Intercultural awareness and sensitivity in an Australian university: a study of professional practice of university staff.

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

at the University of Technology, Sydney

by
Alison Owens

UTS 2005

CERTIFICATE

I certify that this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not being submitted as part of candidature for any other degree.

I also certify that this thesis has been written by me and that any help that I have received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in this thesis.

Signature of candidate

Production Note:
Signature removed prior to publication.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Intercultural awareness and sensitivity in Australian universities: a study of professional practice of university staff.

ABSTRACT

As the cultural and language backgrounds of students enrolling in Australian universities continue to diversify, education, always an act of communication, becomes increasingly an act of *intercultural* communication. Teaching strategies developed for an homogenous culture need to be revised to include these multicultural dimensions. Although there is significant literature concerning theories and training programs in intercultural communication competence that may benefit Australian university staff, training programs to help staff become more competent at addressing the complex communication issues that arise in intercultural contexts are not commonly available for staff at Australian universities. Assuming that university staff who conscientiously seek to improve their teaching effectiveness would welcome and benefit from continuing professional education in intercultural communication, an educational intervention in the form of a Staff Development Training Program in intercultural awareness and sensitivity was designed and implemented for teaching staff at a metropolitan case study campus in Australia. This thesis examines the development and delivery of this intercultural training program to identify the elements that participants found helpful in increasing their intercultural communication skills and also to advance pedagogy in the field of cultural awareness and sensitivity training.

The Training Program was framed as part of processes of both action research and action learning and was comprised of three Workshops offered over a nine-month

period. Over the course of this intercultural Training Program, teachers were provided with a selection of intercultural communication theories relevant to their teaching context and had opportunity to apply these theories to their own professional experiences and practices.

The aim of the research associated with this Training Program was firstly, to investigate and facilitate intercultural awareness and sensitivity in academic practice in the Australian university context, and secondly to identify interculturally aware and sensitive teaching strategies for dissemination to the campus teaching staff and, through publication of this thesis, to other institutions delivering higher education in culturally diverse contexts.

The eleven teachers who attended the workshops also agreed to be research participants. An interpretive methodology was designed in order to investigate the teachers' awareness of and sensitivity to the values, beliefs and practices of international students in the context of their face to face teaching and learning activities. Hence, in-depth interviews were conducted with workshop participants after each workshop to explore seven main Research Questions. The researcher also contributed evidence as a participant-observer and an e-communication list facilitating the sharing of ideas and materials relevant to the training topic was a further source of evidence.

Findings from these multiple sources of evidence demonstrated that purpose-designed intercultural training programs can build the intercultural sensitivity and awareness of Australian university teachers thus enhancing professional practice in culturally diverse teaching contexts. There was a significant contribution to contemporary

knowledge of the specific nature of intercultural teaching and learning problems for international students engaging with Australian curriculum and pedagogy. In addition, possible strategies were contributed to assist university teachers to have more confidence and less anxiety concerning their professional practice with culturally diverse students. In particular, strategies were suggested to help teachers to address aspects of professional practice related to learning issues associated with international students such as, teacher-dependence, uncritical thinking and second language expression. Recommendations were made concerning changes to organisational policy on staff development programs and support structures for international students and their teachers in Australian universities. Specifically, Australian universities should develop ongoing and regular intercultural training opportunities for their staff beginning with induction. Intercultural training for teachers should include an examination of culturally different learning styles and preferences. Australian universities need to establish Learning Support and Counselling Units for international students. In addition, Australian universities should promote and support the learning of languages other than English amongst their staff.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter Three: Research Methodology (interpretive action research)

Chapter Four: Results and Analysis

Chapter Five: Discussion of Major Findings of this Study

Chapter Six: Conclusion

Figures

Chapter One: Intercultural Awareness and Sensitivity in Relation to Teaching and Learning Practices in Australian Universities

1.1 Statement of Thesis

Teachers and students have increasingly reported that significant problems are generated for both teachers and learners of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds during their educational experiences at Australian universities. These teaching and learning problems can arise from culturally different preferences for specific teaching and learning paradigms and methods. Different and sometimes conflicting expectations of academic practice have generated problems particularly for international students and their university teachers across a wide range of academic activity including lecture and tutorial approaches, classroom activities and materials, critical research methods and referencing, teacher/student dependence and assessment formats and criteria.

Australian universities are experiencing the most rapid cultural diversification of all the Australian educational sectors. Almost half of the 153,400 overseas or international students in Australia during 2000 were studying in the higher education sector (72,700 or 47%). The majority (64%) of these international students were studying towards bachelor degrees. Higher education experienced the greatest growth in overseas student numbers, doubling between 1994 and 2000 (Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2003, p. 9). As international students typically pay full fees for their studies, this is big business for Australian universities experiencing cuts in government funding especially in the last five years (*The Australian* 4 October, 2004). There is a financial as well as ethical incentive for Australian universities to support the academic progress of these international students.

There is also a legislative requirement as outlined by Educational Services for Overseas Students legislation (ESOS 2000) which describes the kinds of support structures and reporting requirements necessary to ensure a quality international education at an Australian university. In these requirements intercultural communication training for staff is a recommended element to such support. Earlier in 1998 the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) Charter had required universities to offer intercultural communication training for staff. Despite this there is little evidence of actual intercultural communication training programs in practice in these universities for staff. Where intercultural training exists in Australian universities, it has tended to be delivered as an occasional and 'once-only' workshop with a broad intercultural topic such as 'Global Skills' (Byrne 2000) or 'Dealing with Diversity' (University of Sydney 1997) or 'Multicultural Skills' (King 1991) rather than as an ongoing developmental program exploring specific intercultural communication knowledge and skills for the specific context of teaching international students. The thesis of this doctoral research is that there are significant problems in teaching international students at Australian universities that can be at least partially addressed by appropriate staff development programs in intercultural awareness and sensitivity. It is argued that university staff will welcome and benefit from such programs.

In essence, there is a problematic that there are learning and teaching issues for international students that Australian university staff have not satisfactorily resolved in their academic teaching strategies. The kinds of teaching and learning problems commonly identified by Australian university teachers with international students tend to focus on student shortcomings including a general reluctance to participate in class activities (Klerkx & Wang 1998), an incapacity to think critically and

independently (Klerkx & Wang 1998; Kutieleh & Egege 2004), inadequate English language skills (Klerkx & Wang 1998; Zifirdaus 1998) and general emotional difficulties as a consequence of the cultural adjustment required to study overseas (Hart 1999). International students themselves tend to report teaching and learning problems in Australian university courses are due to their own lack of awareness and understanding of the expectations of teachers in the Australian system (Zifirdaus 1998). But, international students and their Australian teachers do acknowledge that teaching and learning problems are also generated by the lack of awareness and understanding that Australian teachers tend to demonstrate with regard to their students' prior overseas study (Klerkx & Wang 1998; Zifirdaus 1998). This mutual lack of awareness and understanding of culturally different teaching and learning expectations and practices can create students who are not able to identify if their interactions with their teachers are effective and are 'not sure' if their courses are satisfactory when asked to evaluate them (Zifirdaus 1998, p.5). This same lack of intercultural awareness can mean that university staff are unprepared, both materially and attitudinally, to accommodate culturally different learner expectations and practices in teaching and learning in this context. The problem is evident for both international students and university teachers, that there are learning and teaching issues causing confusion and distress for both staff and students.

To investigate this problematic a qualitative research design with an interpretive methodology was constructed to discover university teachers' concerns about teaching in a culturally diverse workplace and to explore possible benefits for their practice of contemporary theories and applications of intercultural awareness and sensitivity. The researcher designed a staff development program of three interactive workshops and invited university staff from a case study campus in Australia to

attend. A plan was developed to continue action research over the course of these workshops based on the thesis that staff would welcome a staff development opportunity to discuss their concerns with a view to enhancing teaching and learning strategies for the instruction of international students. The findings of this action research are presented in this thesis.

1.2 Communication Concepts and Scope of the Thesis

In this thesis, education is understood to be inevitably and fundamentally, a process of communication. *Intercultural communication* is therefore core to the practice of intercultural education. Successful *intracultural communication* (between people of relatively homogeneous cultural identity/experience) is itself a complex and sensitive process governed by possession of certain skill sets, degrees of mutual knowledge and certainty or uncertainty, personal beliefs and tendencies, social and physical context, and so on. Intercultural communication requires the same complex abilities and understanding but there is reduced certainty. Consequently *interpersonal communication* between self and others is conducted in a state of greater anxiety. Nevertheless appropriate skills can be acquired and one can learn to become more effective and more comfortable communicating interculturally through developing intercultural awareness and sensitivity. "Intercultural sensitivity is not natural... Education and training in intercultural communication is an approach to changing our natural behaviour" (Landis & Bhagat 1996, p.148). The study of one approach to such education and training is the focus of this thesis.

There has been a distinction in the literature on intercultural communication between *'intercultural awareness and sensitivity'* and *'intercultural communication competence'* where the latter encompasses awareness and sensitivity but is more than

just that. In broad terms, intercultural communication competence has been defined as "the ability to acknowledge, respect, tolerate and integrate cultural differences that qualifies one for enlightened global citizenship...and ... is comprised of three interrelated components: intercultural sensitivity, intercultural awareness and intercultural adroitness," (Chen & Starosta 2003, p.344). *Intercultural adroitness* has been identified as a behavioral capacity that must exist in tandem with cognitive intercultural awareness and affective sensitivity in order for an individual to be deemed interculturally competent in communication. These distinctions of three interrelated components are recognised as useful in this study which seeks to develop university staff's awareness and sensitivity as necessary but not sufficient conditions for intercultural communication competence.

Intercultural awareness is understood in this thesis as "the cognitive aspect of intercultural communication competence that refers to the understanding of cultural conventions that affect thinking and behaviour," (Chen & Starosta 2003, p.344). That is, what people 'know' both about specific other cultures and about the general cultural conventions around which these cultures are understood to be different. Intercultural sensitivity is understood as "the affective aspect of intercultural competence and refers to the development of a readiness to understand and appreciate cultural differences in intercultural communication" (Chen & Starosta 2003, p.344). So intercultural sensitivity defines how people feel about communicating across culture and sensitivity training offers some strategies for managing the emotional aspects of the experience. "Intercultural adroitness is the behavioral aspect of intercultural communication competence that stresses those skills that are needed for us to act effectively in intercultural interactions," (Chen & Starosta 2003, p.344). *Intercultural adroitness* is expressed as performance or

behaviour where a person interacts with others based on cognitions and emotions.

In relation to the three interrelated components of intercultural communication competence, the study in this thesis focused on the first two: how teachers may develop *intercultural awareness* and *intercultural sensitivity* in their university practice. As intercultural *awareness* and *sensitivity* are fundamental qualities for intercultural communication competence, they were identified as the most appropriate workshop topics given the restricted time available to teachers for staff development training in one year. It would have been a bigger project beyond the scope of this thesis to investigate how teachers might acquire knowledge of specific cultures and develop an ability to act in a way that allows for a culturally integrated practice across these cultures (i.e. intercultural communication competence) in an intensely diverse campus (where students came from 50 countries). Regardless of the degree of diversity in a context, cultural awareness and sensitivity are part of the essential foreground to intercultural competence: "how we come to understand different populations is not necessarily through learning all of the cultural differences that exist but learning first to be open to difference" (Judkins & Lahurd 1999, p. 788). In contrast, intercultural adroitness is a skill-based capacity that is developed through practising behavioural performances over time in intercultural contexts. These *intercultural* contexts are in fact normally envisaged as *cross cultural* in conventional intercultural training programs that are offered to individuals embarking on overseas work placements or study sojourns. A *cross cultural* scenario normally involves only two distinct cultures which is not the state of diversity of the case study campus or Australian university campuses generally. Given the range of cultural differences in the case study campus, opportunity for communicative skills practice and development across the cultural groups represented in the student

population was not possible within the scope of this study.

Three days is a recommended minimum training period for an intercultural communication training course and these 'three days' are normally consecutive (Brislin & Yoshida 1994, p.116; Shumsky 1992). Realistically, the current workloads at the case study campus made such time commitment impossible. In addition, this study sought to facilitate action learning for participants and was therefore scheduled over an academic year of three terms in order to create a 'learning' and 'practising' cycle where teachers returned to the classrooms between workshops and had opportunity to reflect on learned theories in their actual practice. The intercultural communication training program that was developed for this study represented six hours of 'class work' conducted as three workshops each of two hours in February, June and November of 2003. Participants were either fully or partly employed and had restricted availability at work. As the intercultural training program was intended to form an emerging initiative to promote staff development through internal training programs at the case study campus, it was introductory in scope of objectives and, in fact, focused on the introductory educational phase of student orientation as a main experiential theme which was simulated in Workshop One. One finding of this study is that further training addressing behavioural competency in intercultural communication is recommended following the successful results of this initial introductory training program.

The scope of this study of intercultural awareness and sensitivity was limited to the higher education sector, that is, the tertiary sector of universities in Australia. This sector is appropriate for such training and evaluation as the cultural diversity of university students in Australia is continually growing both as a consequence of

migration and overseas study sojourns. Intercultural communication studies typically have distinguished and defined intercultural participants as either migrants, refugees, tourists, strangers, or sojourners. Non English Speaking Background (NESB) student statistics have included both overseas-born migrant students (migrant 'domestic') who live permanently in Australia and overseas born students who are temporary, long-term visitors here for the purpose of education and referred to as sojourners in this thesis. There has been significant growth in the overall figures for NESB student participation in Australian universities measured in 1993 at 25% (Phillips 1993, p.195) and this is evident in the current statistics for overseas student *sojourner* enrolments that constitute over 20.6% (ABS 2004, p.1) of all higher education student enrolments in Australia exclusive of NESB migrant 'domestic' Australian student figures. The campus of this case study enrols full fee paying overseas students (FFPOSS) rather than migrant 'domestic' students. Hence, the study in this thesis focused specifically on the condition of the sojourning student although research findings may also be relevant to teaching migrant 'domestic' students in universities in Australia. The international student participation rate in Australian educational institutions total has increased from under 20 000 arrivals per year to over 60 000 arrivals per year since 1990 (ABS 2003, p.3). It has been projected that by 2012 Australia might have three times the number of overseas students than in 2000 (Gallagher 2002, p.1). "IDP Education Australia Limited is suggesting that the ratio could go much higher to 2:1 overseas to domestic university students," (Gallagher 2002, p.4). At the case study campus, this projected ratio is currently at over 9:1 with the international student participation rate over 90% as it is a dedicated 'international' campus. Staff are also a culturally diverse group with representatives from over 25 nationalities. The intense diversity at this campus makes it a complex but valuable arena for intercultural training and research. The results of this study

should have wider relevance as all Australian universities experience growing cultural diversity.

The economic contribution of international students to Australian export was $616 million in the second quarter of 2003 including student spending on fees and goods and services (International Development Programs (IDP), Marketing and Research 2003). Education is a clean industry in that Australian resources are not depleted and no damaging by-products are generated as a consequence of practice. Quite the opposite, intercultural education contributes to greater international understanding and relations as a consequence of people from different cultural groups coming together cooperatively for the purpose of learning and then dispersing across the globe. As a clean, profitable and continually growing export product, Australian tertiary education of international students warrants some investment in the form of research and development of intercultural teaching excellence. This research and staff development project was an effort to generate such investment at the case study campus where no intercultural training was available. As intercultural communication training is only irregularly offered at Australian universities (see Byrne 2000; King 1991 and University of Sydney 1997) there is little specific debate in academic journals regarding effective training design or training outcomes for the Australian context. This also means that there is little qualitative or quantitative research into the effects of intercultural awareness and sensitivity training for Australian university teachers (see databases such as Educationline 2004; EdResearchOnline 2004; Informit 2004). Such research is important as it can help Australian educators to understand how different culturally established 'norms' - their own and those of their students - can be successfully reconciled in the educational process through development of intercultural awareness, sensitivity and competence.

Training is defined in this thesis as inclusive of both the 'how' and the 'why' aspects of the topic as J.M. Bennet suggested in a 1986 study of conceptualising cross-cultural training as education. Training is usually understood to cover the 'how to' of a topic and is skills-focused, for example, how to model complex and abstract ideas in graphic and textual formats for second-language students, whereas, education is concerned with the 'why' elements to a topic (why modeling is educationally effective in making implicit and culturally-specific thought patterns explicit). An educational approach considers theoretical frameworks for approaching/ conceptualising/defining and justifying topics themselves, how they came to be and how they are learned, rather than just how they are practised. The staff development training program designed for the study in this thesis sought to generate ideas on how to be interculturally aware and sensitive in academic practice and also explored why it would be important to do this.

To understand why certain behaviours affect certain cultural groups in different ways in the university context is to reflect on cultural differences in learning styles and expectations. An educational aspect to training seeks to equip a trainee with the ability to understand something about why there are diverse learning behaviour and expectations and hence be able and willing to apply that understanding creatively in constantly changing culturally-diverse relationships. This staff development training program was designed to be both practical, in applying intercultural theories to 'real world problems' and discussing strategies for ongoing practice, and also educational, in focusing on culturally diverse learning styles and other key elements affecting the actual processes and values of the Australian university teaching and learning culture itself. A training method using simulation, discussion, personal narrative and group problem solving was designed to draw attention to the effects of changing the types

of learning experiences. In his 1986 study, Bennet has referred to such cross-cultural training programs as multidimensional, as they cover: "who, what, when, where, how and why... attempting cognitive, affective, and behavioral goals, with culture-specific culture-general content, using both experiential and intellectual approaches" (J.M. Bennet 1986, p.131).

Intercultural awareness and sensitivity training is generally offered as part of intercultural communication training and has traditionally been offered to sojourners prior to departure on a work or study placement. As Saee (1999) has pointed out, the emphasis on cultural adaptation, and therefore most intercultural training, lies with the sojourner rather than the host. In contrast, this doctoral research explored how host academics at a case study campus currently practise in a culturally diverse context and also how host academics can develop intercultural awareness and sensitivity for personal professional benefit and the benefit of the higher education sector.

In the following sections of this first chapter (1.3, 1.4, and 1.5) the nature of cultural diversity within Australian society and its universities is examined to elucidate the background for the study.

1.3 Cultural Diversity within Australian Society and its Universities

Australia is a culturally diverse country with a population born overseas of 22.8% (Hugo 2002, p.12). In the late twentieth century, if we include those Australians with at least one parent born overseas, this figure rises to 42% (Saee 1999, p.5). In addition to the 'overseas born' element to Australian cultural diversity, Australia has an indigenous population of diverse tribal peoples representing over 700 languages.

Migration patterns and policies in Australia over the last century have shifted to attract a more culturally diverse range of migrants from other continents and cultures with different languages, beliefs and customs than were received prior to 1970 and the dismantling of the White Australia Policy. Compared to other countries Australia has a high migration rate and in the context of a comparatively small population this means a rapid rate of per-capita cultural diversification. Hence, Australia now defines itself as a multicultural society.

Overseas students continue to be a major source of revenue for Australian educational institutions, with student expenditure on fees alone increasing from $883 million to $1.8 billion between 1994 and 2000 (ABS 2003). Overseas students also contribute to the Australian economy more generally. For example, in 2000 they spent $1.9 billion on goods and services while in Australia (ABS 2003). In this way, Australian international education is contributing significantly to the income of other Australian industries.

In the context of the government encouraging a higher education economy where universities become increasingly self-funding, the number of university places that can be reserved for Full Fee Paying Overseas Students (FFPOS) are increasing to create revenue and are contributing to greater diversification of student cultural backgrounds. The results of the research described in this thesis can can be useful to other university sites where diversity exists and will, by projection based on trend, build further over the next ten years.

The concepts and skills learned through intercultural awareness and sensitivity training can contribute to better intracultural relationships between people of

different gender, age, ability, sexual-orientation and so on. Learning about other cultures throws one's own culture into relief: "In the experience of working to fulfill a purpose (interculturally), each person will learn more about how the other regards such cultural basics as time use, values, social organisation and ethics. As a result of contrasting interaction about some of these matters, each will also learn more about the system he or she represents", (Kim & Gudykunst 1998, p.274). Such cultural 'self-awareness' is incidental to intercultural training and generically useful in a multicultural society. Cultural diversity in Australian university systems is discussed next in relation to teaching practices and staff training.

1.4 Cultural Diversity and Teaching Practices in Australian Universities

What are Australian universities doing to negotiate the growing cultural diversity of staff and students? As has been noted previously, there are 25 nationalities represented among the staff at the campus used in the case study for this thesis. The international student population in Australia is governed by Department of Education Science and Training (DEST) and Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA). A growing governance and regulation of sector practice in DEST and DIMIA policies and standards as well as legislative developments in the form of Educational Services for Overseas Students (ESOS 2000) and Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS in DEST 2004) have reflected the growing significance of the international student market. International student education providers are now registered with DEST via CRICOS and are required to maintain this registration through compliance with strict quality controls and requirements. The continued enrolment of an international student requires successful completion of a minimum of 50% of courses undertaken and it is required that universities provide academic and

social support structures to facilitate this.

Australian tertiary higher education providers have generally responded to increasing cultural diversity by publishing guidelines and policies on managing diversity in their classrooms (see for example TAFE 1998; University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) 2004) and, as we have noted, intercultural communication training for academics is not a regular university practice. Outside the actual faculties of Education, Australian academics are not generally trained to 'teach' at all. They are employed as specialists in a scientific or professional field in which they research and publish. Whilst this may not make them poor teachers, it may not encourage or assist them to observe and reflect on their own assumptions about knowledge and learning and their methods of teaching. Consequently many university teachers may have few strategies for reflecting on how they might design teaching processes to negotiate culturally different educational beliefs and practices.

The field of intercultural communication training has been described as suffering "a lack of theory - a theory that would tell why certain programs work, for whom, and when" (Landis & Bhagat 1996, p.xiii). Assessment of intercultural communication training has also been found to be limited or nonexistent. Guidelines and policies for valuing cultural diversity exist in Australian universities but there is little research on how they are applied and little training opportunity for staff to explore this. The study in this thesis has addressed these gaps by analysing the needs of academics at the case study campus, implementing a needs-based Training and Development Program and assessing the outcomes of such a Program in relation to assisting university staff to apply intercultural communication theories to ongoing teaching and learning experiences across culture.

