about NZ. NZ plants, vegetation, animals, etc. Other things which held my attention were about WWII. The country which had attacked NZ during the war seemed to be just Japan. I felt gritty and sorry for all of them. As a whole, I can say this museum is pretty good for contacts to NZ.

I am getting keen on NZ culture.

Club activity in school: They are so lazy about club activity compared with Japanese people who are practicing every day after school, struggling with lots of homework. I got quite surprised at their laziness. I wonder if they don't want to do every day or just want to take a rest so often. This is one of the reasons which make me think of NZ, NZ is a relaxing place.

Many nationalities: I have met hundreds of people who are not kiwi. They are from not only Asia, but also from Europe and South America. I'm feeling excited to meet up with them and make a friend with lots of foreigners. I've got satisfaction from that. I just admire NZ for multicultural perspective.

Walk 'Round the Bays': 70,000 people participated in the event. I walked down along the bays with 70,000 people for 8kms on such a beautiful day. Amazed at the scenery and confident that I walked for 8 kms with satisfaction. This is such a great awesome event. That was fun with AFS friends. I'm quite amazed at this event that we can taste the NZ mood.

I heard NZ is a good country to raise our children because of this nature and good support for children's education. I'm so jealous of children who were born in NZ. They must be flexible to think of everything without destruction. I wanna live here in the future hopefully.

I got to know the law of NZ! It doesn't seem to be allowed to hit the children or even slap!! That's a really good law! I've been slapped and hit so many times (even by teachers). We are not allowed to smoke inside! Great. I was pretty impressed to hear that NZ people are trying to get better heartily. I want to make it law as well in Japan. They are awesome.

NZ notes and parking receipts can't be torn. Awesome.

I found out Dad and Mum accepted my culture by showing their eagerness to know about Japan. I'm happy to share the cultures. They are eager to ask me lots of questions. That was the happiest moment when Dad put on kimono (Japanese traditional cloth) few seconds after I gave it to him.

For the first time (and I hope this is the last time) in my life, I popped in the police car. I didn't seem to notice and know all NZ rules. I was walking on the motorway I regarded as a short cut way. NZ cop is really fantastic. Really nice. It was kind of him I didn't have to be fined \$200!! And to be honest NZ highway doesn't look like a highway. There are sidewalks at the both sides. I thought I could walk through. I felt so ashamed and my legs were shaking when I saw a police car. But thanks to that policeman, I could take the greatest experience of all in NZ. That was a kind of adventure. After that I try to be careful whenever I want to go across the highways. I found out by doing something wrong we can learn much more things than by hearing. Everyone makes fun of this story, good on me.

Hockey: I tried hockey at school just because I can't play in Japan normally. I know the sport is a good way to communicate with people. I learned a lot of good things through hockey. I got impressed by teamwork mostly. In every game everyone keeps encouraging me, saying "Good try! Keep it up". That's an easy way to hang around with kiwi boys.

I got quite pleased, satisfied with it. I'm happy that lots of people let me do anything I want and support me all the time. I think we should do club activities, especially sports. They gave me one of the most impressive moments and experiences.

3 months have passed - boring? normal? Every day used to be fresh and new and special to me for the first 3 months, but getting bored. That might mean I got used to NZ completely. Everything seems normal, every day seems similar. School - home repetitive. The answer for the question "How was today?" become "Typical...., as

usual" every time. I'm getting bored because of this too relaxing mood, not too adventurous, not too exciting life appearing. I wish something exciting, attractive would happen to me soon. I feel a lack of something in this life.

These days I just wonder why there are so many international students at school. They are always hanging around together, not with kiwis, speaking unfamiliar languages we can't understand at all. I can't get it why they want to be here. I feel really furious with them. They just ran away from their countries and settled in this relaxing country. They start to annoy me. I can no longer think I'm happy to meet people from around the world. I asked Dad, "I'm worried about immigrants. Do they change to kiwi culture? Can you accept them? Dad answered me, "Kiwi culture is changing all the time, every single day, that is kiwi culture".

That makes sense. So NZ people accept all of them...? I was relieved to hear that from Dad but I don't think everyone thinks in the same way my dad does.

At this point Kirby changes host family and school. At first he is excited about it:

Everything turned out very new and fresh to me again. Actually I think I'm lucky enough to have two host families.

I hope I'll talk to lots of people and that is what I've wanted. So I'm quite happy to meet lots of people. That's a good choice to change family and school. Whenever I screw up and do wrong things, I have another host family. Even if I feel really sad about new host family and get a culture shock, I've got a free really comfortable space deep inside of my heart which is another host family.

However:

Boys at school make me really sick. Because there is no particular teacher who is in charge of exchange students, I don't have any place to be. I need to be more aggressive and positive to settle in this school. What makes matters worse was that the boys were incredibly rough and tough. They never care about me. They never speak to me somehow. I got completely sick of it. They treated me as an international student in a rough way. I got disappointed with this school and don't think I'm doing well. I'm suffering with host, school, sick... I found myself feeling better in a co-sexed school. I told my host parents about the problems at school. They didn't care about that so much as if it was my fault.

Disappointed with this host family. And feeling really lonely. I totally lost my comfortable place. At school, at home I don't feel good. I'm getting host-family sick. I kept saying "I wanna go back to another host family and school" kind of "home" sick in NZ.

In school bus, some boys threw pebbles at me. I can't look back who they are because I was too scared. Anger, fury, disappointment. I can't believe.

Discrimination at school. I thought multicultural was a good perspective. That's what everyone desires around the world. Japan is a country just one race live in (most of them are Japanese). I even have never heard the word "discrimination" and the words which discriminate people around us. I think to be honest, it's not simple with different cultures and race to live together on the same island. It might be impossible unless they reconsider

about multicultural, how great it is. I just can't believe what is going on. Who's happy with discrimination? I wanna get it changed but I can't do it by myself unfortunately. I'm getting depressed and disappointed with everyone, including myself. I asked host family if I could change the school in case I might be able to go back to another school. They said "No".

I decided to make myself happy with this life. That is one of the lives I chose. Depression made me feel like doing nothing, but I decided to overcome, I swear to myself.

AFS Mid-stay camp: First camp I've had was awesome. I didn't have to worry about being at home and school. Friends I've made and AFSers encouraged me about these problems. I cried so much when they nicely spoke to me and talked about my worries. Saddest moment was when we had to say good-bye and hug. I just said to myself, "Keep it up, I can do it, but I don't wanna go back".

South Island trip with host family: Beautiful scenery and views. Spectacular. Again I was impressed by the beauty of the NZ nature. My choice for AFS was not wrong. I could make the most of that South Island trip.

Our family decided to host 2 more AFS students. Before I met them I was anxious about them if I can get along with them. But they both are really nice to me. Relieved. And it's, in fact, really enjoyable to host another exchange student. We know how we are feeling. It's easier to keep up conversations coz we are both interested in each other. I'm getting better, no longer alone.

I saw shooting stars three times in one night. Pretty magnificent sky. I had such an awesome night. I recognised how polluted the Japanese sky was...4 stars.

NZ workers mostly finish working early in the evening. And they spend most of the time with children at home. That's an awesome thing for children to spend time with their parents. I like the NZ lifestyle. That's completely out of our minds for Japanese who are workaholic.

Most of the people misunderstand some Japanese companies, and products are American (Sony, Wii, DS, PSP, Astro Boy, etc.) They pissed me off. I feel like they disregard our pride and culture. Is it because America has much impact on NZ? Actually NZ people depend on Japanese products (without knowing they are Japanese). There are also good opportunities to tell them about Japanese. Sharing cultures can be easily done by these conversations. I am disappointed so many times by their misunderstandings.

This too relaxing mood makes me too lazy to do anything. This is also a culture-shock. I want to keep myself busy every day. I have to make the most of this relaxing mood and enjoy being here.

Exam is soon. During classes everyone looks like they're studying really hard for exam. I'm not so much. This is a national exam and only one in a year, so everyone gets into it really hard. I was pretty much impressed with them. They seem to study hard at school, not at home..

Christmas: That's the biggest celebration, it seems, of the year. I need to prepare everything for everyone and hide the presents under the tree. I never do that in Japan. We spent lots of time and money for one day of Christmas. That was the most awesome Christmas ever I've had. We don't take it so serious in Japan, but I

did enjoy this NZ Christmas. I saw NZ Santa surfing and I've even see a half-naked santa. I felt the good contrast between NZ and JPN.

On the contrary, on new year's day I didn't do anything in particular. That made me a bit sad. Instead of that, I popped into the water at the beach. I saw great fireworks from the Sky Tower. Compared with Japanese celebration for New Years (it lasts 7 days) NZ one was not that important. I took it for granted that every child can get money and have a feast every day, so I was so disappointed. Home-sick.

Christmas and New Year's day gave me a good understanding about culture difference between NZ and JPN surprisingly.

Everyone loves the beach! Sunscreen is necessary to take with. I often go to the beach to hang around with my friends. Summer in NZ is indulgent. NZ is the best place to be in summer. Even though the sun is so strong and make us easily get sunburned, people like to sunbathe or lie down on the sand. That's why NZ people are warm and nice. I indulge myself to be at the beach.

NZ people love NZ. I often see people wearing NZ tee-shirt and jandals which is a symbol of kiwiana, holding L&P! Everyone is patriotic. I feel peaceful and like to wear NZ tee-shirt and jandals

NZ people have such a sense of humour, and often make fun of something with sarcasm, especially about Australia. They like to say "close to England" not "America" or "Australia".

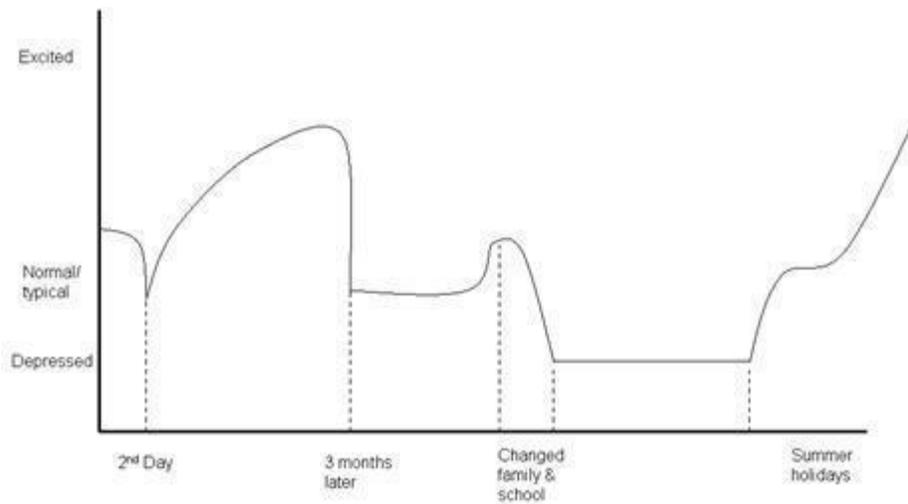
At the beginning I couldn't react when people used sarcasm. I'm likely to laugh at their sarcasm, but that is sarcasm. NZ loves AUS because NZ often makes fun of AUS. Also because NZ loves AUS they keep using sarcasm about AUS. I guess it must be so. That's pleasant and heart-warming, peaceful. But NZ doesn't like America so much. I never hear them saying sarcasm about America.

Campervan and travelling around. I've been to lots of places in NZ with a van. NZ people seem to like travelling around, especially where there is water. I love trips as well. I'm happy to be here in NZ in the holidays.

Water problem. People never waste water. And don't allow me to use water so much. It's confusing me. The water must be really clean and portable, but how come people don't use this water resource? They just collect from raindrops and save them to use up. And do people ever suffer with lack of water?

I never get home-sick, but got host family and school sick to be honest. Since Summer holidays started I've been really excited and enjoying. NZ Summer events seem to make me happy. I could make the most of it.

Wrote and drew this graph showing my year.



I remember everything I've done and how I've been feeling in NZ. I've done lots of "bad" things and felt so many times depressed and lost myself for that moment. But as a whole, those things became good things, one of the greatest experiences. I feel like I succeeded in the achievement. I can't believe it - I did it, put up with lots of things for 1 year! Now I'm feeling fretful, nostalgic... I will no longer stay here in NZ. Again getting depressed. Everything around me reminds me of my first 3 months when I managed to settle in NZ.

I have taken it for granted that I see those things every day, walk on this road everyday, feel those things often, live here in NZ forever, but that's gonna be over. Everything comes to an end. Things I see, walk, touch, feel everyday are going to disappear in front of me. I feel sad about it. Just sad the last week of my stay.

Some reflections:

NZ School is not that formal. Teachers and parents don't put much pressure on their children. After school they go to the beach to chill out. That's the best idea to cool me down to go to the beach. Without pressure NZ Children must [not] be stressed out all the time.

NZ School has lots of rules; lots of people had their cellphones or mp3 confiscated. Schools don't believe students, that's why they try to restrict everything. It sounds really formal and immature.

Hug: That's amazing way to say hello or communicate with people. I got to know how and when I can hug. I had never hugged people before I came here to NZ, so that made me really bedazzled. NZ-style handshake and hugging are also impressive. Even after going back to Japan I'll keep hugging people. Even to my Dad.

I put on 10kg since I came here.

NZ food is not healthy at all apparently. I just hope I'll lose weight in Japan. I wonder why NZ people are not so big like Americans.

I've seen so many times people blowing their noses into their handkerchieves. And they put them into the same washing machine as I did. It's just disgusting. That's against manners; but only in Japan. The way to think of manners seems different.

People don't hesitate to burp. Even at meal time. It's disgusting again. At least I want them to try to avoid.

My host brother told me that in NZ, children learn morals (values?) only from parents, not from school. They don't think teachers are as precious as parents. I feel sad. For me also teachers are as respectful as my parents because they teach us morals [values?] repeatedly and help us make decisions for the future. That's disappointing me that they can't rely on their teachers.