As a consequence of the increasing multiculturalism amongst Australian citizens and residents, Australian universities employ an increasingly culturally diverse teaching group. Where teaching staff are working with both students and colleagues of different backgrounds, a shared understanding of some of the effects on academic work of cultural difference and a sharing of resources of effective teaching strategies for negotiating differences seem increasingly valuable assets for staff and their universities.

Many universities have been writing 'cultural' aspects into existing courses through cross cultural case studies or developing new courses that apply theoretical concepts and frameworks to diverse regions, such as, the Pacific Rim. Typically these regionally focused courses are in commercial fields of business, economics, politics, tourism and hospitality and politics where intercultural competence is an investment that affects the bottom line and is an explicit part of the course. Whilst universities have responded to cultural diversification in the focus and content of some of their undergraduate and postgraduate courses they have, generally, failed to offer their staff who are facilitating this intercultural education any intercultural training in their own fields of education. Awareness of cultural distinctions in learning styles and traditional teaching methods can make a difference to the teaching/learning relationship if the teacher is culturally aware (Ballard & Clanchy 1991). For example, members from collectivist cultures may have 'learned' from earlier educational experience that quoting excessively or using others' work without referencing is a legitimate part of the learning and assessment process whereas, individualist culture members may have 'learned' that 'plagiarism' is an illegitimate practice in education (Ballard & Clanchy 1991). If an individualist culture teacher with collectivist culture students is unaware of the possibility that his/her students do not share or

understand the rejection of plagiarism in Australian universities, the teacher and students are likely to be mutually dissatisfied with each other's assessment practices which may be perceived as illegitimate. Examples of scholarly work on theoretical perspectives on intercultural awareness and sensitivity are discussed next to demonstrate a range of useful concepts that university teachers could use productively in multicultural classrooms and to provide further rationale for the study in this thesis.

1.5 Theoretical Perspectives on Intercultural Awareness and Sensitivity
As intercultural education takes place inevitably as intercultural communication, the study in this thesis explicitly linked current findings of intercultural communication theorists to an investigation of the usefulness of these theories and concepts as tools for analysis of cultural difference in university teaching and learning. Several intercultural communication theories were considered over the period of the Staff Development Program designed for the study in this thesis and were referred to in analytical activities in the three workshops.

Communication is understood in this thesis to mean purposeful inter-subjective negotiation of meaning (Schirato & Yell 1996). Across culture, the same definition applies except that the participants share reduced degrees of homogeneity in respect of framing beliefs about the world and experiences of the world (Kim 1988), the human place in it, human purpose, time, the significance of the self in relation to others (Lustig & Koester 2003), and so on . There is therefore less capacity for intercultural communicators to predict or explain the behaviour of others and, hence, there is more opportunity for communication breakdown. Current intercultural communication theories which were reviewed in the Staff Development training

program helped participants to identify Australian university teaching practices or policies that are interculturally friendly and effective and can thereby contribute to better communication between culturally different teachers and students.

Intercultural awareness and sensitivity are generally defined by intercultural communication theorists as elements necessary for intercultural communication competence (Brislin & Yoshida 1994; Gudykunst 2003; Samovar & Porter 2003). The training program designed for the study in this thesis aimed to develop intercultural awareness and sensitivity which are necessary contributing conditions to overall intercultural communication competence. The range of cultural diversity of the students taught by those in the case study group was 50 countries. As Australian universities tend to enrol international students from *diverse* cultural backgrounds rather than from one cultural and geographical area, student diversity can be too broad to allow for developing comprehensive knowledge of specific cultural differences in the restricted time normally available for staff development training. The opportunity for skills practice during the training program was also too confined at the case study campus to attempt to develop meaningful communication competence, including the behavioural aspect of intercultural adroitness, across such a vast array of difference. Instead, it was hoped that developing the participants' intercultural awareness and sensitivity in the training program would help shape staff approaches to cultural difference that are adaptable and open and therefore supportive of effective communication across cultures. In the context of the wide range of cultural difference between international students at Australian universities, this limited objective and scope may constitute the most appropriate approach to intercultural communication training for teachers.

There are various approaches to theorising cultural difference in a large available literature and two significant approaches are particularly relevant for the study in this thesis. The first approach has a focus on developing *culture-general* indicators or sets of cultural characteristics around which cultures can usefully be seen to differ; while the main interest of the second approach is in gathering *culture-specific* knowledge of how and why a particular culture behaves and thinks in particular ways. Given the previously mentioned focuses and constraints of the training program designed for the study in this thesis, literature concerned with the first approach was most relevant. The participants in the training program were introduced to a range of culture-general theories and concepts developed by influential intercultural communication theorists, such as Hall (1959, 1976), Hofstede (1984, 1991) and Stewart (1972). These are still regarded as major contemporary intercultural communication theorists as represented in a recent review by Lustig and Koester (2003).

Hall (1959) constructed a continuum between high context cultures (less explicit, more implied communication) and low context cultures (more explicit, less implied communication) as a useful tool with which to assess cultural difference. Hofstede (1984, 1991) offered the concepts of power-distance tolerance, individualism/ collectivism, uncertainty avoidance and masculinity/femininity as dimensions around which cultures differ. Stewart (1972) focused on a culture's 'orientation' to its environment, such as activity orientation whereby he locates a culture on a being-becoming-doing continuum. Such theorists have contributed to an understanding of the beliefs, concepts, practices and values around which cultures can be seen to differ and converge and had potential to be applied usefully in the highly diverse context of this case study campus.

The second approach to understanding culture sketched previously has been to focus on a specific culture or cultures and describe belief systems, values, customs and related 'dos and don'ts' of polite communication with a particular group of people. There is plentiful literature on *culture-specific* topics including language guides, cultural guides for tourists and business guides. There is a strong tradition of training in *culture-specific* topics in preparation for an overseas work or study placement. Yet there is also a high 'bail out' rate for those 'trained' sojourners who undertake an overseas placement (McFarland 1999). *Culture-specific* knowledge is an important aspect of intercultural communication but not adequate by itself for a successful sojourn. As the teachers at the case study campus interact with a highly-diverse cultural group, *culture-general* knowledge rather than knowledge of a specific culture's practices, beliefs and values was the focus selected for workshops. However, there were opportunities for teachers to contribute to *culture-specific* knowledge building by virtue of their own culturally diverse backgrounds and knowledge of specific cultures and languages.

Aside from the cognitive and theoretical approaches of, first, the *culture-general* frameworks and, second, the *culture-specific* 'swot', is a third, *psychological* approach to cultural difference and its effects. *Psychological* approaches work to develop intercultural sensitivity rather than awareness. The *psychological* approach is framed from the perspective of the individual and focuses on the affective domain which is central to development of intercultural sensitivity. One useful model has been represented by Hart (1999) (see Appendix 5 of this thesis). This model was first conceived in the 1960s by Gullahorn & Gullahorn (1963) as a U curve which graphs the initial highs, the inevitable and intense lows and the adjustment or recovery period of intercultural sojourn. The authors then extended this model to a

W curve to cover cultural reentry (return home) experience which is an equally mixed undertaking . The concept of the W curve was important to this study as it emphasised the significance of the affective realm of intercultural study, mapped a recovery period from crisis and recognised that the challenge of intercultural study experience does not end 'overseas'. This model is still referred to by contemporary theorists (see Hart 1999 and Zachar 2001).

Another such *psychological* model proposed by Hart (1999) as an effective framework for understanding the intercultural sojourner referred to Campbell's interpretation of the hero's journey through mythology (Campbell 1949 *in* Hart 1999). For Hart, Gullahorn & Gullahorn's W curve hypothesis (1963) could be usefully linked to the phases of the mythological hero's journey into the 'other world' in the quest for the 'ultimate boon' to the purposive sojourn of an overseas study or work trip as imaged in the W curve (Hart 1999, see Appendix 4). Both the W curve hypothesis and the myth of the hero's journey as it is enacted through a study sojourn were discussed in workshop activities in the staff development training program designed for the study in this thesis.

In the field of sociolinguistics theorists such as Bryson (1990), Crystal (1997) and Pennycook (1995) have warned against the danger of English as the global language committing genocide on the other languages of the world. Universities can conceivably contribute to the dying out of other languages, if they cannot create methods by which to integrate and value other languages into their curriculum. Valuing other languages as well as other cultural beliefs, identities and practices is imperative to providing ideologically sound education. It is also imperative to preserving the diversity that intercultural competence requires to operate

meaningfully. How to value other languages in an English-medium university course was a central question for the Staff Development Program designed for the study in this thesis.

Kachru (1996), sociolinguist and editor of *World Englishes*, offers a new positioning of the 'NESB' as the bilinguist or multilinguist who has a different English to the native speaker as a result of a more catholic grammar. Intercultural communication training can explore important assumptions about English and other languages that operate to privilege or deprivilege students and teachers from various backgrounds. In workshops conducted for the study in this thesis participants were asked to critique the 'NESB' identifier and consider the effects of redefining 'NESBs' as multilingual sojourners.

Theorising on the role of the host cultural-interactant Phillips (1993, p.196) adapted M. Bennet's model of Intercultural Sensitivity (1986) to the academic context and mapped academic response to cultural difference from "initial denial and defence, then minimisation, on to acceptance, adaptation and finally integration of difference, where the academic's response is based on awareness of different education and cultural systems". There were workshop activities in the study in this thesis designed for participants to explore how a teacher might experience these stages in intercultural sensitivity and also to facilitate a teacher's conceptualisation of themselves as somewhere along this continuum.

Intercultural training exists in various formats (see: Dharm & Bhawuk 1998; Fiedler, Mitchell & Triandis 1971; Gudykunst & Hammer 1983; Landis & Bhagat 1996; Zhichang 1999) but the preferred model for the study in this thesis was

multidimensional aiming to provide for experiential as well as intellectual learning as outlined by J. M. Bennet (1986). The sequencing and design of activities and topics in the three workshops conformed to Brislin and Yoshida's (1994) recommendation of a four-phase approach to intercultural communication training addressing awareness, knowledge, emotion and skills.

Postmodern theorists of education have recognised that there are losses as well as gains to all educational endeavour. There exists a degree of anxiety amongst teachers and students about English language 'standards' and culturally different university practices. Adopting a postmodern approach allows us to see education "not as betterment but as liberal disenchantment" (Burbules 1996. p.47). If language is the site for negotiation of meaning and one language must serve/stretch to convey the irreducibly different meanings of the different cultures of the world (see Pennycook (1995) and Burbules (1996)), then Burbules' call for the "kind of teaching and learning...that entail a high tolerance for difficulty and uncertainty and error" (1996, p.47) is a potentially rewarding and useful language policy framework for effective teaching across culture which is the central topic of this thesis. A greater ability to tolerate uncertainty is one of the objectives of intercultural awareness and sensitivity training. This uncertainty is both generated and eliminated through a process of communication, a great part of which is linguistic.

Workshops designed for the study in this thesis aimed to give intercultural teachers opportunities to explore and make explicit their own culturally constructed values, assumptions, objectives and competencies within their academic practice and their cultural trading in English to generate a set of practices and standards that they perceived as relevant to themselves as culturally diverse academics.

Intercultural Awareness and Communication training for the academic context is explicitly recommended by the Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee in their Code of Ethical Practice (1998) and was of definite interest to many academics on-site who were interviewed as part of an earlier project seeking academic input for a student orientation film. Such training was not offered at the case study campus prior to the staff development training program introduced for the study in this thesis. The current initiative reported in this thesis can only serve to develop the quality of both domestic and 'export' sectors of Australian higher education.

1.6 Justification for the Study

Intercultural education is unavoidably concerned with intercultural communication which is consistently defined as a process that engenders uncertainty (see Brislin & Yoshida 1994; Chapman & Hartley 1998; Kim & Gudykunst 1998; Gudykunst 2003; Irwin 1996; Jandt 1995). Whilst academic staff themselves may experience some professional uncertainty as a consequence of increasingly diverse cultural identities and learning styles in classes, students too experience uncertainty and difficulty across the range of endeavour including language and cultural adjustment, finances, accommodation, academic or course matters, and homesickness and loneliness (Ballard 1987; Ryan & Twibell 2000 and Velinova 2002). A certain degree of uncertainty in communication is functional (Gudykunst, 2003) and intense uncertainty can engender discomfort and anxiety. Gudykunst (2003) has argued that anxiety is the affective equivalent of uncertainty. The anxiety and stress levels of people immersing themselves in a different culture are almost off the scales marked by such events as moving house, changing jobs, getting divorced, moving to another city or losing a loved one (Dodd 1995) and intercultural immersion is often a combination of many or all of these transitions. International education as

intercultural communication is a process that is always going to be uncertain and often anxious.

As a consequence of their visa regulations, international students are more legally obligated and constrained than domestic students in respect of their commitments and rights in relation to their studies. They are also often more socially-obligated as their families are financing their studies and their need to purchase goods and services whilst living in Australia. The consequences of a fail grade can range from financial hardship, to loss of face, to deportation and such consequences contribute to the anxiety of both teachers and learners in this sector.

Intercultural communication is a risky activity and the risk is escalated under the legal constraints and consequences of a student visa. Domestic students may fail their courses and programs thereby incurring further debt, forestalling their availability for fulltime work and income and they may suffer psychological and emotional challenges associated with 'failure'. International students suffer the same consequences but in addition to this, they may be forced to cease their studies and leave the country to return home to their academic sponsors empty-handed. Apart from the immediate stress of being uprooted summarily and involuntarily from their sojourn community, for many international students the loss of 'face' associated with such a 'public' outcome can be socially debilitating (Lustig & Koester 2003; Weidemann 2001). Universities need to ensure that teaching staff are aware of the regulations governing the teaching of such students and and also that teachers have opportunity to identify and develop strategies for coping with the various pressures such constraints and risks can impose.

Training in intercultural awareness and sensitivity involves seeking strategies to reduce uncertainty, or at the very least, to be more comfortable with it. Gudykunst (2003) has postulated eight variables necessary and sufficient to reduce uncertainty and anxiety. Several of these variables, including cultural identity, stereotypes, intergroup attitude and second language competence, were selected as concepts to be explored in the training exercises and discussions of the staff development program at the focus of the study in this thesis. The intercultural communication literature offers specific methods and tasks for encouraging cultural adjustment. For the study in this thesis it was intended to assess the usefulness of some of these in the Australian academic context. Academics deserve recourse to such strategies as support for the new challenges of international education. With such coping strategies in place, they should be better able to guide the adjustments that their students face and their guidance should be better informed and more critical.

A person's level of prejudice or ethnocentrism can be linked to the degree of anxiety experienced in communicating with cultural others (Saee 1999). Intercultural awareness and sensitivity is not confined to other cultures but involves becoming aware of and sensitive to the cultural beliefs, values and customs of ourselves. Self-awareness may sometimes mean recognising one's own views as biased or prejudiced and this recognition itself can work to destabilise the biased belief. Prejudice contributes to anxious communication and is often based on stereotyping a cultural 'other'. This study sought to reconceptualise images of the international student, also known as the Non English Speaking Background student, or the Non-native speaker student, as a 'multilingual or bilingual sojourner', to challenge stereotyped images associated with these common identifying markers and to encourage teachers to reconsider their own perceptions and their leading role in the task of international

education. In many cases " teachers feel the university should offer staff more intense training in cross-cultural awareness and provide avenues for more social interaction with faculty members" (Klerkx & Wang 1998, p.7). However, a review of staff teaching students at Curtin University in Western Australia found "most of the academic staff confirmed that they were not prepared to adjust their teaching/supervision to overseas students specifically" (Zifirdaus 1998, p.6). In either case, intercultural awareness and sensitivity training seems warranted.

Australia is competing particularly with Canada, the UK and the USA for the international student dollar. Australia has been competing successfully in that overseas student numbers have grown consistently over the last two decades despite various global negatives including the Asian economic crisis in the late 1990s, several international conflicts in which Australian troops saw action to mixed international reception in East-Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq, increased terrorist activity that threatens traveller security and recently, a new 'flu' like virus, SARS, that severely restricted international travel through and out of Asia. Despite this inevitably problematic exposure of international student trade to the impacts of wide and constant global events, international students continue to enrol in Australian universities. The study in this thesis was a response to the cultural diversification of students that is continuing in Australian universities in tandem with, in spite of and perhaps as a consequence of, such international power shifts. As international student education is an increasingly profitable and resilient university market such a training program stands to help differentiate the Australian university system. In addition, the training initiative could contribute to the quality of teaching in this particular campus in terms of the appropriateness of educational services and hence help maintain the International Standards Organisation 9002 accreditation for the case

study campus.

This study and the staff development program designed as part of it also assisted the case study campus to meet the increasingly explicit and broad regulations of educational government agencies, such as DEST and their National Code of conduct for education of international students (DEST 2003). The CRICOS code requires that providers should "promote the successful adjustment by overseas students to life and study in Australian institutions" (DEST 2003, p.4). The ESOS Act 2000 requires that through in-house training, the university bring the requirements of the ESOS Act and CRICOS Code to the attention of teachers (ESOS 2000). DEST manages these systems that require high standards of support strategies from universities for their culturally and linguistically diverse students in order that these students adjust successfully. In terms of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA), this means that 50% or more of a full time load over a 12 month period must be successfully completed by a student. Supporting intercultural adjustment in academic terms and also in wider social terms is now a requirement of universities and their teaching staff.

Training academics in intercultural awareness is a strategy that demonstrates both the university's willingness and aptitude to provide such support and it also contributes to the university's compliance with governance of the sector. The Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee Code of Ethical Practice in the Provision of Education to International Students by Australian Universities (1998) stated that "...universities should make every effort to develop training programs, including cross-cultural programs, appropriate to the different levels of involvement and responsibility among staff" (p.12). The study in this thesis sought to respond to this requirement

by designing, implementing and assessing the outcomes of an academic staff development program in intercultural awareness and sensitivity. It is hoped that the findings of this study might stimulate further development in intercultural training programs for academics in the Australian university context. Such training and development programs may work to improve the quality of the Australian university product from the perspective of international students.

Globalisation is essentially a complex process of communication and has happened largely in the medium of English. International trade, the supporting technology and the international politics that accompanies and manages global business entrenches English further as the language of the world. Hence, English becomes a valuable and powerful resource for any citizen wishing to participate in the global network. This has made the English language a commodity, a situation from which English-medium Australian universities are profiting. This trend has also made English a danger to other languages. The role of language, or languages, in Australian universities is not ideologically neutral and warrants analysis. Pennycook (1995) has observed that English acts a gatekeeper to positions of social privilege and hence, teaching it, and teaching in it, is not an ideologically neutral task. International students at Australian university have to do something that they may never in all likelihood need to attempt again and that is research and write complex academic texts in a second language without recourse to the other language or languages they might speak. In the international context this is not their natural practice. We need to consider if English-only university study is a truly global education. The study in this thesis explored how and why we might include other languages in our courses. If multiculturalism and multilingualism are core values to Australian government social policy and educational policy (South Australian Department of Education and Children's

Services 1994) then perhaps they can and should be core values to tertiary education practice.

1.7 Research Aims

The first aim of the research was to investigate and facilitate intercultural awareness and sensitivity in academic practice in the Australian university context. Responding to expressions of interest by staff, as part of this study a multidimensional intercultural training program was designed and presented to academic staff in an Australian metropolitan university campus. This was a new internal Staff Development Program aiming to facilitate the development of greater intercultural awareness and sensitivity for participants. It was assumed that, if achieved such an outcome would contribute to greater intercultural competence in teaching practice in the culturally diverse case study campus and generate better teaching and learning experiences for both teachers and students. The research investigated how intercultural awareness and sensitivity might translate into better teaching and learning values and practices. The second aim was to identify interculturally aware and sensitive teaching strategies for dissemination to the campus teaching staff and, through publication of this thesis, to other institutions delivering higher education in culturally diverse contexts .

1.8 Research Methodology

The study in this thesis was framed as an action research project and, as such it depended on voluntary participation of teachers, students and management. The researcher was positioned as a participant observer in workshops and the purpose of the study was made explicit to participants. Further details of the research methodology are given in Chapter Three.

This project followed McNiff's five part action reflection cycle design (1993, p.74), also see Figure 1 in Chapter Three, where the five parts are as follows in relation to the study in this thesis:

(1) a specific description of the problem (*how to value cultural and linguistic diversity in an English-medium only university*);

(2) a description of a possible solution (or solutions) to the problems identified (*design of a needs-based intercultural communication training course of three workshops for university teaching staff*);

(3) an account of what happened when the researcher tried to put solution(s) into action; (*feedback from workshop discussion groups, workshop participant interviews and email communication list of workshop participants*);

(4) an evaluation of how successful the researcher's solution(s) had been, in the light of the evidence collected (*evaluative commentary from workshop participants in relation to training design and impacts*);

(5) a modification of the researcher's understanding as a result of this process and a restatement of the researcher's ideas and actions to enable continuing the process of improving practice (*development of a revised training course, teaching and learning policy document and thesis*).

Central to the principles of successful intercultural communication is the valuing of difference and diversity. Hence, this thesis adopted a qualitative approach to social (in this case educational) research which posits reality as a process negotiated and enacted by people continually through communication. Qualitative researchers seek

to understand the complex perceptions of individuals and hence in-depth, interpretive methods of finding out were deployed in this study by conducting one-to-one, semi-structured interviews after each of the three workshops. Workshop participants were asked whether they also wanted to be research participants and all trainees consented to take part in these interviews on a voluntary basis. Semi-structured interviewing allowed participants themselves to identify the intercultural issues, problems and benefits of their work without the interviewer imposing a highly organising structure to their experience and understanding of it. Seven Research Questions, listed in Chapter Three, were asked in these interviews and participants were encouraged to introduce any other information that they deemed relevant. Interviews with research participants were audio-taped (with permission) and then transcribed.

This project also used an interpretive research method of participant observation and the researcher maintained a learning journal of notes derived from reflections on her own experience and observations of other participants at workshops. An email discussion group for workshop participants was set up at Workshop One so that further commentary/feedback and peer learning could be generated and could contribute to research findings.

The researcher analysed transcripts from interviews, observational notes from workshop discussion groups, and e-discussion commentary for emerging themes, metaphors and language patterns. These multiple sources of evidence were analysed to identify participants' perceptions of the workshops both in terms of pedagogy and materials as well as content and topics. Evidence was also analysed to find out how this training had made, or might make, an impact on teaching practice and satisfaction. It was envisaged that from this research an ongoing internal Professional

Development program in intercultural teaching and learning skills would become part of the university's approach to staff development. It was also intended that from this research a pedagogical policy document would be generated for the university in relation to good intercultural teaching and learning practice.