Even children tend to get drunk at parties because it depends on families whether they are allowed to drink or not. Everyone was drunk, holding a bin of alcohol when I went to the party for the first time. They are still too young. I think they will have another way to enjoy the party definitely. Am I still immature, or are they immature? I got a bit scared of this kind of teens party.

No transportation. No train. Bus services are so inconvenient. Every time I go out, I need to ask for a ride. Sometimes it's so annoying that I can't use any transportation. To my surprise, [some] local bus stations don't have names. That's not nice for travellers. So people use cars every day to work. Congestion happens so often. Every time they get stuck with another car they swear at the driver by saying "Asian driver!! Even if they live together and people don't like Asian, they shouldn't insult, especially in front of me. That's dreadful, cruel.

I met my old host family for staying with them as a last chance. As I thought it makes me feel comfortable to be with them because they are the "first" host family. They remind me of my first 3 months when I managed to get used to NZ. They helped me to settle in NZ easily and have been taking care of me during my stay in NZ. Unforgettable things happened so many times to me and this family because without them I wouldn't be here. Just amazing sweet as family.

Everything comes to an end. I'm leaving NZ in 6 days only because I've got to. Exciting, looking forward to seeing my [natural] family and friends, but I feel fretful, sad to say goodbye. Half - half feeling. I'm really proud of people whom I met this year and also of myself for achievement. Without support all of them have given to me, I wouldn't be doing well now. What I wanna say to people around me is "Thank you".

Ends.

Appendix C3: Anna's Journal (blog entries; edited)

Post on February 20 2009

I was watching a show jumping show and when one horse refused to jump over one fence and the horse got disqualified. After the judge had whistled the rider tried to get the horse over the fence for one last time. I heard the people sitting next to me started to talk about that rider and how rude she was doing so. I even heard people talking about that a week after it had happened.

I felt quite confused. It hadn't been such a big thing. I have done the same thing myself before. I don't understand why they thought it was SO rude. The competition wasn't a big one and those kind of events are made to test the horses and if necessary to teach them. I thought it was a good thing that the rider got the horse over the fence in the end and the problem was solved. I felt happy for her.

Post on February 28 2009

I have noticed that many people mark small notes on their hands. Even the teachers at school.

It looked first really strange because in Finland adults are always telling kids who write things on their hands that it is not nice to make your hands look dirty and go wash your hands.

In school some students speak very freely during classes and they even make comments on teachers at their presence.

It makes me feel quite puzzled. I'm used to that teachers have a certain position in class and that it is not appropriate to make any comments on their personal life. It is different if you speak to them during intervals or so, but during classes they expect that students sit quietly and work.

Post on March 16 2009

There has been this ad on TV about the effects of drinking. It ends very sadly, a drunken man accidentally throws a boy against a shelf or something like that.

Every time I see the ad or some add about drinking or driving carelessly I feel very agitated and also surprised that they make adds like that. In Finland they would never make an ad that ends badly so. There the adds would be either showing the right way to do things or they would be more light. They would never end the worse case scenario.

Post on April 7 2009

I've noticed that people here gossip a lot. It's mostly just the other students at school but some adults do that too. On the surface everyone are so polite and friendly so it is hard to know what they really think of someone.

It has actually made me a bit cautious about what I do and say because I don't like to be talked about behind my back, even if they don't really mean bad by doing so. Maybe I'm being too sensitive, but I think it's rude to

gossip and people should mind their own business. I'm used to people being fairly straight so I find it really hard that I don't know what people really think of me.

Post on April 24 2009

I was telling one day to a women how we have a warm meal with salad and bread and all for lunch every day at school in Finland and her comment on that was: 'That must be because of the cold climate' or something like that.

I actually felt quite astonished. I have been taught since I was a kid that it is important to have a good breakfast and lunch so that you learn better in school. We are taught in Finland how to eat healthy from an early age on so it felt really strange to me that an adult would think a 'proper' lunch is because of the weather, not because of the health. I honestly have to say that I don't quite understand the food culture here. It fights a lot against what I'm used to and taught. I'm happy to notice that at least in my school they have started to sell healthier food in canteen and trying to make a change.

We had to write an essay as homework for our history lesson and the deadline was after one week. When the day came, only two people had returned the essay (I was one of them).

I was absolutely amazed when the others said they are not ready and I was even more amazed when the teacher didn't seem to be too angry about it. In Finland if you return something late, the grade automatically drops by one number for every day that it's late. Some teachers even refuse to mark anything that's late. Here the students don't seem to have any kind of responsibility of their studies which makes me wonder how on earth they are ready for university next year.

Post on May 10 2009

We are doing this research in my History class and we were meant to use one period at the school library searching information. When we got there our teacher had already put all the necessary books on one table.

First I was a bit surprised because I had thought that we were supposed to find the books ourselves. The next feeling was something like being annoyed; how will we learn to become independent researchers if the teacher basically does half of the work for us. But when I'm now thinking about it and comparing it to what other teachers do here I notice that they spend a lot of their time to help their students to succeed as well as possible. Back home the students have much more responsibility of their own studies, which I think is better, but the downside of that is that there are students who get bad numbers or drop out of high school b/c they can't take the responsibility and pressure.

Post on June 7 2009

Last Friday I was supposed to go to this party and one of my friends was suppose to pick me up when he was going. He had told me that if he didn't show up it would mean that the party wasn't happening. So I waited and he never showed up so I thought the party really wasn't happening. The next Monday however I found out that there had been a party.

I honestly felt quite pissed, excuse me the language, but I was really mad. The worst thing was that he didn't even apologise for not picking me up. That is just something that would not happen in Finland. Not at least with the people I know. Here it also is harder to know what people really think. Do they really want to be my friends or are they just polite. I used to be good at reading people, but here I feel that I'm just completely lost when it comes to what people think.

We were on a school trip to Wellington and when we came back our teacher who also was the driver of the van drove everybody home.

I was a bit surprised that he was willing to do that. Back home in Finland the teacher would just drop us all by the school and everybody would have to find their own way home. This is just one example of how I find that the teachers here seem to use more of their own time for students which I think is great, but I'm just not used to it. I don't know that is it just because this is a small town in which live in NZ or is it the same everywhere.

Post on June 21 2009

There have been a couple of colder days lately and so I've worn a warm jacket and a woolly hat in the mornings when I've gone to school. The other guys are still wearing their jandals, shorts and thin jerseys.

It felt first very funny that I who is used to a very cold climate compared to this, is the one who wears the most clothes. The others are every day complaining how cold it is, but they still don't wear more clothes which seems to me pretty stupid. Even more, half the school is being more or less sick. Speaking about the jacket brings another thing to my mind. Back in Finland it is considered very rude to keep your jacket on inside. If you are wearing a jacket when in class, the teacher might very well snap at you and tell you to take it off. Here it is the teachers who are most likely to wear a jacket in a class room, which feels sometimes very odd.

Post on July 27 2009

I was just talking random stuff with one of my friends and it came up that scooters are apparently very popular among uni-students in NZ as they are cheap and easy to drive in cities.