1.9 Structure of the Thesis

In Chapter One the statement of the thesis was explained in the context of the culturally diverse international student sector of higher education in Australia and, in particular, of the case study university campus. The thesis is that university staff need and welcome staff development assistance to cope in this context. An action research design was developed to investigate this thesis and a staff development strategy of intercultural awareness and sensitivity training for Australian teachers of international students was developed, implemented and evaluated using multiple sources of evidence. Further rationale for the study was provided by reviewing key theoretical perspectives of intercultural awareness and sensitivity as well as intercultural training from contemporary literature. The Research Aims for the thesis were given with a brief overview of the qualitative research methodology.

In Chapter Two, theoretical perspectives on communication, culture and education relevant to the thesis are explained. The relationship between culture and communication, particularly in the context of the international student sector of Australian university is discussed. *Culture-general* theories (Hall 1959, 1976; Hofstede 1984, 1986; Stewart 1972) and theories of sojourning (Gullahorn & Gullahorn 1963; Hart 1999) are explained in terms of how they are applied in the staff development program conducted for this thesis and also in other studies. Ideological concerns involved in teaching and learning across culture and language are

32

discussed in the context of this study. Intercultural awareness and sensitivity training options are reviewed. In particular, multidimensional experiential training approaches are explained and linked to the training program design chosen for the study in this thesis. Seven main Research Questions and sub questions are generated by this review of theoretical perspectives and listed in Chapter Three.

In Chapter Three, the Research Aims, the Research Questions and the interpretive research methodology are explained in detail.

In Chapter Four, the results from multiple sources of evidence, including interviews, participant observation, researcher's learning journal, evaluation of workshops and email communication list, are given for each of the seven main Research Questions and an analysis of these results is provided.

In Chapter Five, there is a summary of the rationale, main features and findings of the study.

In Chapter Six, the main contributions of the study are identified as well as limitations of the study and directions for future research.

2. Chapter Two: Theoretical Perspectives on Communication, Culture and Education

2.1 Introduction

In Chapter One, the focus of the thesis was explained as a study of intercultural awareness and sensitivity in relation to teaching and learning practices in Australian universities. In this next chapter, the relationship between culture and the communicative practice of education focusing on an intercultural teaching and learning context is elaborated. Theories relevant to the study of intercultural communication in this thesis, particularly *culture-general* theories (Hall 1959, 1976; Hofstede 1984, 1986; and Stewart 1972) and theories of sojourning (Gullahorn & Gullahorn 1963; Hart 1996), are explained as essential knowledge for educators in intercultural classrooms. Consequently, an analysis is provided of ideological issues related to teaching international students in Australian universities. As university staff are generally not trained to teach in intercultural classrooms a range of intercultural training program alternatives is discussed that could be applied to staff development in Australian universities. In contrast to these possibilities a justification is given for the particular training program design and implementation for staff development conducted for the present study at an Australian campus in relation to both the needs of the case study research group, and potentially for staff in the higher education sector in Australia. Key information for establishing the Research Questions for this thesis is provided in this Chapter.

2.2 Communication and Culture

The focus of the thesis in this study on intercultural awareness and sensitivity training for academic staff is essentially on human communication practices in the

context of a multicultural university workplace. Consequently, it is important to state the particular theoretical orientation in this thesis concerning the meanings of concepts such as 'communication' or 'culture'. Communication can be defined as "any behaviour, verbal or non verbal, that is perceived by another. Knowledge, feelings or thoughts are encoded and sent from at least one person and received and decoded by another" (Dwyer 2003, p.6). Culture and communication are embedded in these behaviours. Culture is a pattern of belief, values and practices shared by a community to some extent and communication is the expression of those meanings. As we communicate, we are constructing meanings (and excluding alternative meanings) and contributing further to our communal understanding and, hence, our cultural identity. All meaning is cultural in that people can only make sense of an idea or an action, or interpret it, from reference to their encultured beliefs and experiences so that communication is further actualization of culture. Communicating across culture is an attempt to construe shared meaning using different and sometimes incommensurable frames of cultural reference or tools of understanding. This cultural difference can extend across language, religion, ethical systems, philosophies, politics, and so on. Australian educators' familiarity with cultural frames and implications for communication in their multicultural classrooms was a major theme of research conducted for the study in this thesis.

The ontological ubiquity of culture was, for example, conveyed by Hofstede (1991) when he defined it as the 'software of the mind'. Of course, that metaphor only makes sense if you come from a technologised or technologically-informed culture. To continue this technological analogy, culture is a hypertextual condition. Diversity can be defined as cultural against such criteria as age, gender, economic class, sexual preference and nationality as well as ethnicity. The relative status or intensity of any

one of such interfaced criteria contributing to the 'hypertextual' cultural identity of an individual will depend on the cultural context of any situation in time. In certain contexts the same individual may feel more like a feminist, or an animal protectionist, than an Australian. Recognition of cultural diversity as it exists intraculturally as well as interculturally is an important part of the discourse of intercultural communication theorists and hence, it is of importance to the study in this thesis of behaviour in an educational institution. Kim (1988, p.13) referred to a "global, inclusive conceptualisation of intercultural communication whereby the extent of the interculturalness is reflected in the level of homogeneity/heterogeneity between the experiential backgrounds of the individuals". In the study in this thesis diversity in a university workplace is foregrounded in terms of ethnicity and language. However, the kinds of teaching, learning and curricular features proposed as appropriate for such ethnic diversity, may be pertinent to other educational sites where ethnicities are not as diverse, or where cultural diversity is not primarily ethnicity-based.

2.3 Theorising Education as Intercultural Communication

For the purpose of this thesis it is recognised that intercultural education, or education involving people of different cultures, is inevitably practised through intercultural communication. Education is a communicative process that seeks to establish knowledge formally and develop understanding But knowledge exists through meaning established within cultures framed by different 'truths'. People 'know' that incommensurate things are 'true' so that different Gods 'exist' in a world dominated by monotheistic religions. People believe that different behaviours are right and just, such as capital punishment or gay marriage. Explorations of knowledge and belief are core practice to education. Intercultural education then is a less certain process of communication than intracultural education where participants

are from one culture. The process of communication is constitutive to the knowledge it imparts: "the organisation of the processes of human communication in any culture is a template for the organisation of knowledge or information in that culture" (Byers & Byers in Gay 2003, p. 322) The way people learn, the way they successfully come to 'know' is itself culturally-defined. "A semiotic relationship exists among communication, culture, teaching and learning, and it has profound implications for implementing culturally responsive teaching" (Gay 2003, p. 320).

> The absence of shared communicative frames of
> reference, procedural protocols, rules of etiquette and
> discourse systems makes it difficult for culturally
> diverse students and teachers to genuinely understand
> each other and for students to fully convey their
> intellectual abilities (Gay 2003, p.322).

Culturally different 'truths' are established through culturally different processes of education. Culturally sensitive and aware teaching and learning environments need to accommodate and account for these distinctions.

In relation to the problematic stated for the study in this thesis, namely to seek to develop intercultural teaching skills, one is simultaneously attempting to develop intercultural communication skills. Intercultural awareness and sensitivity are essential features of effective intercultural communication so whilst it was beyond the scope of this research study to develop intercultural communication competence in any complete sense for participants, this staff training program did aim to establish a degree of awareness and sensitivity to cultural difference that would promote a

willingness and an interest to continue professional development towards such competence. It was also important to ascertain educators' mental models or perhaps implicit theories of intercultural communication that may be affecting their teaching and learning practices.

2.4 Culture-general Theories of Intercultural Communication

In the field of intercultural communication, there is generally understood to be *culture-general* theory and knowledge which has attempted to explain cultural difference itself, and *culture-specific* knowledge which has described and explained the common beliefs, values and practices of a specific cultural group. Given the extreme cultural heterogeneity of the case study campus it was regarded as not useful (or feasible) to look for the different ways that students, (for example, Indian, Indonesian, Japanese, Nepalese, Serbian, Taiwanese, Thai, Vietnamese, etc) write a report or engage in a tutorial. Instead the study focused on exploring the different things people do in an intercultural academic situation that work to their advantage in the sense of satisfying course requirements whilst confirming their preferred self-identity and identities of others.

The most appropriate literature relating to the study in this thesis was the range of *culture-general* theories and concepts developed by intercultural communication theorists such as M. Bennet (1986), Gudykunst (2003), Hall (1959, 1976), Hofstede (1984, 1986, 1991), Kim (1988, 1994, 1997) and Stewart (1972). Hofstede (1984, 1991) offered the concepts of power-distance tolerance, individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance and masculinity/femininity as four dimensions around which cultures differ. Hall (1959) constructed a continuum between high context cultures (less explicit, more implied) and low context cultures (more explicit, less implied) as a

useful tool with which to assess cultural difference. Stewart (1972) focused on a culture's activity orientation to locate a culture on a being-becoming-doing continuum. Such theorists have contributed to an understanding of the beliefs, concepts, practices and values around which cultures can be seen to differ and converge. As intercultural education takes place inevitably as intercultural communication, such theorists have articulated useful concepts which were used as tools for analysis of cultural difference in university teaching and learning in the Workshops conducted as part of the research design for the study in this thesis. Whether the participating educators were already familiar with these cultural frames was also studied.

Hofstede's study (1984) was quantitatively impressive with 88 000 participants and generated a total of four categories of cultural difference. Findings are compromised, however, by the fact that the participants were almost entirely male, were employees of one multinational company and were surveyed over 20 years ago (Lustig & Koester 2003, p.135). Cultural practices have changed radically over this period not least through the ongoing and inextricable developments of technologisation and globalisation. In addition, although the cultural backgrounds of participants were diverse in Hofstede's study, they excluded any representatives from Africa (other than South Africa), Arab countries or Russia. Nevertheless, Hofstede's four dimensions of cultural difference (1984) have had pervasive influence on the field of intercultural communication theory and did offer useful tools of analysis for the study in this thesis.

One of the four dimensions around which cultures differ according to Hofstede (1984) is power-distance tolerance which is described in 2003 by Lustig and Koester

as "the degree to which the culture believes that institutional and organisational power should be distributed unequally and the decisions of the power holders should be challenged or accepted" (p.117). Hofstede (1984) developed an Index (also seen in Lustig & Koester 2003, p.118) which numerically rated 40 countries in relation to their preference for more evenly or unevenly distributed power.

For Hofstede (1984) "The consequences of the degree of power-distance that a culture prefers are evident in family customs, the relationships between teachers and students, organisational practices, and so on" (cited by Lustig & Koester 2003, p.119). It was how power-distance tolerance impacts on teaching and learning relationships and outcomes that is of relevance to this study. Hence, Hofstede's dimension of power-distance was reviewed by training participants in Workshop Two of the three staff development workshops conducted for the study in this thesis. It was one of three theoretical elements that participants applied to the critical incidents recounted from personal experience during their participation in the research process. As teachers represent institutional power holders for many cultures, Hofstede's (1984) dimension of power-distance tolerance was a potentially useful model for teachers to think about in the context of university educational practice.

Many international students at the case study campus originated from communities such as Hong Kong and India which were listed as high power-distance cultures on Hofstede's Index. Australia was listed as a relatively low power-distance culture and Australian lecturers have generally encouraged students to work critically and question as well as understand the claims and theories that students have read and listened to during their studies. In Australian universities, it has been not only acceptable but conventional to challenge and question authorities, including teachers

themselves, and a tutorial participation mark has often reflected the degree to which a student can usefully engage in such critique. As Australian pedagogy has shifted towards a more student-centred and less teacher-centred practice, the power-distance relationship has again been adjusted. For an international student, particularly a student from a high power-distance tolerance culture, the questioning of an authority may be an act of overwhelming impoliteness, if not egomania. Teachers, for their part, may be expected by such international students to 'run the show' and dictate what they want the students to feed back to them in assessment. For many overseas students assessment has often been by examination for rote-learned information rather than by an examination or assignment requiring critical analysis and discussion. In this context, the power-distance tolerance factor affecting intercultural communication can seriously inhibit the student's ability to ask the very questions that they are required to pose as demonstration of effective learning within the Australian university model. An awareness by teachers of differences in power-distance tolerance and the consequences of this for intercultural teaching and learning was a focus of this study.

Hofstede (1984, 1991) also defined a dimension of uncertainty avoidance which measured the extent to which cultures tolerate and prefer ambiguity and also the extent to which different cultures act to avoid or limit uncertainty by various strategies. This dimension of cultural difference was useful to the study in this thesis in relation to explaining how teachers and students may address anxiety created through uncertainty in the the academic context. An Australian lecturer may seek to create doubt and uncertainty as useful tools for critical education and independent learning. However, ambiguity about what to read and write, or how to approach a topic may be culturally uncomfortable, or even unworkable, for an international

university student. Hofstede (1994) outlined strategies that may reduce uncertainty and participants were questioned in interviews at the end of the staff development program to ascertain which of these strategies may be operating, or useful, in their teaching practice.

Hofstede' s third dimension of cultural difference was the individualism-collectivism dimension which reflects a culture's tendency to encourage people to be unique and independent or conforming and interdependent (see Lustig & Koester 2003 for a clear commentary on this dimension). This dimension also had implications for the study in this thesis as the Australian university paradigm has generally worked to create critical thinkers and independent learners whereas that may not be the educational or professional goal of an international student, nor a necessarily appropriate mind set for professional practice overseas.

Individualist cultures train their members to speak out as a means of resolving difficulties. In classrooms, students from individualistic cultures are likely to ask questions of the teacher; students from collectivist cultures are not. Similarly, people from individualist cultures are more likely than those from collectivist cultures to use confrontational strategies when dealing with interpersonal problems; those with a collectivist orientation are likely to use avoidance, third party intermediaries, or other face-saving techniques (Lustig & Koester 2003).

The individualist-collectivist dimension has further implications for intercultural education in terms of how successfully students from different cultures perform in their University study in the increasingly popular format of the group-based assessment project. In such projects, students are assessed for their ability to work

in groups and people from collectivist and individualist cultures have different ideas of how this should proceed and hence, different criteria for success in the group context. The complex dynamics of intercultural group work and the implications for group-based assessment were topics of much discussion in Workshops and interviews and Hofstede's individualist/collectivist dimension of cultural difference was a key referent in these discussions.

Hofstede's dimension of femininity and masculinity indicated the degree to which a culture values such behaviours as assertiveness and the acquisition of wealth, or caring for others and the quality of life (see Lustig & Koester 2003). This dimension was relevant for exploring gender role behaviour and values in this study: how it is appropriate for women and men to behave in their academic interactions? Hofstede (1991) has profiled gender role behaviour in the following ways:

> Teachers in masculine cultures praise their best
> students because academic performance is rewarded
> highly. Similarly, male students in these masculine
> cultures strive to be competitive, visible, successful and
> vocationally-oriented. In feminine cultures, teachers
> rarely praise individual achievements and academic
> performance because social accommodation is more
> highly regarded. Male students try to cooperate with
> one another and develop a sense of solidarity, they try
> to behave modestly and properly, they select subjects
> because they are intrinsically interesting rather than
> vocationally rewarding , and friendliness is much more

important than brilliance (Lustig & Koester 2003, p. 128)

Awareness of this feminine/masculine dimension of cultural difference and its possible effects was explored in the study for this thesis as knowledge of this dimension might assist teachers to interpret what they see as inappropriate gender role behaviour and may encourage teachers to praise both the masculine and feminine aspects of their students' academic and social achievements in the period of their study sojourn.

In earlier work by Edward T. Hall (1959) cultures were distinguished by the degree to which they prefer high context messages or low context messages. In the former, much of the meaning of a message is either implied by the physical setting or presumed to be part of the individual's internalised beliefs. An example of high context communication in a high-context culture is the highly ritualised Japanese tea ceremony where little explicit communication occurs and the event is resonant with implicit meanings. In contrast low context cultures use messages that are explicit, overt and precise in language. Modern commentators on theories of intercultural competence such as Lustig and Koester (2003) provide the following examples:

Reactions in high-context cultures are likely to be reserved, whereas, reactions in low context cultures are frequently very explicit and readily observable. In high context cultures, an important purpose in communicating is to promote and sustain harmony amongst the interactants. Unconstrained reactions

could threaten the face or social esteem of the others.

In low context cultures, however, an important

purpose in communicating is to convey exact meaning.

Explicit messages help to achieve this goal. If messages

need to be explicit, so will people's reactions. Even

when the message is understood, one cannot assume

that the meanings are clear in the absence of verbal

messages coded specifically to provide feedback

(Lustig & Koester 2003, p. 113).

This preference for either implicit or explicit messages proposed by Hall in 1959 has implications for both teaching and assessment practices in intercultural groups. Teachers' views on applying Hall's work in the early twenty-first century were investigated during the course of the study in this thesis.

More recently Stewart (1972) defined a different range of cultural patterns against which a particular culture can be understood. Activity orientation is one of these patterns defined as how the people of a culture view human actions and the expression of self through activities. Cultures are positioned along a being-becoming-doing continuum. Doing is the dominant characteristic of Euro-Australian people whereby people often seek to change and control what is happening to them. The emphasis is on getting things done. Work is more important than and separate to play. The pace of life is hectic. Being cultures, on the other hand, such as Indian Hindu culture and African culture, see value in non-action and acceptance of the status quo and often believe that all events are determined by fate. In being and becoming culture, work is a means to an end and there is no clear cut separation

between work and play (Stewart 1972). Such distinct orientations to core aspects of how we perceive reality and how we approach our activity are intrinsically relevant to teaching and learning activities. Awareness of these distinctions can help students and teachers negotiate each other's academic performance and expectations for performance. Stewart's (1972) theoretical concept of activity orientation was considered by research participants in relation to narrated critical intercultural incidents in Workshop Two of the staff development program designed for the study in this thesis.

2.5 Theorising the Sojourn

Intercultural communication theorists have typically used a terminology to identify the intercultural agent as a migrant, refugee, or sojourner all of which draw on Simmel's early work in sociology in the 1950s where he defined the type of 'the stranger' "who is a member of a system but is not strongly attached to that system" (Simmel 1950, p.402). The sojourners in particular with their defining intention to return to their home culture once their quest is achieved, are usefully understood from the position of the stranger and Gudykunst and Kim developed this connection in their text *Communicating with Strangers* (1997). The sojourner can be again distinguished as an expatriate, impatriate or repatriate and such terminology has been common to the field of intercultural business communication (see McFarland 1999) but can also apply to academic sojourners as a means of identifying different intercultural positions in the journey. This selection of terms reflects the complexity of the intercultural academic context of the case study campus as some teachers were impatriate (from other countries, in Australia as employees), or migrants, or repatriates.

The concept of the sojourner was important to defining the population of the study in this thesis. Students sojourn from one particular culture to another particular culture and the cultural mix at the case study campus at a metropolitan centre in Australia is high (over 4000 students from 50 countries) and is made up almost entirely of other 'foreign' sojourners. Teachers were also from various cultural backgrounds including American, Australian, British, Chinese, Indian, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Latvian, Nepalese, Pakistani, Polish, Swedish, Turkish, and Vietnamese. They undertake professional sojourns in the classrooms when they interact with an even more culturally diverse group of students. Both host (academic) and visitor (student) are in some degree strangers to each other's cultural and educational norms. The staff development Workshops positioned participants as sojourners to focus on the intercultural nature of the academic experience.

Theoretical models of mapping and understanding the experience of intercultural sojourn featuring in the Workshop activities have included Gullahorn and Gullahorn's W curve describing the initial highs, the inevitable lows and the adjustment or recovery period of intercultural sojourn (1963) and Hart's application of Campbell's (1949) interpretation of the hero's journey through mythology to the experience of an intercultural study sojourn (Hart 1999). Teachers in the staff development workshops conducted for the study in this thesis were presented with these models to build understanding and to help identify ways to equip students with an anticipation of such experience and coping strategies.

2.6 Culturally Different Communication Styles in Academic Contexts

There is significant literature describing culturally different learning styles and practices (see Ballard 1987; Frank 1991; Gassin 1982; Jiang, Hawkins & Bransgrove

1998; Kato 2001; Klerkx & Wang 1998; Zifirdaus 1988). For instance, one recent study identified a preference for study habits involving collaborative and negotiated problem solving amongst Chinese American high school maths students (Triesman in Gay 2003). This study tried to determine why these students performed so well in high level maths classes and "found what others have observed more informally - the Chinese American students always studied in groups, and they routinely explained to each other their understanding of the problems and how they arrived at solutions to them" (Gay 2003, p.325).

Other studies suggest that there exists an inappropriate stereotyping of 'Asian' learners (itself a problematic 'orientalising' term, see Said 1978) as rote-learners, passive learners, non-participatory learners, or uncritical learners perhaps due to a tendency by teachers and researchers to focus on perceived problems and deficiencies of 'Asian' students (see studies like Ballard 1987; Gassin 1982; Jiang et al 1998).

The assumptions behind these stereotypes can be challenged. For example, an alternative explanation is that:

> ...while Australian researchers and teachers are correct
> in asserting that students from Asia do make significant
> use of memorisation strategies, they have incorrectly
> attributed the use of memorisation and rote learning to
> a surface approach to learning (Chalmers & Volet 1997,
> p.88).

Although the use of memorisation strategies by Western students has been found to

indicate a surface approach to learning, the use of the same strategies by Asian students does not necessarily indicate that they are adopting a surface approach. Rather than view the use of memorisation strategies by Asian students as a "problem" or a deficit in learning it may be more useful to investigate the relationship between memorisation strategies and understanding (Chalmers & Volet 1997, p.87). The relationship between students' strategies for recall and understanding was investigated in the study of this thesis.

Studies have also investigated the analytical writing skills of students from non-western countries. For example, Gay (2003) reported a study of 'world majority students' by Fox in 1994 where observations and interviews were used to study the analytical writing skills of these students in basic writing courses at the Centre for International Education at the University of Massachusetts. Several common writing habits among these students from different countries emerged that conflict with formal writing styles of academe, analytical or critical writing, and scholarly discourse (Gay 2003). These writing habits included characteristics such as:

- Use of much background information and imprecise commentary;
- Use of exaggeration for effect;
- Prolific use of transitional markers, such as "moreover","nevertheless" and "here again";
- Preference for contemplative instead of action words;
- Much meandering around and digressions from the primary topic of discussion;
- Emphasis on surrounding context rather than the subject itself;
- Tendency to be suggestive and to try to convey feelings instead of being

approaches to academic texts, awareness of such variations could be a useful foundation to culturally sensitive assessment and could be studied to advantage in staff development programs. These observations were made known to research participants through the e-discussion facility created in this research project and their reactions to the usefulness of this work was studied by the researcher.

2.7 Intercultural Awareness and Sensitivity and Ideological Issues

Australian intercultural education in the language of English has ideological and political implications intrinsic to the use of a particular language. As Smith aptly declared more than thirty years ago: "teaching is, above all, a linguistic activity... and...language is at the heart of teaching" (1971 in Gay 2003, p.321). Intercultural communication has increased as technology has continued to offer greater opportunity for cultural mobility both physical and virtual or electronic in the process of globalisation. English has been the dominant language of technology, international trade and politics. English can be both empowering for individuals and an important part of the export commodity status of Australian education (see Jiang et.al. 1998). Whilst English can be individually and nationally beneficial, English and English based education are generally only available to the economically-privileged.

At the case study campus, for a student, a Bachelors degree was an investment of ($A) 40 000 minimum. If a student proceeded to postgraduate study, this could add another $20 000 to the total cost of higher education. One needs to consider the effects of currency exchange in this transaction. For the purchaser with Bangladeshi currency (taka), this exchange can be crippling. In addition to actual course fees are costs of return air tickets and accommodation/living expenses. Hence, the total cost of an overseas study sojourn to Australia for a Bangladesh student is approximately

$60 000 fees and $80 000 expenses over a four year sojourn. This is a total of $140 000 and is equivalent to 773 working years earning for a Bangladeshi worker on the minimum wage at October 2003 exchange rates (UNICEF 2005). Needless to say, it is not the minimum wage worker, or his or her son or daughter, who are undertaking tertiary study at Australian universities. These prohibitive costs demonstrate how the English language and its commodification in international tertiary education continues to act as a gatekeeper to positions of privilege and influence (Pennycook 1995).

With a world ratio of one native speaker to four non-native English speakers (Kachru 1996, p.241) English has stretched to become 'Englishes'. Many theorists within the field of sociolinguistics have argued against the tendency to see distinctive features of non-native varieties of English as "acquisition errors or interference" (Yong & Campbell 1995, p.338). It has been argued, for example, by Brian Kachru (1996), editor of *World Englishes*, that bi- and multilinguists operate according to a different grammar from monolinguists from whom the paradigms for communicative behaviour are fallaciously drawn and that, moreover, "while most Britons, Americans (and Australians) see themselves as monolingual, as nation states, they are multilingual" (p.242). Other researchers have complained that second language acquisition researchers have over-emphasised constructs derived from a monolingual setting and have ignored the fact that the reality and goal of their learners is bilingualism (Phillipson 1992). Instead it has been proposed that "English needs to be seen as one language in a multilingual framework, both internationally and within each core English speaking country," (Phillipson 1992, p.23). Intercultural communication training for academic staff such as designed in the study for this thesis can explore important assumptions about English and other languages that operate to privilege or

deprivilege students and teachers from various backgrounds. As can be seen in this comment from The New London Group, the 'NESB' repositioned as the bi-linguist or multilinguist and mutual negotiation of meaning across uses of language becomes vital for students and teachers:

> Local diversity and global connectedness mean not only that there can be no standard; they also mean that the most important skill students [and teachers] need to learn is to negotiate regional, ethnic or class-based dialects; variations in register that occur according to social context; hybrid cross-cultural discourses; the code switching often to be found within a text among different languages, dialects or registers; different visual and iconic meanings; and variations in the gestural relationships between people, language and material objects. Indeed this is the only hope for averting the catastrophic conflicts about identities and spaces that now seem ever ready to flare up (New London Group 1996, p.69).

It is perhaps not reduction, but diversification of standards we should speak of in respect of judgments we make about 'world' usages of English. Linguistic capacity is not necessarily indicative of academic capacity (Pennycook 1995) so it would seem incumbent on universities to explore, for example through staff development, how culturally different usages of English and attendant non-verbal communication skills can be valued in the academic context.

2.8 Intercultural Sensitivity and Awareness Training in the Context of Australian Government and Institutional Policy

Higher education in Australia is under permanent funding review. In recent years a Howard Government reform package for higher education *Our Universities: Backing Australia's Future* has increased full fee places on offer from 25% to 50% (National Tertiary Education Union, June 2003). This has allowed universities to enrol greater numbers of international students who contribute larger sums of money to university income than the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) students. This development in government policy for higher education can only contribute to greater cultural diversification of students across all Australian university campuses.

As increasingly self-funding entities, universities are forced to streamline their operations and hence, under-enrolled courses are phased out of the curriculum which has been required to shift in response to work force demands, such as skills shortage, currently in teaching and nursing. Universities are also offering more casual positions and less tenured employment for academics as protection from market shifts where a set of courses in a specialist field may become redundant. In Australia universities do not have sufficient government funding to allow them to run the courses with only small enrolments. There are, therefore, fewer full-time academics to cover the student consultation work associated with lecturing and tutoring, the administrative work associated with delivery and assessment of courses, and the research and development/review of courses (i.e. the work in support of the teaching hours in any week). The academic work site has become increasingly a place where lecturers walk out of their lecture hall and into their car where they may drive to another campus to deliver a different course to a different group. This has contributed to another effect. The National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) has reported that student staff

ratios have increased by 44% since 1993 (AVCC 2003 in NTEU June 2003, p. 2). So not only are students in Australian Universities of increasingly diverse cultural and linguistic background, there are more students in the lectures and tutorials than ever before. This has created a compounded problem for university teachers who are simultaneously dealing with larger groups and more complex groups perhaps without the benefit of adequate training in education.

International student education has been an increasingly regulated activity in Australia. As international student education is a full-fee paying sector in Australia and, hence, highly profitable, government departments, notably the Department of Education, Science and Training have introduced regulatory legislation (Educational Services for Overseas Students ESOS, Commonwealth, 2000 and National Code of Practice in DEST 2003) and a Commonwealth register of institutions and courses (CRICOS in DEST 2004) to prevent abuse of these funds and ensure the Australian higher educational product remains a quality product when it is offered to the international student both onshore and offshore. Much of the National Code of Practice is about proper trading practices in terms of management of student fees and fee refunds, also provision of appropriate facilities, such as building and technology resources, but the Code also requires educational support structures and practices, including training academics in intercultural communication. The Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) developed and published their own Code of Practice in support of the legislative requirements of ESOS which stated: "Universities should make every effort to: develop training programs, including cross-cultural programs, appropriate to the different levels of involvement and responsibility among staff" (2002, p.8). This element was also part of the 1998 Code of AVCC. In the four years between the publishing of these two consistent

Codes there has been little by way of intercultural communication training for academics or general staff in Australian universities and, more significantly for the study in this thesis, there has been no publishing of research results in the training of such staff. This study addresses that gap.

2.9 Intercultural Sensitivity and Awareness Training and Multiculturalism

"More people moved in 1994 than ever before in world history, driven by fear of guns or desire for more butter or freedom" (Cleveland 2003, p.433). This growth in the temporary and permanent movement of people around the globe is a trend that continues. In Australia the number of permanent residents born overseas grew by 1.7% in the 10 years from 1991 to 2001 while the total population grew by just over 2 million residents in the same time (ABS 2002). Within these figures, the percent of immigrants to Australia from English speaking countries has declined whilst the number of immigrants from non-English speaking backgrounds (specifically east and southern Asia) has significantly increased (ABS 2002). Australia is increasingly a multicultural and a multilingual community and this has implications for university policy and practice.

"Multiculturalism is about our faculties bringing multicultural thinking into the mainstream of our sacred curriculum and our teaching methods" (Myers 1993, p.169). Multicultural thinking will find expression as multicultural writing and speaking in such curriculum and post curriculum in everyday life. Academics teaching such a population need to be skilled to respond to these writings/utterances in an interculturally appropriate way as urgently as overseas students need to adapt or acculturate to their new environment. Two important questions for the study in this thesis were "How do we ensure that differences of culture, language and gender are

emphasised in the dominant model of the intellectual or 'university' approach to intercultural training. The workshop participants for the study in this thesis were graduates of formal university education and could be expected to have experienced the intellectual model of teaching and learning with "emphasis on rationality, abstract knowledge, emotional development and verbal skills" (J.M Bennet 1986, p.123). An intercultural training course emphasising the intellectual approach may fit with teachers' expectations. In addition, a potential shift in attitude to learning was considered to be an important objective of intercultural training in the university context. Hence, adoption of a multidimensional model which sought to encompass various approaches and objectives was preferred.

Most intercultural training programs in popular use have been preparatory or pre-sojourn. In the case study site, the participants were authentically immersed in a culturally diverse context. Consequently, simulation of cultural difference from the perspective of the teacher was unnecessary. Simulated experience of cultural difference from the perspective of the new student was the opening sequence of Workshop One and was later incorporated into the formal teacher induction sessions for academic staff offered each term at the case study campus. Simulation is a useful teaching method in experiential learning as it encourages active participation and ensures that learning is not limited to a cognitive field and is inclusive of affective and behavioural learning. The 'area training' model of intercultural training has traditionally depended heavily on simulation of culturally different environments. This has correspondingly been a limitation of the model as successful duplication of the target overseas environment has been inevitably and often severely limited (J.M Bennet 1986). In the training program designed for the study in this thesis the workshop participants entered the simulated university environment of Unicult, a

classroom in order to enhance their 'self- awareness' as professional practitioners.

The staff development training program developed for the study in this thesis was designed to span what Weil and McGill have defined as the four Villages of experiential learning: Village 1: learning from life and work; Village 2: a basis for bringing about changes to post secondary education; Village 3: a basis for group consciousness raising, community action and social change; and Village 4: a basis for personal growth and development and self awareness and group effectiveness (1989, p.3). These objectives are commensurate with those of this research thesis and not incommensurate with the majority of intercultural training programs with the exception of Village Two which limits experiential learning outcomes to the context of post secondary education. Further explanation of how experiential learning was facilitated for the participants and researcher in the study in this thesis is given in Chapter Three, Section 3.5.

Experiential learning is also defined in the study in this thesis as a four part learning process (Fry & Kolb in J.M Bennet 1986, p.119) involving:

- (1) being actively involved in new experiences (*Unicult simulation*);
- (2) reflecting on these experiences (*discussion and consideration of student as 'multilingual hero-sojourner'/ongoing interviews and e-discussion*). The training program was a series of three workshops scheduled over nine months (February to October, 2003) in order to allow time for continuing practice and professional reflection;
- (3) integrating observations into logically sound theories (*intercultural theories were applied to participant experience*);
- (4) building on this knowledge with problem solving (*teachers' critical*

theoretical approaches to teaching and learning across culture are enunciated. In addition, the interpretive methodology for the qualitative research conducted for the study in this thesis is described, including the staff development training program design and data collection and analysis methods.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology (interpretive action research)

Intercultural awareness and sensitivity are essential features of intercultural communication competence. Teaching is communication and in Australian universities, teaching is increasingly an act of *intercultural* communication. In this thesis it is argued that intercultural communication training can benefit Australian university teachers. Communication is a complex process and in order to investigate how intercultural awareness and sensitivity are useful attributes in teaching practice, a research methodology that is able to capture a variety of relevant, personal and complex evidence was required. Hence, an interpretive methodology was selected for this qualitative research study. In this chapter, this interpretive methodology is explained and justified. In addition, the design of the training program is outlined. Finally, the procedures of evidence collection and analysis are described.

3.1 Research Aims

The first aim of the study was to investigate and facilitate intercultural awareness and sensitivity in academic practice in the Australian university context. As part of this investigation the researcher used an action research model to design and present a multidimensional intercultural training program of a series of three workshops for academic staff in an Australian metropolitan university campus as an internal Staff Development Program. The initiative arose from expressions of interest from staff and aimed to facilitate the development of greater intercultural awareness and sensitivity for participants. It was assumed that such an outcome could contribute to the second aim of the study to achieve greater intercultural competence in teaching practice in the culturally diverse case study campus and generate better teaching and learning experiences for both teachers and students. During the process of action research an interpretive research methodology was used to investigate teachers'

perceptions of how intercultural awareness and sensitivity might translate into better teaching and learning values and practices. It was intended that findings on appropriate interculturally aware and sensitive teaching strategies would be disseminated to the campus teaching staff by further programs in Staff Development and, through publication of this thesis, to staff at other institutions delivering higher education in culturally diverse contexts .

3.2 Research Questions

There were seven main Research Questions and a number of sub-questions.

Research Question 1: What intercultural sensitivity and awareness did teachers have prior to training?

1.1 Is M. Bennet's continuum of intercultural sensitivity (1986) a helpful concept? How? What factors may impact on a teacher's passage along this continuum?

1.2 What other types of intercultural communication training have teachers experienced?

1.3 .What models of intercultural training are effective for academics in a culturally diverse university campus?

Research Question 2: How do teachers currently perceive of and describe international students?

2.1 What are teachers' perceptions of international students' learning styles?

2.2 What are teacher's perceptions of international students' communication problems in the Australian university and work force?

Research Question 3: How do theoretical concepts used in the training program to re-frame the intercultural study sojourn affect teachers' perceptions of the international student?

    3.1 How does the definition of international student as multilingual or bilingual sojourner affect teachers' perceptions?

    3.2 How does the hero's model (Campbell, 1946 in Hart 1999) affect teachers' perceptions of the study sojourn?

    3.3 How useful are *culture-general* theories to teaching and learning practice in the university context?

        3.3.1 power-distance (Hofstede 1984)
        3.3.2 Individualism/collectivism (Hofstede 1984)
        3.3.3 Activity orientation (Stewart 1972)
        3.3.4 High context and low context cultures (Hall 1959)

Research Question 4: What teaching strategies are effective in negotiating the cultural diversity of teachers and learners?

    4.1 What skills, attitudes and practices should/should not distinguish intercultural teachers from intracultural?

Research Question 5: What are teachers' perceptions of the limitations of Australian models of education for culturally diverse groups of learners?

Research Question 6: How is it possible to value other languages in an English-medium university course? How has training influenced teachers' perceptions of this?

Research Question 7: What are the pedagogical implications for Australian teachers with intercultural classes?

3.3 Research Methodology and Rationale

3.3.1 Interpretive Methodology

This research is situated as an act of social science in the sector of education. The 'social' practice under investigation in the sector of higher education is communication, and particularly intercultural communication. Social researchers are required to develop and state a scientific method for establishing what is real in order that the report on 'the real' (the research report) can be convincingly substantiated. In traditional positivist terms this may be so that the research findings can be argued to be universally true. In an interpretive, qualitative and participatory project such as this the research findings are inextricably contextualised to the lives of the participants and there is no intention to establish universal laws. For this research study of social practice it is appropriate to recognise that:

> Predictive generalisability and repeatability are not
> necessarily particularly useful concepts in qualitative
> research when the objective is learning from
> understanding and knowing particular actors intentions,
> actions and reflections in-depth rather than forming
> general rules about others' behaviour (Holian 1999,
> p.11).

Qualitative research is often associated with phenomenological methodology developed by Edmund Husserl (1913 in 1980 trans.) and redefined by Martin Heidegger (1927 in 1996 trans.) as hermeneutical phenomenology. Both phenomenological traditions arose from German philosophy and shared some similar convictions amounting to a 'theory of being' that is a contesting alternative to the

traditional positivist scientific objective of demonstrating universal truths or laws through controlled research to explain an objective 'external' reality. As Laverty remarked: "Both Husserl and Heidegger were convinced that the world that scientists believed as the world, based on Cartesian dualism, is simply one life world among many worlds'" (Laverty 2003, p.4).

In this philosophical vein, this qualitative research adopts an interpretive, specifically, a hermeneutic phenomenological approach that:

> sees people as indissolubly related in cultural, in social and in historical contexts...Meaning is found as we are constructed by the world while at the same time we are constructing this world from our own background and experiences. There is a transaction between the individual and the world as they constitute and are constituted by each other (Munhall in Laverty 2003, p. 3).

To research the experiences of such individuals in order to extract a description of an external or objective system of 'truth' would, in interpretive terms, be beside the point of reporting real experience(s). This study does not seek to establish a single teaching formula for interculturally aware and sensitive academic practice rather it seeks to identify the various means by which individual teachers negotiate cultural diversity in their teaching practice.

Central to both qualitative research using an interpretive methodology and the

principles of successful intercultural communication is the valuing of difference and diversity. An interpretive approach to social (in this case educational) research which posits reality as a negotiated process enacted continually through communication is a good theoretical fit to the objective of studying difference and diversity. Qualitative researchers using an interpretive methodology seek to understand the complex, diverse and even contradictory perceptions of individuals. The interpretive methods of research in this study are fundamental methods relied on by qualitative researchers for gathering information and they include action research experience/intervention in the setting, direct observation of participants and in-depth interviewing of participants (Marshall & Rossman 1995). For the study in this thesis , the researcher established an action research project to investigate the problematic. At the first stage of action research, pilot interviews were held with seven interested academic staff. Based on the findings from the pilot interviews, the researcher developed a plan for action research in six further stages. A series of three staff development workshops was to be designed incorporating findings from interviews and a group email communication facility with participating academic staff held between Workshop One and Two and between Workshops Two and Three. The final, seventh, stage of action research involved holding interviews and email discussion with participants after Workshop Three. Correspondingly, the researcher conducted each workshop, interviewed participants after each of the three workshops and facilitated email discussion according to the following schedule of action research:

1. Pilot interviews with seven academic staff (May/June 2002)

2. Workshop One (February 2003) (12 participants including the researcher/participant)

3. Interviews with 12 workshop participants and email commentary (March/April

2003)

4. Workshop Two (June 2003)

5. Interviews with 12 workshop participants and email commentary
(August/September 2003)

6. Workshop Three (November 2003)

7. Interviews with 12 workshop participants and email commentary
(November/December 2003).

3.3.2 Action Research

This was an action research project for qualitative research that used interpretive
methods of finding out. Action research is a method of enquiry that is particularly
useful for purposeful groups (in this case, organisational employees and teachers)
who are experiencing a problem (in this case possible changes in teaching strategies
related to diverse cultural identities, languages and learning styles and preferences for
negotiating an Australian university curriculum). Action research allows the
researcher to frame a problem and, with an identification of participants and survey
of participant needs, the action research model encourages a hypothesis 'solution' to
be implemented and then assessed with participants themselves acting as the measure
of this success. The design for the action research cycle of this study is modelled
below in Figure 1 and Figure 3.

As an action research project, this study depended on voluntary participation of
teachers and management. The researcher was positioned as a participant observer
and the purpose of the study was made explicit to participants in the invitation to
participate and at Workshop One. As explained in Chapter One in Section 1.10
during the action research project the researcher followed McNiff's five part action

reflection cycle (1993, p.74). These five parts are given again here expressed specifically for this study to link diagrammatically to Figure 1 as further clarification.

McNiff's Five Part Action Research Cycle (1993, p.74)

Part One: An identification of the PROBLEM.

Specifically for this study from pilot interviews: *how to value cultural and linguistic diversity and minimise related anxiety in an English-medium only Australian university;*

Part Two: A proposal of a possible SOLUTION (or solutions) to the problems identified.

Specifically for this study: *develop staff training program and conduct mutual collaboration through interviews and email communication using input from pilot interviews and Workshops One, Two and Three;*

Part Three: An ACCOUNT of what happened when trying to put solution(s) into action.

Specifically for this study: *researcher constructs accounts from evidence from researcher notes taken from workshop discussion groups, interviews with participants, email communication and researcher's learning journal;*

Part Four: An EVALUATION of success of solution(s) in the light of the evidence collected.

Specifically for this study: *researcher constructs evaluation using evidence from participant interviews after Workshops One, Two and Three where evaluative commentary was sought from teachers in relation to training design and impacts;*

Part Five: RECONSIDERATION of the problem and a modification of understanding as a result of this process.
Specifically for this study: *the researcher makes a restatement of ideas and actions to enable continuing the process of improving practice as a Learning Skills Unit Manager (for example, a revised training course, contribution to ongoing staff development (academic induction session) and thesis).*

1.	Identify PROBLEM ⟶ conduct pilot interviews

2.	Propose SOLUTION ⟶ develop Intercultural Staff Development Program and conduct collaborative inquiry

3.	Produce ACCOUNT ⟶ collect multiple sources of evidence from participants and researcher/participant

4.	Synthesise into an EVALUATION ⟶ use analysis of multiple sources of evidence from participants and researcher/participant

5.	Make a RECONSIDERATION of the problem ⟶ evaluate evidence, revise training programs and determine ongoing staff development initiatives

Figure 1: Application of McNiff's Action Reflection Cycle design (1993, p. 74) to this case study.

For each research participant, there was potential also to engage in similar cycles of personal reflection on practice in the course of participating in Workshops One, Two and Three, the interviews and email discussions.

For the purposes of this thesis action research is:

> the act of engaging in real life problem-solving, and getting legitimation from real organisation. The researcher must be able to access real-life data in 'real' time. It is an act of being engaged in the universe where the problem is occurring. This requires the commitment and interest of those who are experiencing the problems (Cunningham 1993, p. 5).

As the Learning Skills Unit Manager at the case study campus it is a professional duty of the researcher to help teachers solve teaching and learning problems and hence, the aims of this training program were directly commensurate with the researcher's work objectives. Teachers were surveyed in an earlier needs analysis (pilot interviews) for their interest in intercultural awareness training and expressed a willingness to participate. Management were supportive of this Professional Development initiative and recommended the Program in an ongoing format as internal Professional Development and allowed teachers time from other tasks to attend.

As a complement to action research, this staff development project may also be usefully understood as an *action learning* project for teachers and researcher, for

example, as represented previously by the McNiff Five Part Action Reflection Cycle (1993, p.74). Action learning has also been defined by Spence where:

- learning centres around the need to find a solution to a real problem;

- learning is voluntary and learner driven;

- individual development is as important as finding the solution to the problem;

- learning is highly visible, social process, which may lead to organisational change;

- learning takes time, ...envisioned as 4-9 months

  (Spence 1998, p.1)

These constructs of action research theory framed the action learning projects and cycles of reflection on practice and experience for the researcher and the academic staff who were participants in the Staff Development Program and the interview rounds. Action research can be effectively used to help individuals and/or groups to identify and respond to a problem situated in a real organisation with the objective of creating some kind of change to ongoing practice (Dick 1997). In this particular study, the action research objective was to facilitate some kind of change to teaching and learning practice. As this is an educational organisation the learning achieved through action learning by teachers in this program stands to affect the learning of their students in turn. As more successful interactions with people of other cultures is an established objective and measured outcome of most intercultural communication training programs (Brislin & Yoshida 1994), such an outcome can be assumed to be a potential benefit of this intercultural Staff Development Program.