I actually thought it really funny that uni-students are driving scooters. In Finland scooters are very popular but the drivers are between the age of 15 and 17. Almost every one I know got a scooter when they turned 15. (that's when u can legally drive them) I had one too. It is one of those must haves. U have to be 18 to drive a car in there so that's one of the reasons. But when people turn 18 it somehow magically becomes embarrassing to drive a scooter and everyone sells them on. For most 18-year-olds it is too expensive to buy a car so they drive their parents' one but nobody would drive a scooter anymore. That's why it felt really funny thinking of uni students driving scooters.

Regarding norms:

In the beginning of my year I had some trouble to remember to use the words pardon and please. This was partly because they simply do not exist in Finnish. In Finnish we use one word that covers the meanings of sorry, excuse me and pardon. I was constantly saying sorry instead of pardon because that is the most common translation. I'm still struggling sometimes to remember to please as in Finnish you are being polite by simply

saying could or would when asking for something. Another thing that is different from Finnish culture is the way of greeting. Here when people say hi they always add the person's name to the greeting which we don't do in Finland. It took some time to get used to it but now I'm doing it myself.

Some things have been really easy to adapt to. Like saying 'see ya' every time you leave even if you won't see them again. That is something we would never do back home. Another easy one to adapt was to say simply 'ta' instead of 'thank you'. That was something I had never heard before but the people here use it all the time.

Adapting to local community life:

I don't know about the food helping to adapt, but making friends with locals has definitely helped. I live in a small town and in school everybody knows everybody since primary school so it was hard first but now I'm in the know of all the dramas and other happenings so I feel almost like a part of the group. Still a bit an outsider but not a total stranger anymore.

Post on July 30 2009

A Swedish exchange student who has just arrived to New Zealand was staying at my place and when we were leaving the house in the morning she asked me if she could borrow a jacket.

The situation itself was nothing special or anything like that, but I found it interesting how my own mind started working. Six months ago I would have thought her request the most natural thing and would have most likely taken a jacket myself. Now the first thing that came to my mind was that why do you want a jacket, it's a beautiful day outside and not so cold really. It was funny to notice how I've started to adapt the culture here and how she, coming fresh from Scandinavia, is so like I was six months ago.

Post on August 24 2009

At last week's soccer training nobody really felt like training so we just talked about possibly doing some fundraising. It was otherwise okay and nothing that special, but there was one thing that really bugged me. Our coach, who is one of the younger teachers at school, didn't even try to make us practice and was making all these stupid suggestions... and then in games she tells us how bad we played, once again.

It sometimes really bothers me that our coach acts like one of the girls. Well she is only in her twenties, but sometimes she has no authority what so ever. She is too laid back or relaxed or whatever one calls it. She should be more like above us to gain some respect so maybe then our team would have some self control. I've noticed the same effect on other leadership situations as well. I'm used to that there is one strong leader, but here it doesn't just seem to work. Maybe it is because of a small town and a small school, but the students don't seem to show any kind of respect to their teachers sometimes, which means that the teachers have no control in the class. Back home not showing respect to teachers is just that wouldn't happen.

Post on September 9 2009

You know how sometimes little things can be so frustrating and make everything feel so much worse. For me, one of these little things is coconut, or more specifically those coconut flakes that they seem to put on cakes

and stuff in here all the time. I don't like them and I just don't understand why they have to put them on everything. Can't a girl just buy a normal chocolate brownie without those bloody coconut flakes? Anyway, I better get on with the story to make some sense of it. The other day I was having a really bad morning... not wanting to get up, running late, you get the picture. I was packing my lunch in a hurry and when I went to get a munch bar from the pantry. Guess what I found? Three new packages of different munch bars, every single one having coconut in them. It just got to me so bad.

It is really funny how such a little thing can stir up such strong emotions, but at that moment I was pretty much cursing that I had ever come to New Zealand, where I have to make my own lunch and where they put coconut into everything. And then of course I started to think all the other little things I don't like in here and pretty much had a really crappy day. Afterwards that just felt so stupid how one can ruin a whole day because of a little thing like that. Not my proudest moment I must say, but makes a good memory. By the way, I must add that no blame can be put on my host mum for buying all those munch bar (meant for my lunch) because it never came up that I don't like coconut. I think I really should tell her that to avoid further spoilt days. ;)

Post on September 11 2009

This is maybe one of the most wonderful things that has happened to me in New Zealand.

It was my birthday today, and during Biology at school I got a surprise birthday cake!

Of course I was very touched that they had went to all the trouble in the middle of the day to organise it, but the most amazing part was that the girls who bought it weren't even my best friends at school. Back home I would have expected that my very best and closest friends might have something like that so I was very surprised that people who don't even know me so well would do something like that. It so different... A funny thing was that three teachers and our principal conveniently happened to pop in our class "on some business" while the cake was being eaten. :) Small school, news travel fast, haha

Post on October 1 2009

This is something I've noticed a long time ago but somehow always forget to mention when I'm writing.

It is funny how languages work in different ways. In English, when somebody asks how to spell a word, people always spell it out letter by letter. In Finnish, we always say them in syllables if someone asks. It feels quite funny sometimes when someone asks in class how to spell a word and I always think of saying it out loud in syllables and then somebody says it letter by letter. I think it is because in Finnish the pronunciation is always the same and the sound of the word is the same as the written word. We're also taught to read in syllables first and I remember that in elementary school we used to have these tests every year in which you had to cut the words down to syllables in a limited time. I think that is why I have a hard time sometimes to remember that in English you spell the words letter by letter.

That brings to my mind another matter regarding the language differences. Here people of my age make that sort of spelling mistakes that seem really easy to me. My host sister for example almost every time writes *their* when she means *there*. (she's my age) A lot of my friends make the same sort of mistakes. It feels quite funny that I can spell/write better English than the boy who sits next to in my English class and speaks English as a

first language. Well, I of course make more mistakes when it comes to grammar but in spelling words I'm much better than him. It is pretty different back home where everybody of my age can spell correctly. The most mistakes that people do, is about writing some words separate when they are supposed to be written together. We have a lot of those in Finnish. It is actually quite interesting to find out what kind of mistakes people, who speak English as first language, do.

Post on October 16 2009

As it is coming close to the time when teachers decide who gets the Top of the Class, it is a constant subject in school. Many of my teachers are half joking, half seriously saying that I'm near the top of the class and throughout the year they have been saying how impressed they are of how good I'm doing when English is not my first language. And most of the time this happens in front of the whole class.

Of course I liked that they thought I was doing well, but mostly I just felt a bit uncomfortable taking these comments, especially when in class. You see, I'm not very good at taking compliments and a big part of that comes from my cultural background. In Finnish culture modesty is one of the most appreciated characteristics in a person and if you look like you are proud of what you have done people take you as smug. Modesty is so to speak so tightly in our nature, that if you are given a compliment the first answer that most people would give is 'oh, it was nothing...' and then explain what you could have done better and making it sound like you did not do anything worthwhile in the first place. You would make everything you can to make sure that the other person does not think you smug.

Another typical situation is when you are wearing new shoes or clothes for the first time and your friend notices that and tells you they look nice, because it's the polite thing to do. You say thank you, probably say that they were some cheap ones from the sales and ad quickly add how nice a t-shirt your friend is wearing. Because if you don't do this or worse, you say something like 'thanks, I think so too', you are being smug. And I'm being totally serious about this. I have often discussed with my friends how ridiculous this is and how Finnish have such a low self-esteem and are very bad in selling/lobbing themselves to others.

Another thing that is kind of similar is how conversation works differently in different cultures. In Finnish culture it goes like one person says something and the other listens quietly until the speaker has finished what he was saying. Then the second person answers and the first one stays quiet. Staying quiet while the other person is speaking shows respect and means that you are listening. If you have something you want to ask you wait until he/she is finished. Interrupting is very rude. You only speak when you have something intelligent to say, which means that 'small talk' is not a part of our culture, because if you have nothing important to say, you stay quiet.

Because I come from this background it is sometimes very difficult to take part in a small talk conversation and when having a conversation I often feel that people think I don't either understand or I don't really care to talk because I stay quiet while they are talking and not interrupting to ask questions and making the conversation move on like that. I also feel it very difficult to change how I communicate with people in here as it is sometimes against of what I have learnt.

Just read the email and this came to my mind, not sure have I mentioned this before, probably I have.

In the beginning I found it massively annoying and rude how students here chat during the class and sometimes even the teacher with words that aren't worth repeating. I think it's just that I have adjusted to my environment or because I have only two or so weeks left at school, but I don't seem to care much about it anymore. I still don't think it's right but I doesn't think about it so much now.

One quite funny event relates to this. I was chatting with one of my Finnish schoolfriends on Facebook and I asked had things changed in my old school because our school and another high school emerged together and we got some 150 new students from the other school, mostly really sporty people as that school was specialised in sports and all of those transferred to my school. The only thing he said was that some of the transfer students (mostly the sporty ones) were chatting in class and a bit rude towards the teachers. When he said that it instantly felt so funny because that was exactly how I had felt when I first came to [the local] college. And it also felt really good that somebody else felt the same and I was not just being all snobbish or something like that. And now I have to add that most of those people who are noisy in class in here are sporty people too...

My attitudes towards kiwi kids studying methods have changed too. I first thought that they don't really do anything as they don't do much in class, but I have noticed that they do much more work at home, and some of my friends study very seriously for their externals. The first impression is not always the right one.

btw, I'm mostly travelling during the end of this month and the whole of next month so you probably won't hear from me before December.

Post on November 11

Hey, I've just come back from a ten day trip on The Spirit of New Zealand. It was a great thing to do and I gained so much. Here are few things that happened during those days. My trip was a bit different because more than half of the students there were exchange students. Of 40 students 19 were Kiwis, 16 German, 3 Finns, 1 Italian and 1 French.

Because all the girls lived in the same mess (not sure how to spell it, but the room that you sleep in on a ship), there was very little space and we all had to change our clothes in there and that sort of things. The faces of some girls were worth while seeing when they heard that.

This is something that I have noticed so many times during this year. In Finland nobody cares about that kind of things. You just do what you have to do and don't think about it too much. It was sort of funny to notice how the first morning the Finns just started to change their clothes without any further thought and how some of the other girls were a bit shy, or something like that, at first. It came to my mind what it would have been like if we had had some South Americans with us...

I was the watch/team -leader for a couple of times and as you can imagine not everybody are willing to do always as asked. Especially when you are a girl and an equal crew member at other times.

Maybe it was partly because of the last days of the trip and all, but I started to get really pissed off, really easily if I had to repeat things many times and then wait a couple of minutes for anything to happen. I think it is the way that I was brought up that if you have to ask twice for something to happen it is almost once too many. Another thing that I noticed and in this I might be wrong to some extent, but there were some differences in

people's responses depending on where they were from and on their gender (naturally). If I asked a German to do something they did it right away, but if I asked something from a Kiwi boy, there was quite often this slight delay and the 'why don't you do it yourself' -look in their face. Some of the girls were the same. But there were exceptions on both sides too, of course. It was interesting to notice that when we (students) had to make some decisions, the Finns and the Germans were like "let's sort this all now so we don't have to think about it any more and we can relax later" and some of the others were saying "oh, can't we just stop talking now and figure it all out later as it comes".

I feel I sound very stereotypical right now and always smoking the New Zealanders. In fact there are many things I love about them. For example the teachers and staff at school have been amazingly friendly and genuinely interested in my future plans which wouldn't happen back home. And I have never got so many invitations to go to stay with different people for a weekend or dinner invitations and such.

Post on December 13 2009

Hey, I know I haven't been writing much lately, but it feels like nothing that special has happened in here. I'm actually getting more and more excited about going home.

It feels strange that I'm going home just in three weeks or so. I will miss some things so much about New Zealand. Like the way people always ask me to do things such as drying dishes or getting the washing in. Back home I would just be told to do so. And not just at home, but in everywhere and by everybody who are older than me. Speaking more politely is something that we Finns should do more.

But still there are things that I quite don't understand about New Zealanders. There was this thing in the news, maybe couple a weeks ago, about one primary school where the kids addressed the teachers by their first name. Many people seemed somewhat upset or [expressed] unapproval about it. They said that calling teachers by Mr or Mrs so and so creates respect. I even think that one guy said that it is essential in secondary schools where teenagers have lack of respect towards their teachers. I understand where they are coming from with this idea but to me the whole situation seems a bit hilarious because in Finland we never had to call our teachers Sir or Mr so and so and there the students show so much more respect towards the teachers. In primary school we always called them just teacher or the shorter version (in Finnish) and in secondary school we usually just use their first name. I think we should be calling them by their title, which is lecturer, but nobody really cares about that rule anymore. Now it's only used in writing.

Another similar thing is the school uniform. Here they say that wearing uniform teaches students to dress according to the situation and prepares them for the work world where they have to dress properly. In my school year 13 don't have to wear a uniform but that changes next year because they say that seniors are dressing too casually to school. That something that has never been a problem in any of my schools in Finland. We don't wear uniforms, but too casual dressing isn't a problem either. But I think there is a small problem with some kids wearing designer clothes and the American style of wearing every day different clothes is pretty much a norm. I have to say that I miss it how young people there can show their personality by dressing. Here I see no 1980's fans, goths, manga/anime fans or those who just dress differently.

Ends.

Appendix C4: Damon's Journal (blog entries; edited)

Created on Thursday, 03/05/2009⁹

So, it's been nearly a week in real time, since I left NZ. It is pretty strange thing to leave your family behind and go to a completely new family. I don't think you can really be prepared for what it is going to be like. There is no feeling that is the same as realisation that you are not going to be seeing your family for a whole year. I am not feeling a huge loss at the moment, and I haven't yet. I am feeling that spending an evening with my best friend right now would be really nice, just cruise, listen to music and just chat with her. That is the thing that I am really missing right now. The ability to just listen and chat with her, and other friends. Not having any friends here right now is difficult. I haven't been to school yet, so I haven't really had a chance to meet people my own age, but that's fine.