As explained by Dick (1997, p.4), "Action research intends to introduce some

change; action learning uses some intended change as a vehicle for learning through reflection". Specifically for this study the research 'problem' of valuing diversity in an English medium Australian university was shared by all participants and the outcome of the problem solution mattered to the participants which is claimed to be necessary for a successful action learning project (Spence 1998). For participants, the outcomes of action learning may assist them in performing their professional academic practice with less anxiety. Action in professional practice can be performed without reflection and may be performed on an intuitive, rather than a conscious basis resulting in little 'learning'. In action research, reflective cycles of action learning can be explicitly encouraged for research participants. Guidance can be provided on how to consider 'action' through structured reflection and, in turn, how to recognise and articulate learning. This articulated learning then informs the next action and this second phase of action can be again reflected on to create an integrated cycle of action, reflection and learning. Such an integrated cycle of cognitive and affective processing on action has been delineated as follows: "Participatory action research is not just research which we hope will be followed by action! It is action which is researched, changed and re-researched, *within* the research process by participants" (Wadsworth 1998, p.18).

In another influential model, the cyclical nature of learning from experience within professional practice has been popularly understood through the work of David Kolb (1984). This experiential learning cycle is represented below in Figure 2:

EXPERIENCING

PLANNING   REVIEWING

CONCLUDING
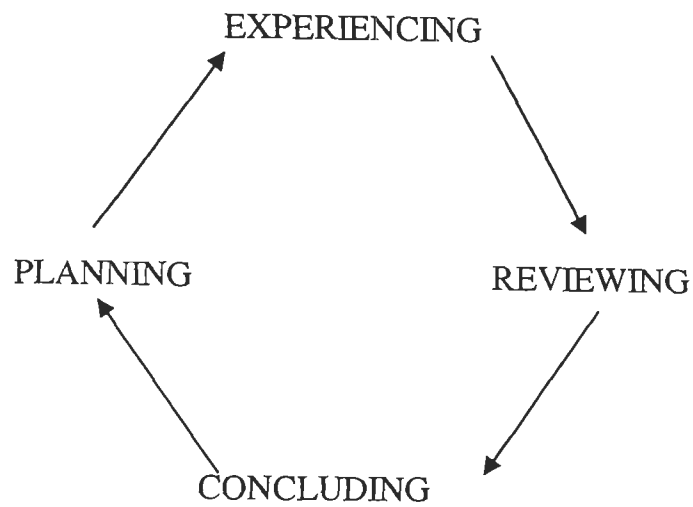
Figure 2: The Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb 1984)

For the study in this thesis, the researcher and the participants had opportunities to
engage in an action research project where action learning was facilitated for
individuals and groups according to guidelines suggested by McNiff (1993),
Spence (1998) and Kolb (1994). In this action research project, some of the
possible action learning cycles for teachers/research participants, including the
researcher, are represented in Figure 3:
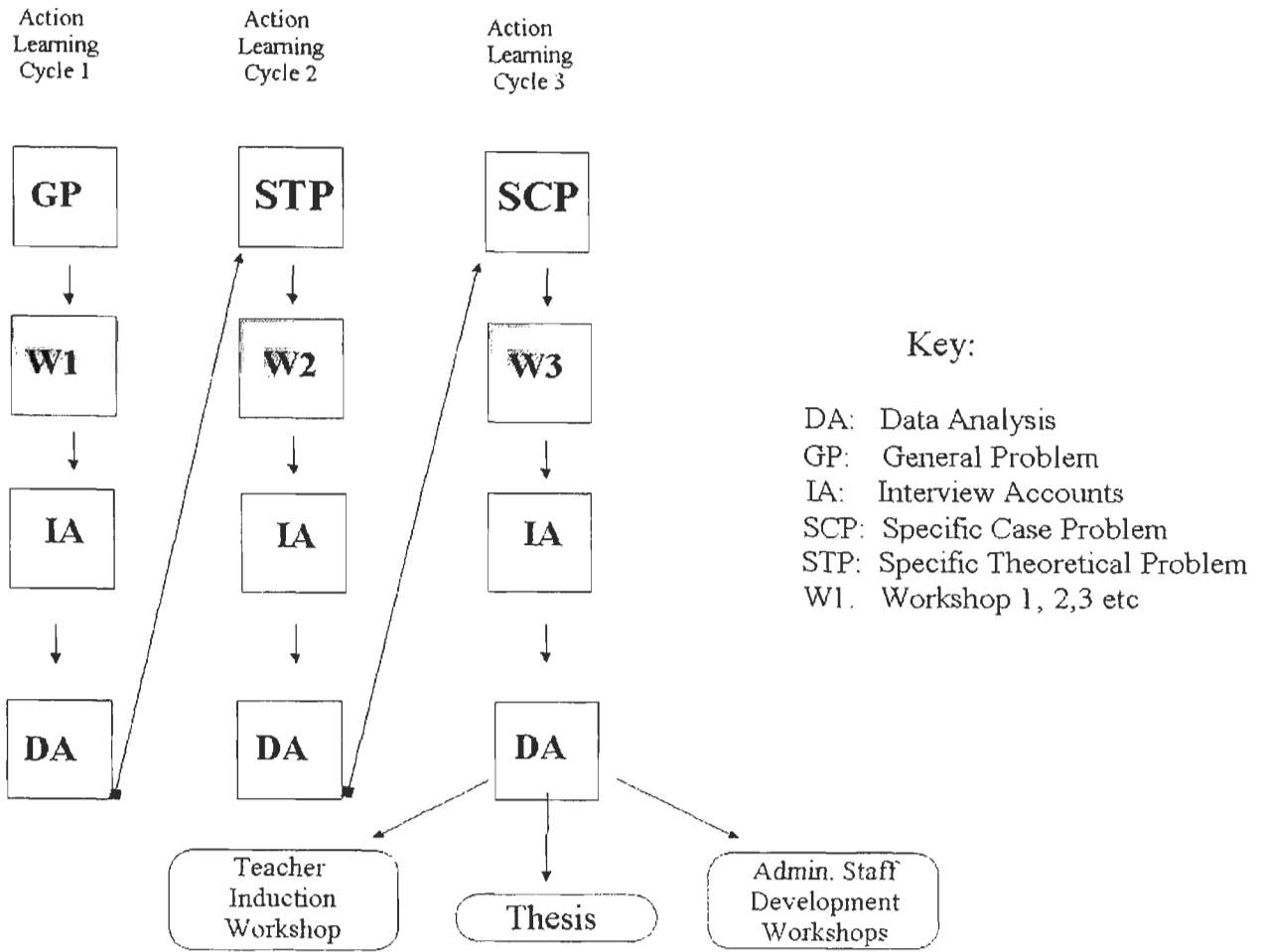
Figure 3: Possible Action Learning Cycles within Action Research Project
for either Researcher or Participants

This Staff Development Program and associated action research schedule ran over a period of nine months or two university semesters. Up to nine months is an effective recommended period for implementation of action learning projects (Spence 1998) and the nine month schedule was an attempt on the part of the researcher to facilitate time and opportunities both for implementation of any learned ideas or concepts in teaching practice and for reflection through interviews and e-discussions. Kolb's experiential learning cycle (1984) shown in Figure 2, in fact, represents *cycles* of learning overlaid (or spiralling) rather than a single, flat circle as professionals constantly engage in this cycle over their careers. Building in the opportunity and time for such reflection did lead to changes in training design and workshop materials for the researcher as pictured in the components in Figure 3.

From teacher commentary collected in pilot interviews, from group discussions in Workshop One (Data Analysis (DA) and also in interviews with participants after Workshop One (Interview Accounts (IA), the researcher was able to select a range of intercultural communication theories that were most usefully related to the specific teaching and learning context. This stage of the research is identified in Figure 3 as the Specific Theoretical Problem at the beginning of a possible second cycle of action learning for both participants and the researcher. Commentary collected from group discussions in Workshop Two and from the interviews with participants after Workshop Two (Interview Accounts (IA) and Data Analysis (DA) in Figure 3) enabled the researcher to construct a *situated* role play scenario, identified in Figure 3 as Specific Case Problem that leads to a third possible cycle of action learning for those involved.

This role play scenario incorporated the kinds of intercultural problems that teachers

were likely to experience in their everyday practice as evident from their commentaries. In this scenario, participants were required to frame responses to these problems from the perspective of the range of significant stake holders including the teachers, the students and the university management group. Initially, this role play was envisaged by the researcher/trainer to be a generalised and futuristic scenario of escalated global diversity. However, in the course of engaging in the workshops and interviewing research participants, the various 'interculturally difficult' scenarios that teachers described in their work experience were elucidated and deemed to provide for a more relevant role play scenario than initially envisaged. In this way, the cyclic patterns of possible action learning represented in Figure 3 meant that the design of the action research project could be modified as it was being implemented to incorporate learned information if needed. In fact, the action research design envisaged as six stages following the pilot interviews in stage one, was not modified. During the progress of the research, teacher participants did report to each other at Workshops and, privately, to the researcher during individual interviews, that they were engaging in personal action learning by reflecting on their teaching style and practices. Teachers reported as action learning outcomes that they had made, or intended to make, various adaptations in response to their experiences of the workshop training and the post training interviews and e-discussions.

Fundamentally, action research endeavours to facilitate change and improvement in the conditions under investigation for the participants involved (Dick 1997; Wadsworth 1998). In the context of intercultural training, Brislin and Yoshida (1994) surveyed evaluations of intercultural training programs conducted by various researchers to identify the range of benefits that can result from such training. Many such benefits (and most intercultural training programs) are designed for and related

to sojourners rather than host culture members. Nevertheless, the benefits gained by the host-culture teachers in this study might be assumed also to benefit the sojourning students as a consequence of their ongoing interaction with the interculturally trained teaching staff. As the main focus of the action research designed for the study in this thesis involved a new staff development program in intercultural training, it was envisaged that the following potential benefits identified by Brislin and Yoshida (1994, pp. 166-170) would be part of participants' learning and would change and improve working conditions for them:

- Increase in development of complex rather than oversimplified thinking about another culture (Gim, Atkinson & Kim 1991; Landis, Day, McGrew, Miller & Thomas 1976; Malpass & Salankik 1977; Wade & Bernstein 1991);

- Increases in the general attitude called 'world-mindedness' as well as greater knowledge about one's own culture (Steinkalk & Taft 1979);

- Greater ability to solve difficult critical incidents that demand a knowledge of culture and cultural differences, and the ability to analyse critical incidents in one's own life (Cushner 1989; Ilola 1989);

- Increase in feelings of self-confidence that allow people to meet the challenges brought on by intercultural contact (O'Brien & Plooij 1976; Worchell & Mitchell 1972);

- Greater enjoyment among people as they interact with hosts (Landis, Brislin & Hulgus 1985; Randolph, Landis & Tzeng 1977);

- Decrease in reported levels of stress (Befus 1988; Johnson 1989);

- Better interpersonal relations in work groups composed of people from different cultural backgrounds (Earley 1987; Fiedler et al. 1971);

- More sophistication when setting and working toward goals in other cultures (Katz 1977), and increase in the ability to formulate solutions to problems (Cushner 1989);

- Better job performance (Earley 1987; Johnson 1989; Westwood & Barker 1990).

Such a range of outcomes has the potential to create personal and professional benefit as well as organisational benefit. It was an intention of the study in this thesis to establish through analysis of evidence derived from interview rounds, e-discussions and researcher notes, if these benefits had been experienced by the participants and the researcher.

3.4 Qualitative Research Design and Interpretive Methods

The qualitative research design incorporated a number of interpretive methods to find out about participant experiences of intercultural education during the action research project. A multidimensional and experiential Staff Development Program was designed by the researcher and interpretive methods were used to explore how this Program affected participants' and the researcher's ongoing experiences of intercultural education. These methods included: conducting three one-hour interviews with each of the twelve research participants held after each of the Workshops One, Two and Three; collecting written notes from Workshop discussion

groups; establishing an email communication list for Workshop participants; recording the researcher's own reactions in a learning journal; observation of research participants by the researcher. Thus, multiple sources of evidence were used, as recommended by Holian (1999): "The use of multiple sources of evidence has been advocated by Yin (1994) as a method of contributing towards validity based on the assumption that multiple data sources of the same phenomenon add up to a 'chain of evidence' which can be shown to underpin concept and theory development" (Holian 1999, p.13). The qualitative research design had the following sources of evidence: researcher's and participants' experiences in the process of design and implementation of a series of three staff development workshops on intercultural training reported through: in-depth interviews with workshop participants; researcher learning journal; email communication list for workshop participants; and workshop participant observation.

3.4.1 Selection of Participants

In the culturally diverse university campus at which this research was situated three main groups were involved in the research as research participants who attended the Staff Development Program of three intercultural workshops. An invitation to participate in this Staff Development Program was issued via email and hard copy (see Appendix 1) to all teaching staff at the campus in the interests of running a democratic program on a voluntary basis. The eleven employees (excluding the researcher) who responded all agreed to participate in the research and represented a group of staff who are involved in one of three different teaching and or training functions that the campus offers. These included: (1) academics who lecture and tutor Faculty courses; (2) learning support tutors who provide academic skills classes and individual guidance to students enrolled in any Faculty, and; (3) Student Training

and Education Program staff, who provide training and assistance for students so that they are work-ready. In the analysis of the evidence collected for this thesis these research participants are referred to collectively as 'teachers'.

These participants fulfilled the following criteria recommended by Laverty (2003): "The aim in participant selection in phenomenological and hermeneutic phenomenological research is to select participants who have lived experience that is the focus of the study, who are willing to talk about their experience, and who are diverse enough from one another to enhance possibilities of rich and unique stories of particular experience" (Laverty 2003, p. 6). The twelve research participants (including researcher) were all teachers and included three males and nine females. All research participants were Australian residents of diverse cultural backgrounds including Australian, British, Indian and Irish. All research participants were employed full time or part time in a teaching capacity in the case study campus. Ages ranged from 30 to 59 years. All participants except for one were from an English speaking background. The 'NESB' participant was born in India and therefore was brought up in an environment where English was one of three languages in daily use. Three research participants had functional fluency (or better) in one or more languages other than English.

3.4.2 Description of the Design of the Multidimensional and Experiential Staff Development Training Program

As explained in Chapter 2, Section 2.10, the approach adopted for designing a series of intercultural training workshops as part of the action research was multidimensional and experiential. It was also recognised that two popular and complementary objectives to experiential learning have included pursuing learner-

centred activities (J.M.Bennet 1986) and increasing self-awareness (Weil & McGill 1989). Many intercultural theorists have argued that intercultural training is as much about the self as the other and the 'self-awareness' model of intercultural training promotes increased self-awareness as a core outcome of training. In addition, an individual's experience of cross cultural immersion in an unknown 'society' is by its nature a learner-centred experience where there is, conventionally, no intercultural teacher or classroom. The learner is not under instruction but *in* the experience. In this study, the student population is in a complex position where students are learning experientially about the new social and academic cultural norms and values that define Australian society and university. They are also studying formally under a teacher within specific professional fields for academic awards. The teachers/ research participants are engaged in a learner-centred, experiential environment at their workplace where they are learning to adapt their academic practices and expectations to a changing audience. This intercultural Staff Development Program sought to create learner-centred activities and facilitate participant development of self awareness as both appropriate experiential learning objectives and also fundamental intercultural training objectives.

Further to the model in Figure 2, experiential learning is also defined as a four part learning process by Fry and Kolb (in J.M. Bennet 1986, p.119) involving for the workshop participants and researcher:

1. active involvement in new experiences (such as the Unicult simulation in Workshop One);
2. reflecting on these experiences (such as participant discussion and consideration of student as 'multilingual or bilingual hero-sojourner' in

Workshop One, interviews, learning journal and e-discussion. The training

program was a series of three workshops scheduled over nine months

(February to December, 2003) in order to allow time for continuing practice

and professional reflection).

3. integrating observations into logically sound theories (such as participants

    applying intercultural theories to their own experiences in Workshop Two)

4. building on this knowledge with problem solving (such as teachers' critical

    incident narratives,Unicult hypothetical scenario and role play in Workshops

    Two and Three).

Whereas "a single training modality puts clear boundaries on the effectiveness of the

program" (J.M. Bennet 1986, p. 130), multidimensional approaches can provide

abstract theoretical content. In this case there were culture-general indicators or

catalogues representing group beliefs about claims to knowledge, as well as more

learner-centred models of understanding intercultural experience focusing on the

experience of the individual, such as, the hero-model (Hart 1999), the W curve

(Gullahorn & Gullahorn 1963) and M. Bennet's continuum (M. Bennet 1986). All of

these approaches emphasise individual experience, affective aspects of crossing

culture and empathy for the sojourner. How experiential learning was facilitated for

participants in the intercultural training program designed for staff development is

explained in the next section.

3.4.2.1 Description of Staff Development Training Workshops

Workshop One: Two hours February 2003

The objective of Workshop One was to develop awareness of intercultural issues and

problems in teaching and learning at university through a simulation of the culturally

'unconventional' and only partly-comprehensible experience of a first lecture for new international students at Australian university. The simulation took the form of an oral presentation by the researcher in role as a University Representative of Unicult welcoming new students (see Appendix 2) and a form-filling exercise by the participants in role as new students at Unicult (see Appendix 3). Following this a group discussion was held focusing on questions seeking to investigate the affective and cognitive aspects of the experience and to help establish or challenge some current teacher perceptions of their sojourning students (see Appendix 4). The questions also sought ideas to generate strategies for facilitating positive feelings in a cognitively difficult context.

In the next stage of Workshop One, the W curve concept developed by Gullahorn & Gullahorn (1963) (see Hart 1999, p.6) and Campbell's (1949) 'hero's model' (see Hart 1999, p.7) were outlined for participants (see Appendix 5) and they were asked to identify intercultural experiences of their students or themselves that might reflect the patterns or phases outlined by these models. The participants were then presented with a diagram of M. Bennet's continuum of intercultural sensitivity (1986 and see Appendix 6) and asked to try to identify for themselves where they might sit along it. They returned to this continuum in Workshop Three and in the sequence of interviews following the Workshops. At the end of Workshop One as preparation for Workshop Two, they were asked to write a brief narrative of a critical incident from their teaching experience that they considered to be interculturally difficult or complex to bring to Workshop Two for recounting in twelve weeks time. Three different handouts summarising some accessible elements of the intercultural theories of Hofstede (1984) (power-distance tolerance in Lustig & Koester 2003, p.117-118), Hall (1976) (high context/low context cultures in Lustig & Koester 2003, p.111-114)

and Stewart (1972) (activity orientation in Lustig & Koester 2003, p.94-96) were posted to all participants on the email communication list following Workshop One and they were asked to read them prior to Workshop Two.

Workshop Two: Two hours June 2003

Workshop Two started with a recount of the narratives of critical intercultural experiences teachers had in their academic practice. Then, three small groups were formed. Each group was allocated one of the three intercultural theory handouts from the email communication list posting and discussed the applications of this theory to their own critical incident. Small groups then gave feedback to the whole workshop group. Through this process participants had opportunities to build culture-general knowledge to use to practise further applications of such theoretical knowledge to other real life problems over the next two months before Workshop Three.

Workshop Three: Two hours November 2003

Firstly, in Workshop Three, small groups were formed to brainstorm some principles and strategies for good intercultural teaching and learning experiences that had arisen from participants reflecting on and applying the theoretical knowledge gained in Workshop Two to real life classes during the past four months. These 'rules' were written up on a white board and remained there for the role-play activity that followed.

Workshop Three continued the Unicult simulation introduced in Workshop One by offering a problem solving, role-play activity involving a hypothetical intercultural scenario at the university campus, Unicult. It was a situation where cultural differences had created an intercultural crisis at Unicult (see Appendix 7). The

workshop participants read the case-study scenario, were randomly allocated to one

of three groups and discussed/devised an interculturally aware and sensitive response

to the crisis. Each group 'elected' a spokesperson by scissor/paper/rock elimination

game and then the role play began with each spokesperson representing the case for

their particular group. Groups recorded their own agreed rules for good intercultural

teaching and learning experiences on the white board to guide them. Following this

role play a number of group discussion questions were asked (see Appendix 7) to

stimulate group reflection on the ubiquitous nature of culture as the 'software of the

mind' (Hofstede 1984). This final workshop offered opportunities for learner

participation and skills practice to a limited extent in a safe 'fictional' space. Role

play was appropriate for the final workshop as the groups had formed for prior

activities and were familiar with each other. It also allowed for some fun and some

make believe which was a good wind down for the intercultural training program.

Such design of the training program intervention was intended to achieve a

multidimensional approach that "attempts cognitive, affective, and behavioural goals,

with culture-specific and culture-general content, using both experiential and

intellectual approaches" (J.M. Bennet 1986, p.131). This research design created

opportunities for the researcher to seek feedback as evidence from participants in an

ongoing manner and in various formats as described in the next section.

3.4.3 In-depth interviews

At Workshop One participants were asked whether they also wanted to be research

participants and all twelve workshop participants voluntarily consented to take part

in the research (see sample Consent Form Appendix 9). The researcher conducted

one-to-one, semi-structured interviews with each participant within approximately eight weeks of each workshop. Semi-structured interviewing allowed participants themselves to identify what were the intercultural issues, problems and benefits of their work without the interviewer imposing a highly organising structure on participants' experience and understanding of the issues. In these interviews, the researcher adopted the following guidelines:

> Typically qualitative, in-depth interviews are much more like conversations than formal events with predetermined response categories. The researcher explores a few general topics to help uncover the participant's meaning perspective, but otherwise respects how the participant frames and structures the responses ...the participant's perspective on the phenomenon of interest should unfold as the participant views it not as the researcher views it (Marshall & Rossman 1995, p.81).

Each of the three interviews for each participant (excluding the researcher) lasted approximately one hour. Thirty-three interviews were audiotaped and transcribed by the researcher. Some guiding questions used for these interviews are included in Appendix 8. Generally, within the three interviews each participant was encouraged to expand on ideas or concepts, provide clarification through example and anecdote and explain in detail his/her experiences of the intercultural nature of university work as well as of the Staff Development Program. Such openness to interviewees' own directions in conversations is an interpretive strategy for staying as near the lived

experience as possible which is the central concern of phenomenology (Conroy 2003; Laverty 2003).