One of the strangest things is having younger siblings. Coming from the youngest of three, with 5 years between each of us, to have two younger siblings, 7 and 9 years younger is strange. I am sure that I must have been like my younger brother when I was his age (indeed, there is a video that confirms that) and I have a huge amount of sympathy for my older brother now. I am trying to be as patient as I can and just let it wash over me, and that is working quite well at the moment.

The food is quite different. More meat than I am used to, and I feel that I may be putting on weight. I am going to need to watch that and go for more runs to try and cope with that. Going for runs might be a good thing anyway, giving me a chance to just be by myself and clear my mind. Also, as exercise is a good anti-depressant, it will make a difference to my mood.

I am tired all the time. It is seriously exhausting trying to learn a new language. The first difference that I am noticing in the language is not that I am understanding more of what is being said, but I am able to hear what they are saying more clearly. With next to no Spanish to begin with, I am constantly trying to pick up new words. Fortunately, with a good grounding in French and Latin, I can read enough to get a general idea of what is being said, but aurally, I am really struggling. If I am actively listening now, though, I can at least hear words, and can kind of get an idea of the grammar of the sentence, even if I can't understand what many of the words mean. Understanding the rough syntax of the sentence is better than nothing though. In writing, I can get a very good idea of the syntax - person, number, tense, and can start to figure things out more. I tried to read the newspaper yesterday and was able to figure out that someone was saying there was a lot of corruption within INAU (a CYFS like organisation, I found out from my host-father later). More than that, I could figure out parts of sentences and was being held up by my vocab. I am still thinking of ways to learn lots of vocab fast. That is the main thing that is holding me up right now. If I had more vocab, I would be able to say a huge amount more, as I am getting my head around how to conjugate the verbs, get the adjectives to agree with the nouns etc.

It was strange, earlier today. I was talking on MSN with a friend of mine from Belgium, who speaks French and English, and I talk with her in a combination of the two languages. My mind is obviously thinking better linguistically, as I was able to say a lot more in French in the conversation than I have been able to in previous conversations.

⁹Date is U.S. format.

Unfortunately, I am only starting school next week. I think it would be better to start school sooner, and start to get to know some people (or more have something more to do during the day). At the moment, I am kinda struggling to fill the day. Diary writing, exercise, reading what, where and when I can. Writing some emails to friends (though I am trying to limit how much time I spend online), but even so, the days aren't exactly going fast. This will change, I'm sure. Everyone says so at least, and also says that this is the hardest part. I am forcing myself to keep busy, and seem to be succeeding fairly well. It is strange that I haven't been feeling terribly homesick. More just missing the company of my best friend. Thankfully I can send fairly good emails to her in short amounts of time. Touch typing is good for that. And she is sending good emails back, which is making quite a difference. I would love to have a face to face chat with her, or at least a phone call (I should really get Skype set up properly on my computer).

Thinking back to the orientation camp, it was very interesting to see just how much English is spoken world wide. It does definitely seem to be the universal language.

Weird thing to notice. Things lock and unlock in the opposite direction to that in NZ.

Created on Thursday, 04/23/2009

So, it is hard to get put down on paper like this, what I really feel about the country. So many thoughts and experiences.

So - biggest differences that I have noticed. There is far more energy here. Everything happens at a much more intense level with everything. School works roughly the same as my school back in NZ, though this is a-typical of Uruguay. I am within a school that is private and does the IB, and is modelled on British public (ie, private) schools. That being said, there are still definitely some very noticeable differences. Teachers are always talked to on a first name basis. It is somewhat difficult to catch myself from saying "sir" and "miss" all the time, as well as the urge to stand up as a teacher comes into the class, though I guess that this is again an a-typical thing for NZ. Still, definitely something I have noticed. There is a lot less interventionism within the classroom. Students have more freedom just to talk, to wander around the classroom, to do things. It seems to be more learning when you want to learn, though, of course, this is a generalisation and changes from class to class with some teachers being very strict.

Integrating with the other students has been giving the usual troubles that integrating into any pre-formed group that has functioned perfectly well for a long time without your presence gives. It is not that the students are unfriendly at all, quite the opposite, but when you don't have their natural language, and although I am in a school that is bi-lingual (a-typical of the country), and the students can speak very good English, some of them perfectly fluent, there is something about not speaking their natural language that creates a strong barrier between you and them. Although I can talk with them in English, I always feel uncomfortable because they are going out of their way and needing to separate themselves off from the group to interact with me. The Spanish is too rapid for me to follow when they are talking amongst themselves, and so I just kind of listen, smile, and nod, and really try to understand as much as is going on. It is a very isolating experience - to want to make friends, but not to have the primary facility that you have always used and have praised highly - language.

In terms of understanding what is going on, one experience I had truly showed me just how little I knew and how hard it is to really break into a new regimes. It took me most of the first week at school to find out where all the people in my generation went at morning tea and lunchtime. It took one of the other students walking out of a classroom late at morning tea to say "hey, come on" to me, and show me where everyone went. Before then, because I hardly knew who was in my year, and there was too many people and too much happening, I hadn't been able to figure out that everyone went to the dairy that is one block away from the school. At lunchtime, everyone goes home for lunch.

The society is very demonstrative - lots of hugs, lots of kisses all the time. Fortunately I have had a fair amount of interaction with people from other similar cultures and so I had no qualms about it at all (as I know some of the other students from NZ did), but it is very different that all the time when you meet people you don't know, there are hugs and kisses on the cheek. I was thinking about it - although Kiwi's are very friendly on the whole, always willing to talk and interact and help out etc, in a very similar way to here, the main difference is that here they do it with more strength (? I can't find the words to phrase it any better - it is an idea of more energy with it, more excitement... just more).

I think the best way to describe the differences between the teen culture here and in NZ is that NZ has a drinking culture and here has a dancing culture. Each has a bit of the other, but the focus is very different. In NZ I was always being saddened at how little dancing there was, and how just "let's sit around, get drunk and talk and be stupid" it was. In stark contrast, here, people dance. And dance. And dance. I went to a wedding - and after dinner a good two thirds of the people present started dancing. This was a wedding where you had people aged 7 to 70, and everyone was dancing. I saw a couple in their later stage of life being some of the first on the floor, as well as some children, and everyone in between. I have just never witnessed anything like that in NZ.

The drinking of mate is a very important part of the culture here - it is a very social thing, with the mate being passed around a circle, and it is a very nice, relaxed way for a group of people just to hang out, chat and interact. I guess it is very similar to how we treat drinking alcohol in the evenings, but it is non-alcoholic and is at any time. It feels very similar, almost, to going out with a coffee for someone, but is much more portable and much more simple (and cheaper too).

Other things I have noticed, as an acclimatization thing to the new culture, is that links to NZ have either strengthened or died. The people who truly matter to me, I feel that much much more, and the people who were just... friends without any particularly special bond, are kind of fading away. Cultural differences, added to language differences, added to the fact that there are only limited numbers of people in this world who will ever become very close friends, means that the thing I have really missed has been the ability to just cruise with my best friend, listen to music, and talk to her about anything and everything that is on my mind, and vice-versa. Something very relaxing and calming for the mind about that.