3.4.4 Email communication list

In addition to interviews, feedback and clarification from participants were sought as evidence through an email communication list set up for the entire nine month period over which the research was conducted. This list allowed the researcher to share readings, relevant quotations and relevant research data, and also to ask questions of particular participants as needed. An important element for action research and learning as well as experiential learning is the practice of reflection. This is often explained as a cycle whereby there is action (in this case participating in a workshop) and then there is reflection (facilitated at interview); followed by further action and time for reflection, and so on. Reflection during action and then further action and reflection takes time. The email communication list assisted the researcher to retain a facility for ongoing communication with research participants and vice versa over an extended period of time. In this case the period was a total of nine months with three workshops and three interview rounds that facilitated both reflection and participation. This practice was designed according to the research paradigm of hermeneutical phenomenology where, "Ongoing interaction engenders reflection and active dialogue within the narrative sessions, the research process, and continual reinterpretation of the world. It includes sharing personal values, beliefs and assumptions and reflections between participants and researcher" (Conroy 2003, p.5). Whilst in-depth interviews provided excellent vehicles for focused and intense reflection, the email communication list allowed for less structured reflection and association of ideas and activity over a longer period of time.

The evolving practice of collaborating through computer mediated communication modes in all organisations, including teaching and learning institutions, is an increasingly important topic of research (Haythornwaite 2005). Email communication was employed primarily by the researcher in this study as a strategic tool to efficiently disseminate written information, both logistic and academic, to the network of research participants. Whilst the communication mode of email itself dramatically affects the manner in which people exchange information, for example, the practice of coding non-verbal messages into written or graphic forms (Suler 2003), the specific effects of email as a computer mediated form of communication were not examined in this study. Hence, the content of email messages sent and received by the researcher and research participants were reviewed as part of the evidence collected but the *effects* of the computer mediated mode on the actual messages were not examined.

The email discussion list created a facility for the researcher to share and check some interpretations of these reflections with a participant in order to verify an individual's meanings or statements. This was an important facility for an interpretive researcher attempting to identify valid findings in accordance with guidelines given by Holian (1999):

> In action research and co-operative inquiry two-way
> positive and negative feedback loops and action-
> reflection-analysis cycles are used to enhance validity
> by successive movement towards a best available
> description, explanation and plan for action. Ongoing
> reflection can be used to examine and judge how 'well

founded' aspects of descriptions are and how well they fit with the rest of the theory emerging from the data. (Holian 1999, p.13).

Approximately 3000 words of emailed contributions were collected by the researcher. A further qualitative research method of participant observation was deployed in collection of data for the thesis in this study.

3.4.5 Participant Observation

This project also involved the interpretive research method of participant observation and the researcher kept a learning journal of notes derived from her own observations and experiences of the three intercultural training workshops as both a participant herself and as an observer of the other workshop participants.

As a participant observer in the research process the researcher's background or 'historicality' in phenomenological terms can affect the research and it was requisite that the researcher reflected consciously on how this was happening at regular points over the research period. Hermeneutic phenomenology denies the possibility of a researcher bracketing their own assumptions and biases as Husserl (1980) advocated in phenomenological research methods. Instead, "the researcher is called on an ongoing basis, to give considerable thought to their own experience and to explicitly claim the ways in which their position or experience relates to the issues being researched" (Laverty 2003 p. 5). A reflective learning journal is a recommended tool for such record of researcher perspective on the experience of the research and featured as a source of evidence to be reported as part of the research findings. Action research is fundamentally about participation and the researcher is not immune to this

fundamental requirement as expressed by Holian (1999):

> As an action researcher who explores issues in your
> own organisation you are a participant first, prior to,
> during and (usually) after the research. As such you
> have a history with the group you study; know the
> native language, know who are the key stake holders
> and you can bring retrospective observations into the
> analysis of current issues (Holian 1999, p.4).

The researcher recognised these levels of participation and the researcher's role, participation in the research and level of participation were made explicit to research participants in the invitation to recruit participants (see Appendix 1).

3.5 Collection of evidence and analysis

Thirty-three interviews with research participants (3 interviews with each of 11 participants) were audio-taped (with permission) for later transcription. The researcher analysed transcripts from interviews, the researcher's observational notes of workshop discussion groups in all three workshops, the researcher's own reflections in a learning journal, and e-discussion commentary for emerging themes, metaphors and language patterns that related to each of the seven main Research Questions and sub-questions. Conroy (2003) has provided useful guidelines for interpretive analysis of qualitative evidence:

> IP [Interpretive phenomenological] researchers should
> look for themes, paradigms and exemplars. All three

constitute ways of thought and/or action, implying consistency within any given example or person of a recurrent thematic way of thinking. However it is also important from an interpretive approach to seek out modalities and fluctuations in any person's ways of thinking. This would reflect how people incorporate and respond to their unsettled sense of existence in the world (Conroy 2003, p. 1).

All transcripts and e-discussion contributions were linked to an individual participant by the following code: ALA, ALB, ALC, ALD (4 Academic Lecturers); LSTA, LSTB, LSTC, LSTD, LSTE (5 Learning Skills Tutors); LSTR (1 Learning Skills Tutor and Researcher); and VTA, VTB: (2 Vocational Trainers). These coded, de-identified transcripts and emails and other sources of evidence have been stored securely in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's home office.

Participants' evaluations of each of the three Workshops as expressed in the transcripts from in-depth interviews were analysed to identify participants' perceptions of the three intercultural training workshops in terms of pedagogy and materials as well as intercultural content and topics. All data collected from sources of evidence was also analysed to find out how this training could influence teaching practice and satisfaction. It was envisaged that from this research an ongoing internal professional development program in intercultural teaching and learning skills would become part of continuing organisational staff development.

Once transcribed, interview accounts were read to identify common themes and

metaphors used to describe international students and teaching and learning problems in the case study campus. A colour coding system was used to distinguish commonly themed commentary. This commentary was then synthesized according to thematic topic and the comments de-identified to be reported as major findings. In order to preserve the complexity of the data, the researcher made extensive use of participants' comments in discussion of the value of intercultural communication theories incorporated in the training program as well as in relation to meeting the objectives of the training program and the aims of the research.

3.6 Ethical Issues

This Staff Development Program required teachers to temporarily tolerate levels of uncertainty that may have made them uncomfortable. Workshop participants (all of whom were also research participants) may have experienced anxiety in discussing some of the topics and participating in some of the workshop activities related to intercultural communication in the university system. However, anxiety as it is generated by intercultural interaction is an everyday risk for these teachers and support staff. Emotional response is an important and necessary part of intercultural communication and it is to be expected that not all emotions generated during/after training will always be positive. The emotional aspect of intercultural communication was the focus of Workshop One. The knowledge/skill development component of the Program increasingly allowed participants to recognize and 'manage' emotional responses to cultural and linguistic difference.

Approval for this project was given by the University of Technology, Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix 10). The project also received written approval from the Campus Director of the case study university. It was an

ethical principle to invite all campus academic and academic support staff (approximately 100) to participate voluntarily in the Staff Development Program of three intercultural training workshops. An invitation was thus addressed to approximately 100 staff by hard copy or email (see Appendix 1). Interested participants were asked to respond confidentially to the researcher. All volunteers were given the opportunity to participate in the workshops and/or to participate in the research study. The doctoral research connected to the workshops was mentioned both in the invitation and at Workshop One.

In fact, all the workshop participants also volunteered as research participants and were asked to sign a consent form which accompanied the information sheet/ invitation (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 9). Participants were able to consent fully. For any workshop participant who agreed to be part of the research project, the commitment was six hours total for the workshops and a series of three one-hour interviews over the nine months of the research study and optional participation in an ongoing email discussion group. Research took place on Campus in workshop classrooms, in a private office (interviews) and over the intranet via email list. Participants could withdraw from the research at any time without giving a reason while still remaining as workshop participants. Any information contributed by a participant who withdrew from the study could have been easily removed from the sources of evidence. No video recordings were made of the workshops to facilitate open discussion and gain trust in a 'safe learning environment'. During the course of the research, none of the participants withdrew from the study and they attended all three workshops.

Training encourages teachers to engage in open discussion of the problems that they have in their classrooms related to cultural and linguistic diversity and share the strategies that they use to address these problems. Teacher employment security could be affected by attributed statement of personal beliefs about cultural difference and university teaching. For this reason confidentiality in reporting results was very important in the research design. Interviews conducted after the workshops seeking the participants' views and reactions were confidential. The researcher requested voluntary exclusion of the Sub Deans from the training workshops to encourage open discussion amongst same-level academics without fear of employer reprisal for views expressed that may not be consistent with management line. The participants might be professionally harmed if they were identifiable in the data as speaking critically of their employer, if they offered sensitive information or they offered information which was confidential to the campus. Confidential information was not included in the collection of qualitative evidence for analysis in this thesis or published papers and guidance on confidential information was sought by the researcher from the Campus Director.

The researcher's position on the Campus was as the Manager of the Learning Skills Unit (LSU) and, as such, she was not in a position of authority over the majority of the participants who were professionally responsible to their respective Faculty Sub-Deans. Consequently, the researcher did not anticipate or experience anxiety in this respect from most members of the group. Several Workshop and research participants were under the management of the researcher as Learning Skills Unit (LSU) Manager and these staff volunteered their participation in Workshops and in the research process. An important concern for the researcher then was to acknowledge and consciously reflect on her professional relationship with these staff

over the course of this study. The researcher's objective was to contribute to shared understanding of intercultural issues across various aspects of academic practice and hence, build team cohesiveness in this respect. The endeavour involved an element of risk for the researcher's staff as she was in a position of authority over them. Hence, the researcher made explicit efforts in workshops and interviews to separate the role as researcher from the role as Manager of a department. The other teacher-participants might have recognised the researcher as the LSU Manager which is a professional support role for teachers and students. Participants who knew the researcher fairly well may have felt an obligation to attend. In the invitation information and at the training workshops it was emphasised that participation was voluntary, that all reporting was de-identified, and that participants could withdraw from the training program and/or the research study at any time without giving a reason (see Participant Consent Form in Appendix 9) .

It was possible for the researcher to identify the participants to the extent that she was able to recall individual interviews and interactions that took place over the course of the training Workshops and the training program evaluations. Although the research could not be anonymous, it was fully-confidential. Names do not appear on unpublished notes and transcripts. Audio tapes, transcripts and other sources of data were locked away in a secure location. Research participants were de-identified in writing the results to protect them from possible recognition and repercussion in relation to the employer.

In the investigation carried out for this thesis teachers have only been identified as part of a large teaching group at an Australian metropolitan campus. The identity of the campus itself was kept confidential and functioned as a case study at an

unidentified Australian university in a metropolitan area.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter an explanation and justification has been given for the qualitative research design of this interpretive study of teachers' perceptions of intercultural awareness and sensitivity in higher education according to a phenomenological investigation of participants' perceptions of issues and learning experiences. The action research model adopted for the study has been described and justified for addressing a research problem concerning development of knowledge and skills by university participants. In particular, the design of the Staff Development Program developed and implemented as part of the investigation was justified as involving multidimensional teaching and learning objectives which included a provision for both experiential and intellectual learning. Qualitative research methods of training intervention, in-depth interviews of workshop participants, participant observation and email communication list have been outlined as multiple sources of evidence. Ethical issues involved in this research were concerned with instituting an appropriate and equitable means of representative recruitment and selection of research participants, ensuring confidentiality for the participants and the institution and minimising risks especially for the jobs and reputations of employees at the case study campus.

In the next chapter, results from the various sources of evidence are described and analysed with respect to the Research Questions.

Chapter 4: Results and Analysis

In Chapter Three the interpretive research methodology used for the study reported in this thesis was described and justified. In this chapter the findings from multiple sources of data have been combined to identify teachers' perspectives on common issues and beliefs in relation to intercultural awareness and sensitivity in Australian universities and impacts of training for professional practice of teachers. A Staff Development training program of three workshops, in-depth interviews of workshop participants, participant observation and an e-discussion forum were the sources of evidence. Eleven participants attended three interactive workshops designed in consultation with the researcher. The researcher kept records of her own and participants' reactions and commentary during these workshops. Interviews conducted with each of the eleven participants after each workshop were semi-structured and the seven main Research Questions identified in Chapter Three were posed for all participants during this process. Participants were also encouraged to identify for themselves and discuss in interviews any topics or issues that they saw as relevant to intercultural awareness and sensitivity in university practice. The researcher, as participant observer, contributed interactively in workshops, interviews and the e-discussion forum. Selected comments from the eleven participants, as well as the researcher have been reported to illustrate key themes supported by the evidence in answer to the Research Questions.

In the following analysis and discussion of results, participants and the researcher are identified by the following codes:

AL: Academic Lecturer (4 participants):ALA, ALB, ALC, ALD,

LST: Learning Skills Tutor (5 participants): LSTA, LSTB, LSTC, LSTD, LSTE

LSTR: Learning Skills Tutor and Researcher (1 participant): LSTR

VT: Vocational Trainer (2 participants): VTA, VTB

Results are discussed and analysed in the following seven sections each addressing one of seven Research Questions and sub questions indicated in Chapter Three.

4.1 Teachers' intercultural sensitivity and awareness (Research Question 1)

In this section the results for Research Question 1 and three sub-questions 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3, are described and discussed. In order to assess the impact of training on intercultural sensitivity and awareness, it is useful for both the researcher and the participants to have an understanding of the degree of sensitivity and awareness participants felt that they had already developed in their working lives. M. Bennet's continuum (1986 in Appendix 6) was selected as an heuristic, visual model by which teachers were asked to self assess. Prior training in intercultural awareness, sensitivity and communication may have differentiated the outcomes of training for participants and was, therefore, useful information for this thesis. In addition, a discussion of prior training formats and outcomes would facilitate a better understanding of which training formats work best and why. In particular, it was an objective of this study to establish whether a multidimensional experiential training program designed to address the specific needs of Australian university teachers with international students was an effective training format for development of intercultural sensitivity and awareness.

Research Question 1: What intercultural sensitivity and awareness and did teachers have prior to training?

Prior to training, teachers assessed their own intercultural sensitivity and awareness

as being affected by: cross cultural experiences; informal learning of culture-general and culture-specific information where culture-general awareness was linked to self-awareness and culture-specific information was linked to culture-general understanding; ability to negotiate culturally identified gender; experiences of culture shock , disbelief and credibility; miscommunication based on challenges to Australian assumptions and beliefs; and sensitivity to cultural difference.

Cross cultural experiences build intercultural awareness and sensitivity

In interviews all eleven participants were asked to assess their own intercultural sensitivity and awareness and were also asked to position themselves on M. Bennet's continuum of intercultural sensitivity (1986 in Appendix 6) which they were introduced to in Workshop One. Most participants, when asked to discuss their own degree of intercultural awareness and sensitivity recounted episodes from their lives that they perceived as critical to development of their awareness of cultural difference and their sensitivity to some of the effects of intercultural experience. Six of the eleven research participants were migrants to Australia from Africa, England, India and Ireland. The other five participants were Australian born. Two of these Australian born participants described a highly multicultural childhood in Australia and felt that this experience had been fundamental to their development of intercultural awareness and sensitivity. Three of the Australian born participants had travelled, two extensively, for extended periods overseas and spoke of these experiences as useful in terms of the empathy they felt for the experiences of international students. The migrant Australian participants also referred to their own cross cultural experience of moving to Australia and all participants referred to experiential learning rather than formal learning when describing any development in their own intercultural awareness and sensitivity, although some participants had

undertaken some degree of formal intercultural learning. The informal experiences of mixing with culturally different people whether as a host in a culture or as a sojourner or migrant were perceived to be useful to development of intercultural awareness and sensitivity:

> ALA: I can remember when I was very little at Redleaf pool...someone ran past and dived in the water and there was all this splashing and I heard this term, and it was something about the tone, something about "refo." And I asked my dad, "What's 'refo' dad?" And my father explained that refo was short for refugee and these people were very brave and had come out with only the clothes that they stand up in, and we welcome them, must be very kind to them and be friends with them. "And if I ever catch you using the term refo, I'll tan the hide off you." And I thought even then, you don't have to do that, I like all this cultural difference.

Intergroup contact between people of different cultural origins has been identified in social science research as an effective method of reducing racial and ethnic prejudice (see Gudykunst & Kim 1997 and Judkins & Lahurd 1999). Intercultural experience itself, whether through migration, travel overseas, or domestic interaction with culturally different groups, was deemed by most participants to build intercultural awareness and sensitivity. Therefore, whilst it may be true that "Intercultural sensitivity is not natural" (Landis & Bhagat 1996, p.148) it can be developed informally through life experience as well as formally in training and education.

Informal intercultural learning of culture-general and culture-specific
information

All of the participants expressed pleasure at having an opportunity to learn about other cultures whilst at work by interacting with them. Many reported learning a great deal of culture-specific information and some fundamental culture-general concepts on the job. The culture-specific ability to recognise people from different cultural groups was highly valued by the majority of participants:

> LSTB: When I first started working here six years ago,
> I couldn't tell Asian cultures apart but now I can tell a
> Taiwanese Chinese, from a Hong Kong Chinese from a
> mainland Chinese ... Don't worry, you are still new
> here, in a year or so I will be able to say to you where
> is that person from? And you will say, Korea,
> probably the south. You learn so much here and I owe
> a massive debt to this place in terms of intercultural
> learning...

Indeed, the inability to distinguish cultural groups was reported to be an issue of concern and anxiety for teachers.

> LSTC: There are so many cultures, there is a need to
> understand and be able to recognise them, ...I
> remember it surprised me in the first week or two and I
> still haven't got it. Sorry to generalise but to recognise
> people as where they are from and be able to

distinguish is important.

Culture-general awareness linked to self-awareness

Also perceived as valuable was a culture-general awareness developed through professional contact with so many diverse cultural groups that one's own paradigms and systems for interpreting the world are culture-specific and not necessarily shared by others. This is a central learning objective of the self-awareness model of intercultural training (J.M. Bennet 1986) where participants are encouraged to become more conscious of their own feelings, emotions and responses in order that they might understand themselves and hence, their own culture better. Gudykunst (2003) has argued that such self awareness makes an individual more effective abroad and one would assume, more effective in any culturally diverse context. It seems possible that this element of self-awareness is developed incidentally in the process of continuing intercultural interaction.

Culture-specific information linked to culture-general understanding

People who learn culture-specific information from social interaction with people of other cultural groups are able to develop a degree of culture-general understanding in the sense that they tend to recontextualise their own culturally engendered beliefs and values as one of a number of alternative positions. Another culture-general lesson identified by participants was discovering through travelling into another culture that some of one's own culturally-blinkered perceptions were equally operative for the other cultural group in the exchange. One participant told the story of her trip to China with her sister. At the end of a week, when she and her sister swapped earrings, their guide repeatedly confused them.

LSTR: My sister and I looked very different: she had dark hair and dark eyes, I had blonde hair and lighter eyes, she is a few inches taller than me. I couldn't believe it when I realised that he had been telling us apart by our earrings for a whole week! That old racist saying or stereotype, you know: 'they all look the same to me'... I thought, there you go! I was shocked that the 'others' couldn't tell westerners apart! Then I thought well why would we be different?

Negotiating culturally identified gender

This inability to distinguish and interpret the specific signs of various cultural groups was reported by several participants in interviews as sometimes resulting in an inability to identify gender which caused even greater anxiety for teachers who were unable to select from the two available English pronouns of 'he' or 'she' in their conversations with students. All participants reported at least one occasion where they had been too uncertain of gender to communicate comfortably with a student from another culture. Wrongly identifying an individual's culture or gender was perceived to be culturally insensitive and highly discomfiting. Strategies suggested for avoiding such faux pas were questioning, or asking the student where they are from. This move supports Gudykunst's (2003) recommendation for asking for and confirming people's own perceptions of their cultural/subcultural identity rather than imposing cultural identities on others. However, participants pointed out that eliciting information that seeks to identify gender is not socially acceptable and error in assuming gender can result in gross insult given that gender differentiation is one of the most important socialisation processes in any society (Cassel 2004). Future

research may focus on how intercultural participants can successfully negotiate uncertainties about gender identity in their communications across culture.

Culture shock, disbelief and credibility

Overseas sojourning was a common experience for four of the research participants. These were professional sojourns involving working in other cultures, usually as teachers. Participants referred to these experiences as fundamental to their development of intercultural awareness. Surprisingly perhaps, a significantly intense experience of culture shock was reported by those participants who crossed into other English speaking cultures, such as the USA and the UK, which they found, nevertheless, quite alien. One of the Learning Skills Tutors said that America ' nearly did my head in'.

> LSTB: I was an English speaker and purposefully
> went there because I had grown up listening to
> American music, watching American TV , films and
> reading American politics. I thought, there will be a bit
> of culture shock but I will be OK. But I couldn't
> believe it. ....It is not simply a case of... studying...
> friends, things like that. My greatest problem in US
> was food. I couldn't get anything I liked to eat. ..that's
> Already one major problem, a really basic thing.
> Drinking, eating

An element of disbelief was common to participants' experiences of other cultures, including the USA. An academic participant described his perception of American

culture as having a credibility problem: "they definitely seem to be less critical in terms of analysing what is going on around them and more accepting of some aspects."

> ALB: I was there when Reagan was getting elected for
> the second time and the ad campaigns were laughable…
> I was thinking nobody believes that crap but looking
> around, yep, they are believing it.

Challenges to basic Australian assumptions and beliefs leading to miscommunication

Others sojourned into non English speaking countries and experienced more radical difference and definite contrasts to their basic assumptions and beliefs as Australians:

> ALA: In the BBC when one of my colleagues was
> trying to set up a whole Kabuki production they had
> lots of conversations with this Japanese drama
> company saying look we need to film this and do that
> and can you help us by providing this and that? They
> said yes, yes. They flew the crew out and nothing was
> there. The Brits were furious: 'You said Yes, you
> could do it!' What the Japanese had meant was 'Yes, I
> hear you'. They couldn't provide and they didn't say
> 'sorry we can't provide that', because that loses face. I
> said to my Japanese interpreter well what happens

when they realise that we realise that they didn't or

couldn't do what they said they could do? Isn't that

more loss of face?