Created on Monday, 05/25/2009

My next update, roughly a month down the track, and a lot has happened in that time. The majority of which is not hugely relevant or interesting or different to the time before it. There has been a significant amount of time doing roughly the same things - to school, home from school, cruise around for a while, rinse, repeat.

Two weeks ago, more or less, things suddenly changed, and suddenly I am starting to see the rest of the year looking one hell of a lot better. Due to various reasons, complicated and unimportant, I ended up staying at the house of one of the AFS associated families over night. I got to their place around 8, and by 8:30 I had discovered that the father was a music lover. By that I mean he has the largest collection of music CD's and DVD's I have seen. It is truly quite impressive. The kids all do some kind of music and are all very musical. This immediately gave me something to bond over and we stayed up till 3:30 talking, and watching music DVD's. By the end of the night I had been completely welcomed into the family and they have become very close friends in a very short space of time. This is something I have noticed seems more common here than in NZ - a level of openness into a family with such warmth and speed that is less common in NZ. We talked about life, the universe, everything, politics, how countries are run, music, and everything in between.

It was this night that something seemed to click in my brain. A catalyst was suddenly dropped into the reaction that is me learning Spanish and from that evening on, suddenly I went from understanding very little, and having very little, to having a huge amount of the language open up to me. Every day since then I have been working more and more in Spanish, to the point that now I am finding it difficult at times to work in English and it takes effort to change back into English.

[My host] father, invited me to two music performances the following week, which I went to without hesitation, and enjoyed immensely. It was a huge relief to suddenly have someone (albeit more than twice my age) who has the same passion for music as myself. Because he has this passion, he also has a lot of the contacts that were needed to create the second biggest change for me. He introduced me to the manager, and then conductor of a youth orchestra here (which is very good) and I essentially walked into to one of the seats and started playing with them. That was just over a week ago. This week has been absolutely insane, with roughly 35-40 hours of rehearsals on top of 5-6 performances. About the best way I could have had to kick start my time with the orchestra as now I know pretty much everybody in the orchestra and get on well with all of them. Yet again, everybody has been SUPER friendly and welcoming and absolutely love them all to bits. It is very strange to see how much easier it is to make good friends with them than it has been at the British Schools. I think that having more Spanish has helped, and definitely having the shared interest in music helps, but for some reason, everything just worked with the orchestra. It clicked, so to speak, and in one week, I had more invitations to go out and do things, and did more things with them, than I have done with the people from the British Schools since I got here. I really find some of the people from school trying - they are often completely disinterested, and I find it frustrating how much they live in a bubble in their suburb. It seems as though the world outside their suburb, and USA doesn't exist a lot of the time for them. And USA exists within TV. The people in the orchestra seem much more REAL. They don't have the privilege nor the wealth, or the second language of English, nor the opportunities of the people at the British, but they seem to almost have more integrity. This, I don't think is limited to here though. I saw the same kind of things within SKC in NZ with a lot of the students there. Similarly in NZ my friends were more from outside of school than inside - some things change, some things just don't, different culture or not. There is one guy at the British with whom I am getting on really well. He is a musician too, and we are looking into playing some stuff together, maybe set up a band or something. I dunno.

What has changed in my mind is that, in the last week, I have had next to no opportunity to speak in English. It has been Spanish all day every day and I have needed to understand what has been happening all the time, in rehearsals and for the performances, what we are playing, where, when, in what clothes, etc. As such, my

mind has adjusted by flicking a switch and the difference between now and two or three weeks ago, is that now I can hold a conversation in Spanish easily, on most topics, and be understood, and understand, and before, I simply couldn't. A huge change. Today, I was with a kiwi teacher, who is here with AFS for one of their teacher training courses, 3 months, and his Spanish is less good than mine at the moment and so I was swapping languages all the time, and for the first time, I spoke in Spanish to someone who couldn't speak it, and I didn't realise I had done it. I also needed to ask at one point, what language someone had asked me a question in because I couldn't remember, 20 seconds later. It is no longer that I am translating or anything, it seems to be pretty much pure understanding. So weird!

On a side note, interesting to see how effectively everyone survives on such a small amount of sleep. Between Thursday morning and Saturday night, I had about 6 hours of sleep, along with a good third of the orchestra (we went out two nights in a row, and had 4 performances in the three days) and they all seemed fine, with energy to burn, and I was shattered. They are made of sterner stuff when it comes to partying than I am.

This is looking at slightly different things than last time, more about mental changes and experiences than physical ones.

Created on Tuesday, 06/23/2009

Well, it seems to be that I am giving you updates roughly monthly. This seems just to be the length of time it takes me to collect my thoughts and think that I have something new to tell you about, and is not by design.

Well, I was definitely correct when I said that I thought that getting into the orchestra would change a lot for me in my year here. This last month so much has changed for me. I have gone from, in truth, not socialising a huge amount, to going out two or three times a week, hardly sleeping (I had my first 8 hour night of sleep in about 10 days last night, and have been averaging around 6 with it getting down to about 2 on Saturday night, with no siestas) and doing so many things. As well, my Spanish has gone from very much a pidgin language in which I could communicate if I needed to and understand if I really focused, to being able to chat and converse in Spanish quite easily (though not necessarily perfect with my grammar). I have also noticed that my English is becoming slightly strange because of that and so do forgive any odd phrases.

Mate: Probably the most interesting cultural thing to do with food/drink here is the mate. It is a type of tea that has a lot of significance in the culture. What is different is that it has a completely unique way of drinking it and has a lot of culture associated with it. You have the mate itself, which is, from what I understand, initially a big nut, that they cut open and encase in leather. It is small, holding only about a mouthful or two worth of liquid at any time. As well, you have the bombilla, which is a kind of metal straw with a filter kind of thing at the bottom. Within the mate you put the yerba (tea leaves) and there are a couple of ways of doing it that I don't fully understand, but essentially it is to do with arranging it in such a way that you have the very fine leaves at the top and the bigger leaves at the bottom. This is to stop you from drinking the leaves. At this point you put the bombilla in and pour the water in. The water is hot water, and you tend to have it in a thermos flask. Different people do different things in order to keep the fine tea leaves away from the bottom but that is all just personal preference and not really part of the cultural side of it.

At this point, you start drinking. Because there is only about a mouthful or two of the mate inside, you drink a bit, then refill the mate (with water, not with more yerba), then drink a bit and refill the mate and this is the point that it is interesting. It is a communal drink, on the whole. You share mate with friends, with other people, as you talk to them and interact with them. The mate gets passed from the person who owns it and fills it, to each person, who finishes it (you must finish it yourself, and hear a sound that there is no more, kind of like a straw sucking a drink when there is no drink left) and then passes it back. The person then refills it and passes it around. This tends to happen within a circle as people are talking about general communal things and can happen between a lot of people or just two.

An example of this was over the weekend when I was talking to my consajero (support person) about stuff that was going on, we went to the rambla (waterfront) and sat and chatted and drank mate. It was a way that we were equal and a way to build a relationship in a way. Like any part of the culture, different people do different things. You don't always have to share your mate, and a lot of times people don't (especially now because of all the concerns about swine flu). Also, you tend not to share it with random people, or with someone if you are only chatting with them for a couple of minutes about random things. If you are cruising around a campfire, for example, and you are chatting with some friends for an extended period of time, then you would start sharing it around. Times like that. That you pass it directly from the person whose mate it is to the other person and then back is also very important. I don't know how well I have explained it but I hope this helps.

The other ritual that I guess exists is to do with the asado. Essentially it is a very fancy barbeque that they tend to have about once a week, and in terms of rituals, I haven't really seen any that I would call culturally specific any more than food is specific to the country. What happens is very similar to at a barbeque in NZ. There is the asado (grill with embers underneath and a bracketed fire to the side that is slightly elevated to let the embers fall down and be moved around), and the meat, and you throw the meat on the grill as well as well as sometimes skewers of mixed things, or corn or packets of vegies or you can have a kind of mini muffin tray with pockets where you put cheese and it melts and you eat the melted cheese. After that, either the person whose house it is (the man of the house) or one of the friends (men) controls the fire, controls the height of the grill, controls the embers and controls the cooking in much the same way that one might control the barbie in NZ. There aren't, from what I can tell, many rituals, but it is the most common way to entertain a lot of people. The idea is "this person is coming from overseas, so we are going to have her/him around for an asado." As well, it tends to be a good time for family to spend time together as it takes more time, and you kind of nibble at chorizo or blood sausage as kind of... entrees. All very yummy food and I think it is a superior way of cooking meat than on a gas barbeque. You get a slightly different flavour, and the meat tends to be VERY tender. Also, you don't marinade or do anything like that. It is only the meat, with salt rubbed in. All in all, I like it a lot.

Other things that have been happening recently. As I said, the Spanish has come along a huge way. That is mostly thanks to the fact that with the orchestra I HAVE to speak in Spanish, and that there is something happening with one of the girls there. Without going into a huge amount of detail (it is VERY complicated and not worth the effort), there are some basic differences within the culture. The direct translation of "boyfriend/girlfriend" means a lot more than the word does in English, and they have another word that they use that is kind of a stage between friends and being a couple. Not fully understanding this led to some interesting conversations as I have been trying to get to grips with all the intricacies at the moment. This was a very strong way to demonstrate exactly how strongly culture and language are linked. The words mean exactly the same thing in a completely different way. I really can't explain it any better than that without going into a

month's worth of very complex interactions in a different language. Suffice it to say, it has definitely been the best way to learn the language and learn a lot more about the culture. At the same time, I can see that leaving might be made a helluva lot more complicated because of it.

This is already pretty big and it is currently lunch time at school (this is one of my free periods where the others have classes, so I use the time to catch up on emails and things like that). Again, if there is anything that you want more information on or a specific concept looked into, let me know.

Created on Tuesday, 10/20/2009

So yeah - it's definitely been a while since I've written anything here. There are a lot of reasons for that. A lot of things have changed in my life here. I have had to change families, which came as a bit of a surprise (that is a particular story that is hard to explain properly via text... maybe better explained when I get back into the country) as well as not being a surprise. There was no specific issue, but just a logistics thing, to do with changing conditions within the family that had been put out at the beginning of the year, but were uncertain for the second half of the year. Anyway, it was fine and I am now well settled in with my new family and everything is good.

So, in the time that I have been out of contact, I have fully firmed up the change of plans for what I am going to be studying next year. This, you might say, is not so much a thing of cultural differences, but for me, it has taken going halfway across the world, and getting the viewpoint that restarting a life here has given me, to realise that for me, there is nothing quite like music. La Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional ... has truly changed a lot for me and it for me. About 2 months ago, the new exchange students arrived, for the second half of the year, and I have been able to have a kind of yardstick against which to measure my beginnings.

I was right - my Spanish developed really slowly. I was never given an immersion situation. For the first two months, there was no place where I was FORCED to speak Spanish. There was no option to get rid of English in my life, and survive communicating and learning Spanish. As such, I can see that all of the new exchange students have better Spanish than I did after 2 months. When I entered the orchestra though, it didn't really matter that I couldn't speak a huge amount. I had just enough to be able to kinda follow what was going on within the rehearsals, and that truly made a difference with the learning. But what was more interesting, was that even without all of that, the music really helped to make friends without the need for language, or perhaps it would be better to say that the music acted as the language.

For me, recently, I have been meeting a lot of musicians from all around the world. I have played under the baton of a Spaniard, played with a French concert pianist who is living in Buenos Aires, several Venezuelans and more, within the orchestra, as well as getting to know musicians from different parts of Argentina. It is amazing to see that there is some strange bond that takes place, and all other things are forgotten, when a group of musicians get together. In a bus, one the way back from a trip in Argentina, there was a group of musicians who had got on the bus. I started talking with one of them, and ended up chatting with him for the entire bus trip. Really interesting to see that music acts as an almost universal language, and cultural bond that doesn't matter anything about where you were born, where you grow, or where you live or anything like that.

Other crazy things that have been happening - Friday night, I got mugged. I stopped thinking for 5 minutes, let myself go a little way away from safety, and was pretty much immediately mugged. There was no violence, and everything is alright. All that was lost was a bit of money (about \$20 equivalent from each of the three of us, and two mobiles), but it really brings the reality back, that the country that I am in is not really very safe, and is, in truth, a developing country. It is generally accepted that there are some problems within the country, to do with wealth distribution, infrastructure, and a couple of aspects of the culture, or rather a few cultural types that exist. It is brought home when the hill with the best view in the city, waterfront, amazing views of water and city, is one of the most dangerous, and poorest areas of the city. It is like being able to have houses on One Tree Hill with views across the harbour and the city, and then having people living in truly bad housing. At the bottom of the hill there are mounds of rubbish and things like that. But this is part of the country that I live in, and it is a shame, but so many of the people that I know are such good people and despite the fact that there are problems, everyone keeps on living and doing what they can with what they've got.

Despite not having had the language at the beginning of the year, I do feel that I have made a huge amount of progress, and I think that I can match, grammatically, a good portion of the other students, but I just don't have the overall vocabulary that some of them do.

{Here] at the moment, it is elections. Politics here is something truly impressive. Next weekend are the actual elections. For the last 2-3 months, if you went down to the waterfront, there would be long lines of cars doing a political... demonstration (would that be the right word), just showing their support for a specific party. At times it would take 5-10 minutes for the cars to all get past, all with horns blaring, whistling, waving flags. A lot of times, roads were cordoned off so that politicians could give rallies. There has been a lot of advertising on the TV. It's just politics at a whole different level than that which we are used to in NZ. Far stronger, far more present, and far more pervasive within society. It is required by law to vote, though abstentions are allowed. I am not sure how much that has to do with it, or the fact that they really don't want their vote to go to waste, due to their history of having a dictatorship government 20-30 years ago, and adding to that the passion of the Spaniard and Italian blood. It probably has to do with a lot of things.

Ends...