Although it seems clear that the Japanese crew in this scenario never, in fact, said that
they could do the production, only that they could understand the requests, the
Australian involved tends to imagine the Japanese position as if it were an Australian
position. An Australian 'yes' is different to a Japanese 'yes' which makes the
Australian's final question redundant. They will not have the 'realisation' that she is
modeling because for them, that is not what happened; that is, it is not an account of
the 'real'. This is an example of the profound influence culture has on perception of
meaning (Brislin 2000; O'Sullivan 1994; Samovar & Porter 2003), in this case the
different meanings of 'yes' in a cross cultural business agreement, and also of the
subterranean misunderstandings that can underscore what appears to be a clear cross-
cultural understanding. If you do not know that 'yes' has a different meaning for
your cross-cultural correspondent, then you cannot be aware that you have different
perceptions of the meaning to an agreement. That awareness only strikes when a
whole accompaniment of other signs such as missing equipment and resources
emerge.

Not only do intercultural communicators often "have no way of knowing how the
other is interpreting reasons for their misunderstandings" (Brislin 2000, p.3) for
example, the Japanese crew may never understand that their Australian/British
partners interpreted their behaviour as remiss, they may not even be aware that a
misunderstanding existed. "Culture consists of ideals, values and assumptions about
life that people widely share and that guide specific behaviours. Yet these are

invisible elements," (Brislin 2000, p. 5). This anecdote illustrates the difficulty in identifying and interpreting miscommunication across cultures but also the frustration involved in becoming aware of such fundamental and potentially disastrous differences in understanding in-situ, experientially, and without the advantage of intercultural training.

Adaptation to Australian culture, beliefs and values

Migrant participants reported their own and their families' and friends' experiences of adapting to Australian culture when asked about their perceptions of intercultural sensitivity and awareness. One participant's story illustrates well the profound dislocation involved in crossing culture as well as the risk in trying to negotiate the invisible assumptions of the world around you:

> AM: This is a very good example actually... one of my friend's friends they migrated to Australian and they didn't know anyone and they couldn't contact anyone. They were very bold to come to Australia and they had a new born baby. You wouldn't believe they spent three nights in a portico ...like a bus shelter. And they didn't know where to buy breads from because in India you don't buy breads from a supermarket. You buy it in a breads shop. Nowadays, it is building up the concept of supermarket, but mainly there you have a shop for bread, a shop for this , a shop for that,...So they stayed for three days in a portico! They didn't know where to

go and they had a new born baby and they didn't know

where to buy bread from. And they literally had to ask

a man going on the road: "Hey, could you please help

us buy?'" and they couldn't speak the accent: (slowly)

"Could you please help buying us bread?' And he

says, "Yes, you go to Woolies!" "What is this

Woolies? I haven't heard this name before, what is this

Woolies?" And the man says, "Oh you go to Woolies

and he passed, you know, he said: 'OK, bye, bye, you

go to Woolies'. Now this man is thinking, 'What is this

Woolies? Bloody Woolies, where to find this Woolies?'

Can you understand that? They were totally

devastated.

All participants were able to recount intercultural experiences either at work or in

general social interactions. All participants were able to demonstrate some degree of

intercultural awareness in interviews by being able to identify an intercultural

scenario from their experience and describe the behaviours in terms of culturally

different beliefs or values. Each of these stories involved interaction between two

specific cultural groups. Participants generally displayed high levels of cultural self

awareness by appreciating that their own values and beliefs were not necessarily

shared by other cultural groups. No participants introduced culture-general theories

to explain the cultural and communicative differences in the stories that they related

in interviews prior to Workshop Two where some of these theories were circulated.

Participants displayed culture-specific awareness but not culture-general awareness

in their initial interviews.

Sensitivity to cultural difference

All participants displayed some sensitivity to cultural difference or "readiness to understand and appreciate cultural differences in intercultural communication" (Chen & Starosta 1996 in Samovar & Porter 2003, p.344). A common element in these narratives was the element of disbelief experienced when crossing culture. 'I couldn't believe it', was a term that the majority of participants used to describe their feelings about another cultural group's conventions for behaviour. Culture has been defined as "a pattern of values, attitudes, beliefs and effects," (Irwin 1996, p.111) and the pivotal role of 'belief' in this cultural formula that makes us who we are, was emphasised by participants who all experienced a loss of 'belief' or a dramatic experience of uncertainty that the real was 'real' when they tried to cross culture.

Research Question 1.1: Is M. Bennet's continuum of intercultural sensitivity (1986) a helpful concept? How? What factors may impact on a teacher's passage along this continuum?

M. Bennet's (1986) continuum was incorporated in Workshop One to assist teachers to evaluate their own personal and professional sensitivity to cultural difference. Teachers identified important limitations to Benett's (1986) continuum when applied to a multicultural and multilingual context rather than a cross-cultural and bilingual context. The concept of 'integration' defined in the continuum as the highest level of intercultural sensitivity, was considered particularly problematic in a multilingual context. Teachers also questioned the capacity of the continuum to express the dynamic, sometimes regressive, nature of intercultural sensitivity.

M. Bennet's (1986) continuum of intercultural sensitivity

In interviews, participants were asked to assess their own intercultural sensitivity

and awareness and they did this by recounting life experiences. They were also asked to position themselves somewhere along M. Bennet's continuum of intercultural sensitivity (1986, Appendix 6) in order to elicit their conceptual understanding of what intercultural sensitivity means and how it might be measured. M. Bennet's (1986) continuum is a conventional tool of intercultural training courses and texts, particularly in the area of intercultural education (see Phillips 1993 and Byrne & Associates 2000). The continuum defines the possible stages of intercultural sensitivity from the lowest point of denial, through minimisation of difference, to a mid point of acceptance of difference and then to two active stages of adaptation and integration. Feedback from participants on the usefulness of this simple model in teaching and learning across culture indicated that it was perceived as useful in the context of its growing application to the field.

Uncertainty concerning the meanings of the terms

Three participants did not answer the question when asked to position themselves. This was perceived as a problematic tool partly because it reduces the process of becoming less or more interculturally aware to six concepts and partly because of uncertainty of what the terms actually meant, although the definitions were provided in Workshop One.

Acceptance and adaptation

The willingness to expect and accept difference is positioned around mid way on the continuum at a passive stage of 'acceptance'. The next two stages, adaptation and integration are not passive states and imply a functional strategy for response to cultural difference. Several participants found M. Bennet's (1986) continuum a useful tool even though they acknowledged it had problems. The majority of participants

positioned themselves about mid way on M. Bennet's (1986) continuum between acceptance and adaptation. Acceptance was defined by one of the Learning Skills Tutors as "preparedness for things to be different and perhaps uncertain and a willingness or a comfort with that kind of uncertainty happening to you regularly". Examples offered of adaptation were efforts to adapt class materials so that they included study of 'other' cultural entities and conventions; the development of more selective, simpler, more structured reading programs for assignment research; adaptation of teaching methods, for example, slower delivery; multiple explanations of the same concept, and; more group work.

Achieving integration

The concept of 'integration', presented as the ultimate state of intercultural sensitivity on the continuum, was perceived as a particularly problematic term:

> ALC: Integration... Sounds utopian to me ... I would
> not expect to attain that state which is why I would
> not put myself in the integration stage. I think there
> are stages missing. Why are there just six stages? As it
> is a very dynamic process.

Only one participant described herself as feeling at the 'integration' phase of the continuum but she had some difficulty understanding the concept:

> ALA: I like to think that I am at the integration phase.
> I guess integration means you can jog along with the
> differences and that the ... um knock on effect that has.

In other words, you expect difference?

Of the participants who understood the distinctions between the terms on the continuum, one claimed to have reached a level of intercultural sensitivity that could be described as 'integrated' and this was on the basis of seven years of social and professional immersion in one other culture. Several participants felt that the development of such a high degree of intercultural sensitivity depended on learning to be competent in another language or languages as well as learning specific information about another culture. If integration is only possible with other language acquisition, then adaptability is probably the greatest level of sensitivity Australian teachers with international students will be able to achieve without significant policy shift in university management so that universities promote language learning as professional development for their teaching staff:

> LSTR: I think of integration as,... in terms of dual
> nationality or dual or multiple cultural identity where
> you are able to switch languages and cultures with such
> seamless ease ...something that is currently and
> possibly ever beyond me. Unless my employer decides
> to offer me language classes. ... I think Bennet's
> continuum is a highly problematic tool. I think it is
> useful. In the same sense as the U curve and the W
> curve are useful in that you can see a negative aspect to
> the experience but you can also see a positive aspect to
> experience of cultural difference.

Dynamic nature of intercultural sensitivity

One participant reflected on the dynamic nature of intercultural sensitivity and questioned how the continuum could express that. This participant had spent seven years in another culture on professional sojourn and felt that she had achieved something close to the stage of 'integration' at the most developed end of the continuum in that period but felt that when the intercultural context changed, she moved back along the continuum. She considered that intercultural sensitivity is not fixed and it is possible to lose and gain degrees of sensitivity as the context changes.

> LSTA: I have been thinking about it a lot. Can you regress? (laugh) Because I felt Almost well integrated in Japan. I felt totally comfortable there in the end after seven years. There was complete understanding. It didn't matter what groups I was in. I could sit with my co-workers who were Japanese and felt totally comfortable and at ease as with ex-pats. When I got back here to this situation at our campus ... it is still intercultural but it was new and different to what I was so confident with in Japan. The situation had been reversed and while it was still intercultural communication required it was different and I felt less prepared. There was a level of difference where I didn't feel part of it. They don't have the same language background that I understand. There was, I think then a regression.

Regression

M. Bennet's (1986) continuum does not explicitly discount the possibility of regression in degree of intercultural sensitivity in relation to shifts in cultural context. It was suggested that the continuum could usefully be developed to explicitly accommodate this possibility within the experience of developing intercultural sensitivity.

Limited value of M. Bennet's (1986) continuum

M. Bennet's (1986) continuum was perceived by most participants to be of limited value because it was simplistic in that it reduced experiences to single concepts which were not particularly clear in terms of what kinds of attitudes and practices would accompany/attest to each stage. Nor were all of the participants clear on how the different stages were distinguished from each other. Whilst the reduction of intercultural sensitivity to five concepts is a useful means of summarising a complex process, such reduction of the experience was perceived as artificial and not very meaningful by most participants. Intercultural interaction is an emotionally complex practice and was not perceived by participants to be linear or one-directional, but dynamic, sporadic and sometimes regressive. This perhaps identifies the continuum as a cross-cultural rather than an intercultural tool as it seems to measure a sojourner's developing sensitivity as they immerse themselves in one other culture and learn the language. It cannot explain how an individual can achieve integration stage across a multiplicity of culturally and linguistically different groups. It could be that for intercultural contexts that involve interaction with and between multiple cultural groups, the continuum's conceptualisation of the ultimate degree of intercultural sensitivity should be adaptation and not integration. The continuum was useful to this study as it generated reflection by participants on the development of

sensitivity and how it can be described as a dynamic process rather than single scale of competence building.

Factors that impacted on a teacher's passage along the continuum

In summary, the factors identified as contributing to a teacher's passage along the continuum of intercultural sensitivity were: frequency of intercultural interaction, sustained intercultural interaction, learning of specific information about other cultures, learning of other languages, institutional support in providing opportunity for professional development of intercultural sensitivity, and a willingness on the part of the teacher to reflect on and review their own culturally engendered classroom communication styles and assumptions. This willingness to review professional practice seems to be a by-product of the prior factors.

Research Question 1.2: What other intercultural communication training have teachers experienced?

When teachers were asked to describe intercultural training that they had participated in prior to this staff development program they tended to describe specific courses with intercultural themes that they had undertaken as part of a university degree and/or English as a Second Language teacher training courses that were cross-cultural and culture specific rather than intercultural. Those that could identify some form of prior 'training' were able to identify limitations to these training experiences in relation to their prior and current teaching context.

Lack of training

It was important to this study to assess the effects of training in the format of a multidimensional, needs-based program designed for teaching staff at Australian

117

universities. Prior training experience could assist participants to identify effective or ineffective aspects of the training program in comparison to other training programs that they had experienced. None of the eleven research participants had received intercultural communication training at the case study campus and this is typical of the wider group of Australian university teaching staff at the case study campus and the teaching staff at other Australian university campuses.

Existing programs

In almost all Australian Universities, a Teaching and Learning Support or Development Unit exists and establishes policy and practice documents for the teaching community of the institution. In La Trobe University, for example, the Academic Development Unit offers a written guide for new teachers which subsumes intercultural teaching and learning issues within a document on developing inclusive curriculum (La Trobe University Academic Development Unit 2004). La Trobe also offers postgraduate study modules in the areas of cross cultural communication or multicultural education and these are available to staff as part of 'professional development' but these are modules constitutive of formal study towards the Graduate Certificate in Education (Professional Development) and the Masters in Education and are available outside of normal working hours on the basis of paid enrolment.

Such courses or modules on intercultural or cross cultural communication and cultural diversity in classrooms are conventional to many Education Faculties in Australian Universities and available to staff as well as students as are courses in any formal field of study. Such professional development is entirely voluntary and depends on the interest of the staff member and their capacity to attend and pay for the course.

The professional development of intercultural knowledge and skills for teaching staff with increasingly culturally diverse students does not yet feature as a regular part of Australian university practices of teacher induction or development other than as an enrolment option for staff wishing to undertake further study in the field of Education.

University of Sydney Institute of Teaching and Learning offers a three day course for new university teachers but does not list cultural diversity as a specific interest of the course (University of Sydney 2004). The orientation pack for new teachers also fails to address the topic of teaching across culturally diverse groups (University of Sydney 2004).

The University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) offers a teaching guide 'Teaching Matters' (UTS 2004) which defines the UTS student identity as 'diverse' across age, gender, culture and ability and makes recommendations for good teaching in that context but does not specifically address the needs and interests of international students. The UTS induction program is mainly focused on a meet and greet opportunity with other staff and the standard Australian university professional development option is available to staff to support any study of their choice that is deemed by the employer to contribute to their professional development. It can be demonstrated that Australian universities do not yet conventionally include training to develop intercultural awareness and sensitivity as it applies in the Australian university teaching context as a feature of induction or professional development for Australian university teachers.

Formal courses in teaching adults

A few participants had experienced some degree of training outside their current workplace. All but one of the participants had completed a formal university course in teaching adults ranging from Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers Other Languages, Diploma or Masters in either Linguistics or Adult Education. This in itself makes this teaching group unusual as teaching qualifications are not typically required of or pursued by academic staff in universities outside of the Faculties of Education. Participants reported various experiences of intercultural training prior to their employment at the case study campus and these were in the form of 'culture focused' courses offered as part of formal programs undertaken in their university studies in humanities areas, as Department of Education teacher training, or as induction training with English as a Second language (ESL) teacher recruitment or overseas aid agents. All participants had mixed evaluations to give of these formal training experiences:

> ALA: Yes, XXX built in some intercultural study to the Graduate Diploma in Adult Education,...to try and make us aware...they could tell you some things... like what happens when you get a Palestinian and a Jewish person in the same group, it's going to be difficult. Interestingly enough whenever I have taught people who are from these groups where back home they are at each others' throats, they haven't been difficult. They really haven't.

In-service training seminars

Another participant received in-service training within the Queensland state education system as a high school teacher rather than a student. This was a two day seminar focusing particularly on Aboriginal students' approaches to learning and their sense of time and scheduling work. LSTC mentioned that there was no ongoing training or refresher training but that she was able 'pick up things' on the job from other more experienced teachers of the region. All participants who had received intercultural communication training per se, had received that training about a specific cultural group for a specific purpose (usually teaching). Those that experienced this commented on the brevity of the courses which were almost all confined to two days. They also mentioned qualitative limitations they found to this training.

Lack of needs-based programs for teachers

One participant had lived in the target culture for two years prior to attending training and expressed disbelief at some of the information offered in the training: "A lot of the people running the training, I would think, have you actually been there!? " LSTA said that the commercial operator running the training for teachers recruited for contracts in Japan tended to bias the training, "they were making it look pretty glowing", in order to make the professional teaching contracts more desirable. The training was perceived to be inadequate mainly because whilst it was culture-specific, it was not professionally-specific. There was very little training content or focus on teaching or the Japanese education system. Training was not designed as a needs-based program from the perspective of teachers involved. The absence of such professionally relevant cultural information was perceived to be, at least partly, deliberate:

> LSTA: It is nowhere near as organised as it ought to
> be. They give you stuff on being in a society, the pre-
> leave thing is all about what a great experience it is
> going to be going to Japan. When you get there there is
> a little bit about what is expected in the schools but
> only a little bit because they really don't want you to
> take over too much control of the teaching aspect.
> There is not enough about the reality of the in-class
> situation but that is because they don't want you to
> take on that role. They are quite happy for you to just
> be a novelty.

Language training

All participants who had participated in training for overseas sojourns bemoaned the
fact that no encouragement or facility was offered for them to learn another language,
and specifically the host culture language. Participants felt this was a mistake as it
made it more difficult for them to negotiate their new intercultural situation and also
meant that there was not a genuine or equal undertaking for cultural exchange.

> LSTA: And the thing that really surprised me about
> XXX is there is not allowance to learn Japanese. You
> are kind of half encouraged but it is by no means
> pushed and I think it should be. It is all about bringing
> English and intercultural awareness to Japan but they
> don't go back with... you learn from being here sure

but they don't give you real opportunity to learn a

language or go beyond.

The failure of both ESL educational provider companies and Australian universities

to value and incorporate languages other than English into educational practice is

perhaps partly explained as symptomatic of the currently dominant pedagogical

model of communicative language teaching which promotes a target language only

teaching and learning process in ESL classrooms. If Australian teachers are generally

discouraged from using languages other than English with their students, it is

therefore, not surprising that their employers do not generally support them in

attempts to learn other languages. Whilst this may promote English learning within

the communicative language teaching model, it may also set up barriers to

development of intercultural awareness and sensitivity between teachers and learners,

and to a teacher's acculturation into any overseas community in which they work.

Emphasis on western models

Ongoing training associated with intercultural sojourn was available to only one

participant but was perceived to be of of limited use in part due to the structure of

the training which excluded Japanese host teaching staff. As professional educators,

most trainees had expected to critique and debate the practice of education as they

had been trained to do in their Australian education. They found however that they

argued amongst themselves and there was no true engagement with Japanese

pedagogical assumptions, values and practices. This was perceived as frustrating as

the intercultural training program failed to assist teachers develop their intercultural

skills as relevant to their professional field.

Importing western teaching theories

A further limitation to the training identified by LSTA was the culturally incommensurate objectives of the teaching abroad program as perceived by the members of the different cultures involved in the professional exchange. Many trainees seemed poorly prepared for intercultural sojourn in the sense that they expected to impose the culturally constructed teaching theories and models and rationales of their own schooling:

> LSTA: It did seem like a lot of people would come into Japan and felt they were going to change the system and have a major impact on how English was taught in primary and high school in Japan. I thought well, be realistic. You have to work within the system to start with. They are not going to let you do whatever you want when those students have to sit an exam at the end of the year. You can work within the system and feel like you are working toward the exam and have constructive and interesting activities within that.

This assumption that a particular and inevitably encultured teaching paradigm will successfully cross into another country's system of education was not seen as a strength. One participant argued that it was in fact, a weakness:

> LSTA: It was interesting because we were hired, when I went to the interview for XXX I had lived in Japan

for two years and knew what I was doing as far as

teaching to an extent, and the best advice I got from

someone in XXX is play it down, play down the time

you spent teaching here. They don't want teachers.

They want someone who is new, fresh, bright eyed and

willing to do... to just be in some respects, a novelty.

If they think you are going to come in with ideas about

how to teach and take over, you are not going to get the

job. And that is what I did and I got it. Because I really

wanted it.

Need for intercultural awareness and sensitivity training

Half of the participants reported that they had not experienced any prior intercultural

training other than basic Human Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity (1986)

documents distributed at Australian workplaces. The need for training in intercultural

awareness and sensitivity in Australian universities was recognised by all

participants:

> ALC : I think teaching large groups of the these sort of
>
> students is a peculiar challenge and frankly I don't
>
> think there are many good teachers in this area. That is
>
> not a reflection on the teachers but just a sign of how
>
> quickly this thing has grown. There are no trained
>
> teachers as far as I know with high qualifications in
>
> this area.

In summary, intercultural awareness and sensitivity training is not generally included in staff induction programs or explicitly recommended as part of staff development for teachers at Australian universities although these universities acknowledge the growing cultural diversity of their students in their teaching policy documents and guides (La Trobe University Academic Development Unit 2004; University of Sydney 2004; UTS 2004). Participants in this study felt that training programs were most effective when they were offered in-service rather than, or as well as, pre-service and were ongoing rather than one-off. Training programs were also deemed to be most effective when they focused specifically on the target professional practice of the participants, in this case, teaching. Training programs were also perceived to be of limited value if they isolated the sojourners (trainees) from their host culture colleagues and were not informed by teaching policy and pedagogical preferences of the target culture group. The export of Australian pedagogy and educational policy was seen as highly problematic and training programs need to equip trainees with this understanding and with a preparedness to adapt to local practices and processes. In order to facilitate ongoing development of intercultural awareness and sensitivity, intercultural training programs would ideally incorporate or support opportunity for learning of a language other than English.

Research Question 1.3: What models of intercultural training are effective for academics in a culturally diverse university campus?

As the professional development program designed for the study in this thesis was intended to be a continuing program at the case study campus, this study offered the opportunity to discover through the reported experiences of the participants where the model was effective or ineffective. Such evaluative information could suggest useful revisions or developments to the program. This staff development program of

three workshops was designed in a multidimensional training format consisting of simulation, critical incident narratives and role play/problem solving.

The simulation in Workshop One

Participants were asked to describe their experience of these formats beginning with the introductory simulation of a student perspective on the customary university orientation presentation in Workshop One (see Appendix 2). The purpose of this simulation was to identify the affective or emotional results of not being able to understand 'explicit' messages completely in a formal learning environment and not being able to learn from a distracting amount of informal, context-based communication. The overwhelming sensation experienced by training participants at Workshop One was reported as a sense of alienation and discomfort. The learning objective was to discover how teachers might create positive learning outcomes in this context.

The simulation had a dramatic effect on all participants. All participants felt that it was a powerful method for creating an empathy with students, particularly for students' ability to comprehend. The majority of participants described the experience as 'alienating' to a degree. Many described a sense of disbelief and amusement at the presentation. One Learning Skills Teacher said: "It was excellent! It really was. We are just sitting there going, "What is going on here!?" I would like to have seen our faces actually because I kept looking at (LSTB) and across at everyone like, what the...!?" All participants said that they had reflected, many extensively, on the meaning of the experience. One academic participant said: " I have reflected a lot on it and my conclusion is it was an amusing way of making a point about alienation and obscurity". Most participants reported an ability during the simulation to

experience a sense of their students' incomprehension of university systems of meaning and alienation from the academic culture in which they were nevertheless immersed.

> ALD: Oh yes, I found that I am an alien or probably the most stupid person sitting on the chairs, couldn't understand what she is talking about, I thought my God! What is that?! I think probably my students feel the same way.

In the de-briefing following the simulation, in this case the de-briefing extended beyond the workshop into in-depth interviews, the 'ex-participants' in the simulation were given 'the opportunity to draw parallels' between the simulated 'reality' and their conventional reality (Crookall, Oxford & Saunders 1987). Teachers were able to draw many parallels between their own experiences in the simulation and their students' experiences in the conventional teaching and learning contexts of the university.

Anxiety, authority and assumptions

Teachers explained that the incomprehension they experienced in the simulation was discomforting in the context of being enrolled in a university degree which depended on comprehending the rules. One Learning Skills Teacher said: "What was really an eye opener was to find out only a few words had changed but you still couldn't understand important details. While you go the gist of it, it wasn't enough. She's talking about something I am not supposed to do, but what is it?" Many teachers found the experience created anxiety as a consequence of the clear authority that the

presenter exercised over them in the university system. The anxiety seemed to be largely generated by the fact that this presenter was unable to explain clearly to them the rules and requirements of this highly structured and rule-bound academic context. The teachers however, felt very keenly that they were assumed to have the level of comprehension necessary to follow the presentation and the rules and regulations by which they were supposed to practise their university study. This assumption was perceived as dangerous:

> LSTA: You know it is a problem but not exactly what kind of problem. When that is an interactive situation where you are supposed to contribute to the situation or react and you don't actually know what it is you are reacting to, that would be that bit harder. In Japan I knew when I was supposed to smile and nod. They knew I didn't understand and they didn't expect me to. But when it is a situation where it is assumed that you do understand but you don't, that is scary.

Alienation

Another Learning Skills Unit Teacher said that she had often felt that the Orientation presentation conventional to this campus was in fact more like a session of alienation: "Where students realise how much trouble they are in and they realise they are going to get into worse trouble too. But they don't know how exactly that path is going to run but it is clear there are serious repercussions."

Non-verbal behaviour: smiling and nodding

When discussing their reactions to the incomprehensible elements of the simulation, many participants referred to 'smiling and nodding' behaviour and identified this as a coping or masking strategy for incomprehension that they performed in the simulation and that they witnessed students performing in classrooms. Smiling during a communicative interaction is perceived in Australian culture, and many other cultures, to indicate positive reinforcement and nodding normally indicates agreement or comprehension. However, other cultures, such as Indian communities from the south of the sub continent and Sri Lanka, indicate agreement by a sideways swaying of the head (Jandt 1995). Japanese people smile for the simple effect of sustaining social harmony: "The smile is also used to avoid conflict; a Japanese person might simply smile in order to avoid answering an awkward question or giving a negative answer" (McDaniel 2003, p. 255).

Smiling and nodding, whilst generally understood as non-verbal markers of agreement and/or comprehension amongst Australian people, can also be a learned behaviour used by Australians to disguise the fact that the listener has 'switched off' (Barnnin 1999) or 'tuned out' (World Union of Jewish Students 2004). Smiling and nodding has been reported to work to reinforce negative ideas as well as positive ideas as they occur to the person smiling and nodding. If you are thinking negative thoughts, the smiling and nodding will "make you more confident in the negative thoughts" (Ohio State University 2003, p.1). Hence, it is possible that international students who are smiling and nodding at their teacher may actually be reinforcing their dissatisfaction with the learning experience. The meaning of the smiling and the nodding is further complicated by gender roles as both male and female speakers tend to respond more positively to these signals when enacted by women than by men (Barnnin 1999) and

women tend to smile more frequently then men (Borisoff & Marril in Samovar & Porter 2003). Smiling and nodding is not adequately understood as positive reinforcement or agreement in culturally diverse classrooms and may in fact signal a masking of negative experience.

One Learning Skills Teacher explained her own habit of smiling and nodding during her sojourn in Japan: "You get to a point where you just can't ask any more questions, it was all too much! Overload! You wanted it to end so you smile and nod until they allow you to leave... You think I will deal with it later..." Not recognising that this may be a sign of incomprehension, or a coping strategy by which one tolerates unbearable levels of uncertainty, can compound levels of incomprehension over a course and eventuate in assessment task submissions from students that are not relevant or appropriate to the actual question. It can also create frustration in teachers who may even feel that the incomprehension is feigned.

> LSTR: I think the smiling and nodding is one of the
> coping strategies of our students. They appear to
> understand and then you get this thing, this assignment
> that bears no relationship to what you have told them
> to do. You get quite annoyed and tired of repeating
> yourself and you think, this student is deliberately
> doing this, wasting my time.

Methods for clarifying meaning to students

The simulation and their own response to it caused teachers to reflect on the methods that they used to clarify meaning for their students:

LSTB: When you came in and you had those words made up, even though I had some idea of what they may mean, they were still confusing enough for me to feel terribly confused. And it started making me think about what I say to the students. I always thought I had been conscious of what I say to students, and I have a policy of saying, "Do you understand?" to students. "Can you tell me in your own words?" But that really hit home. I wonder how much of what I say is confusing to students. Occasionally you can pick it, with the blank look. Some people are really good at hiding what they feel inside. Nodding the head, big smile on their face, but not a clue. That really did make me think and it is still making me think so hopefully I will be a bit more conscious of what I say. It is so difficult, I mean what terms do they or don't they understand.

Affective learning

As a teaching strategy within an experiential learning program, the simulation aimed to facilitate learning across the affective field as well as the cognitive field (J.M. Bennet 1986; Weil & McGill 1989). As participants felt confusion, disbelief and humour in varying degrees during the presentation it proved a successful teaching strategy in this respect. Participants were also able to associate their feelings with what their students might feel in class and in addition, some reflected on intercultural

experiences of their own which generated commensurate feelings. Hence, the simulation contributed to another experiential learning objective that of promoting learner centred experience (J.M. Bennet 1986, Weil & McGill 1989).

Empathy

After the simulation, a discussion of the theoretical models of the W Curve (Gullahorn & Gullahorn 1963) and intercultural sojourner as hero (Hart 1996) focused the participants in Workshop One on the emotional aspects of crossing culture during discussion of the simulation. Workshop One was designed primarily to stimulate sensitivity to the students' intercultural predicament and generate association and empathy with the students' emotional state. An empathetic mind set or attitude is a beneficial precursor to cognitive and behavioural learning and is recommended as a an early objective to intercultural training (Brislin & Yoshida 1994).

Critical Incidents in Workshop Two

All participants enjoyed the interactive opportunity to share each other's experiences of communication difficulties experienced teaching across cultures which they narrated as critical incidents in Workshop Two. All participants were able to contribute a critical incident narrative from their professional experience and were also able to apply culture-general theories in discussion and analysis of these incidents. Many participants referred to these incidents, both their own and those of others, in interviews and felt that accessing such a cross-section of critical intercultural experience in the academic workplace was a useful exercise. This training exercise satisfied several important objectives of experiential learning as it was learner focused and stimulated reflection as participants reviewed their own

intercultural experiences and interactions to identify which of those were 'critical' from their own perspective.

Role play in Workshop Three

Participants engaged in the role play exercise of Workshop Three with enthusiasm and a sense of humour. One academic commented, 'That was very funny, sorry, did you want us to be more serious?' They demonstrated the ability to imagine themselves in one of three roles: teachers, international students, academic advisory committee (management). The experience was seen to be somewhat liberating in the sense that they were able to 'put themselves in the shoes of others' in an imaginary and safe context and work through some of the intercultural academic tensions we had identified in earlier workshops with a sense of fun.

Rules for intercultural teaching and learning

This workshop asked participants to generate some rules that they perceived as important for intercultural teaching and learning. The following were suggested:

- Never assume anything (3 responses).
- Try and put yourself in 'their' shoes.
- Be aware that rudeness may be ignorance and politeness may be false.
- Learn how to address people in a culturally appropriate manner.
- Involve student backgrounds in class to help understanding and answer course questions.
- State expectations explicitly.
- Be ready to explain everything from vocabulary, to concepts, to whole theories.

The first four of these 'rules' are common pieces of advice regarding intercultural communication and fit with intercultural theory: in highlighting the tendency for cross-cultural assumptions to be incorrect (Brislin 2000); in emphasising the need for people to make an effort to identify and emphasise commonalities across culture (Kale 2003); and in encouraging self-identification from culturally different peoples and then affirming this self-identity (Gudykunst 2003; O'Sullivan 1994) as an effective method of learning to address people appropriately. The final three rules are more specific to the teaching and learning process and will be discussed in section four of this chapter.

The teacher's perspective

In the role play debate in Workshop Three, the 'teaching group' played the role that was most commensurate with their 'real world' professional role. They argued primarily that students needed to take responsibility for their own learning as any Australian academic would be likely to argue. They expressed discomfort with the effects of profit driven management policies and an educational approach from students that framed their study as a financial transaction that should have significant impact on the educational transaction that was normally (and rightly as far as teachers were concerned) free from commercial imperatives. They blamed student confusion for the high number of failures largely generated through poor attendance excused by multiple medical certificates. Teachers expressed common sector-wide anxieties for Australian academics including a fundamental commitment to merit based entry and assessment despite the increasingly common practice of admitting full fee paying students into universities on the basis of available funding rather than merit. The strongest value expressed in the teachers' presentation in this role play was that learning is primarily the responsibility of the learner, a fundamental

Australian and individualist educational assumption (Hofstede 1986) that may not be shared across other cultures (Hofstede 1986).

The student's perspective

The 'student group' argued 'with great respect' that failing large numbers of students was not a good education and not good value. They feared that teachers may be discriminating against them and suggested that teachers needed to take more time to explain explicitly what they had to do in examinations and assignments. This group of workshop participants were required to 'put themselves in the shoes of others' and they focused on the financial hardship of a fail as well as the University responsibility to provide educational services equal to the dollar value that they charged. The specter of possible racial discrimination was raised and they emphasised the problem that they had in understanding what was required from them in assessment tasks and examinations. It was deemed to be the teacher's responsibility to clarify for students what was expected of them in these contexts reflecting a more teacher centered perception of education common to students from many of the Asian communities studying at the campus (Hofstede 1986).

The management perspective

In the role play debate, the 'management' group deferred any decision as to whether they should recommend a review of all grades. They argued that students had multiple avenues by which to discover about examinations and other assignments and needed to make an effort to find out themselves as well as depend on teachers to explain. They committed to review the relevant texts in terms of clarity and accessibility. This group were understandably the most uncomfortable and uncertain in their response to the scenario as it was their task to resolve the argument between

two groups with culturally different paradigms and expectations. This group attempted to reconcile the learner-centred and the teacher-centred educational perspective by acknowledging that both parties had a responsibility to clarify that course objectives and processes were clearly understood and shared. They also recognised the responsibility of University management to ensure that University documents were accessible to culturally different students. A deferred decision acknowledged the complexity of the intercultural scenario and allowed for further opportunity to reconcile different perspectives.

Application of theory

The role play scenario of Workshop Three was seen as an enjoyable method of ending the training program as it allowed participants to explore creatively the application of various intercultural theories, concepts and communicative strategies learned in the program. As participants had built familiarity with each other over the program, this opportunity was seen as non-threatening and entertaining.

The multidimensional model of intercultural training (J.M. Bennet 1986) featuring educational or theoretical content emphasising cognitive learning but also featuring experiential elements emphasising learner-centred involvement and development of self-awareness was an effective model of intercultural training for academic staff. The most referred to activities of the training program during post-training interviews were the theories proposing cultural-general truths (Hall 1976; Hofstede 1984, 1991; & Stewart 1972) and also the simulation of a new student's experience of orientation, a purely experiential learning activity. This demonstrated that such variation in training techniques and objectives, a multidimensional training program, is a popular approach to training university teaching staff.

Further training

Several participants expressed the desire for further training and all participants were particularly interested in learning more about other cultures:

> LSTC: Number One for me would be to learn about those individual cultures so if I was able to find out more obviously I would be talking about mere generalizations but to find out how I can generalise a Bangladeshi student? And what expectations does a Sri Lankan student have? And are there different expectations of students coming from southern and northern India? And does the caste system have any impact on how they interact with the Learning Skills Unit? That would be Number One for me so that when I do interact with those students, I have greater understanding of where they are coming from and perhaps be more aware and sensitive to my teaching.

Over the course of the interviews, the researcher suggested to participants that a second series of participatory workshops could be offered targeting development of culture-specific knowledge where participants would assist each other to develop knowledge of the fifty different nationalities currently represented in the student population at this campus. This group approach to researching culture where each individual would present to the group what they had learned about a particular country's people was agreed by the participants to be a potentially useful strategy to broach the problem of there being too much diversity for an individual to research in

isolation. Learning more about the differences between specific cultures was of great interest to all participants. Further research might usefully explore other options for building culture-specific knowledge for Australian academics through intercultural training programs.

In summary, teachers valued opportunities to learn about other cultures but had not been offered adequate professional development options to promote this learning and equip them with strategies to make appropriate adjustments to their classroom practice. Teachers demonstrated a high degree of intercultural sensitivity in their ability to empathise readily with students experiencing culture shock and to draw meaningful analogies from their own experiences of intercultural interaction. They also displayed a willingness and in many cases, specific pedagogical strategies, for creating more interculturally meaningful and friendly classroom practices. This intercultural sensitivity was developed experientially through sustained professional practice in teaching international students as well as in this staff development program. Intercultural awareness and sensitivity training was perceived by teachers to be a valuable exercise for Australian university staff with international students. Training programs that are properly situated in the professional field of practice and are consecutive to intercultural experience are perceived as more effective than general intercultural training, or training delivered prior to the actual intercultural experience.

4.2 Teachers' perceptions of international students (Research Question 2)

In this section, the results for Research Question 2 and two sub-questions 2.1 and 2.2 are described and discussed. While it was important to establish in the preceding discussion, degrees of university staff's intercultural awareness and sensitivity and prior training in this area, it was also important to ascertain the initial perceptions

that teachers had of their international students before they participated in the three Workshops. This was achieved by asking them to describe their feelings about international students early in the training program in Workshop One and in interviews following Workshop One. Qualitative research seeks to identify in research data common themes, metaphors and language patterns used by the research population, as well as diversions and fluctuations in patterns of thinking, feelings and beliefs reflected in the verbal and non-verbal messages of the researched. Describing is a language function rich in adjective and metaphor and often involves comparison and analogy (Patton 1990). Teacher's descriptions of their students at this early stage of the action research generated important information about common perceptions of: international students generally, the learning style preferred by various cultural groups; and, the communication problems experienced by students studying in a different culture.

Research Question 2: How do teachers perceive of and describe international students?

Teachers were empathetic

In both interviews and workshops participants expressed a great deal of empathy with the students, especially the new students who were having to adapt to a whole new social context, as well as a new academic context. Empathy is defined as, "the ability to share someone else's feelings or experiences by imagining what it would be like to be in their situation" (Cambridge University 2004, n.p.). Participants readily imagined the student situation from various perspectives identifying emotional, financial, and legal pressures as key problems for international students sojourning in Australian universities. Most participants expressed concern and empathy by comparing students' experiences with their own experiences and

imagining themselves as part of the student's family and/or as the student.

Teachers used descriptive metaphors

Several participants described newly arrived and enrolled students metaphorically as 'new born babies' and 'aliens,' metaphors that respectively imply both a nurturing, protective response and a more ambiguous, wary response to the new and unpredictable student. All participants referred to the loss of family and friends as critical to the degree of culture shock these students might experience, and the degree of difficulty they have normalising to a very different social environment:

> ALD: It is totally different from what they have in
> developing countries and what you have in Australia. It
> is totally different and sometimes the experience can be
> very, very devastating. I have seen some of these
> students, they are literally in tears most of the time.
> Obviously, they settle in 3-4 weeks, or maybe 5-6
> months. They start getting the taste of dollars, you
> know working, they get some job, get the taste of
> dollars and then they become quite clever and smart. It
> is not that they don't have brains, it is that their brains
> have not been exposed to this kind of situation or
> environment. If you give a proper light, yes, it will
> flash. If I don't get a proper light, I don't know what
> is there in the next room.

Teachers were sympathetic

New students, in particular were perceived to be in a difficult situation and this stimulated feelings of strong sympathy amongst teachers. One teacher felt that the expectations put on new students by Australian regulations were unrealistic:

> LSTR: There is a high first year fail rate. Teachers need
> to be OK with that. It is OK to go to another country,
> lose everything you are familiar with, start something
> so complex it is almost undoable and fail a bit. I feel
> sorry for them with the Australian overseas student
> visa regulations where they have to do a full load right
> from the start in semester one. They would do so much
> better if they could take 3 or even 2 units until they got
> the hang of it. They would save money too. They
> could go a bit faster later on. It's sort of like they are
> just set up to lose a bit of money and self esteem.

Teachers feared for students' well being

Three of the participants commented on the loneliness they felt when sojourning in another culture when they spoke of their understanding of their students' experiences in Australia. One Learning Skills Teacher commented: "Some days the only positive thought I had was I don't have to stay here. If I really want to, I can go home." The same participant reported on the high suicide rate of XXX-employed teachers especially in the northern parts of Japan: 'There was one or two a year'. Repeatedly witnessing the problems new students have in adjusting was perceived as stressful for teachers. Many teachers reported fears for their students' well-being as a

consequence of the extensive cultural adjustments expected of them. One Learning Skills Teacher said:

> LSTB: Yeah, I have wanted to say to many students "Go home, it is not failing'. A few I have said it to: they tell me they are unhappy here. I say 'Go home'. Life's hard anyway, go home.' I wouldn't do that to a kid of mine. No way on earth, I wouldn't dare.

> LSTD: There are incredible pressures on our students, sometimes they run out of money, it is all the employer or the family has put aside to cover their education. But they can't pass the subjects in the required time...You see 25 year old guys crying, 'Please pass me, just pass me'. I have to say, it doesn't work like that. They hold onto your hands!

Teachers were distressed

Many participants indicated that they were sometimes distressed by the problems their students experienced and that they were at a loss where to send a student who was emotionally upset. One phrased it: 'What do you do when someone loses it?' Several participants indicated that there was a need to have an interculturally competent counsellor on site for the many students who were experiencing difficulty in completing their studies and distress over the many repercussions of this. 'You need to walk them up to the Counselling Unit then and there'. There is currently no Counselling Unit at the case study campus.

Teachers wanted to help

Participants' comments generally reflected a shared awareness of a range of negative pressures effecting international students which stimulated empathetic feelings and a desire to help them, a desire frequently frustrated either by policies regulating student workloads, or a lack of local resources. From the teachers' perspective, the overseas study sojourn was an often painful and even dangerous undertaking and no participants described the early phase of the sojourn experience in positive terms. They saw the students as passively enduring a process that was ill-designed. They expressed empathy with the students' loss of their familiar cultural environment and their networks of family and friends but were also aware that this was a medium term problem significantly alleviated over one or two semesters.

Teachers recognised financial pressures

Participants expressed an empathetic awareness of financial pressures on students, pressures they identified, ironically perhaps, as often applied by family, friends or employers. These pressures were largely seen to be a consequence of unrealistic expectations that international students will be able to complete their academic programs successfully in the minimum time frame for a degree. It was the experience of all participants in this training program that international students failed courses regularly in the first semester or year of study. As new students are identified as suffering intense cultural adjustment issues, or even culture shock, this was perceived by participants as being perfectly normal and predictable for a large percentage of new students. Many teachers recommended that financial planning for international study sojourn needed to account for some failure.

Teachers felt pressured

Although many teachers said that they often felt unreasonable pressure from their students to pass them or review a fail grade where it was not appropriate or ethical, they did not blame the student but blamed the authorities including families, agents, employers and government regulatory bodies who they felt did not fully appreciate or plan and account for the inevitable difficulties a student faces in crossing cultures.

Research Question 2.1: What are teachers' perceptions of international student learning styles?

In addition to their general perceptions about international students in Australian university, participants were asked to comment specifically about the learning styles and preferences of international students. This was perceived as useful in identifying from the perspective of the teachers, shared, distinct as well as conflicting expectations of the teaching and learning process between Australian teachers and international learners.

Teacher-dependence

Although the learning population comes from over 50 countries, the majority of the students come from countries within Asia, including Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Korea and Nepal. The majority of participants identified a general student tendency to be teacher-dependent or teacher-centred, a characteristic attributed to students from collectivist and also high power-distance cultures (Hofstede 1986) but also frequently attributed to Asian students (Ballard & Clanchy 1997). Being teacher-dependent rather than independent learners was perceived as being a significant problem for a student's successful negotiation of the student-centred Australian University curriculum and pedagogy (Hofstede 1986). Participants did not confine

this observed tendency to Asian learners, although all the Asian countries included in Hofstede's study (1984) ranked within the high power-distance tolerance range of the scale and are also ranked as collectivist cultures. The tendency in the learner to be teacher-dependent was identified by several participants to apply to students from Russia as well as Asia. Russia was not part of the Hofstede study (1984), nor were African or Arab countries (Lustig & Koester 2003, p.115) yet the campus has significant enrolments from these cultural groups.

> LSTC: The exchange students from the high power-distance cultures are feeling very uneasy because they expect their teachers to direct and supervise their work very closely and in Australian tertiary study we don't really follow that mode of teaching very closely. There is an expectation that the student will be very independent and to read huge amounts of material on our reading lists.

> LSTC: An Aboriginal co-worker of mine at State High once described the Aboriginal people... if they have a problem, ...the way they go about solving it is to go about asking everyone they know for the possible solution they would do and then come up with a kind of group decision or find the best decision that way...but in my own culture, you are encouraged to come up with your own solution to the problem and you are seeking that solution for yourself.

Another pointed out that it was not only non-European background students who were dependent learners:

> ALA: Many people assume that dependence is an
> Asian characteristic but...The Russians are much more
> noisy and voluble and all the rest of it... on the positive
> side they are very warm and funny... but this is what is
> interesting, to find that they still want to be told what
> to do. To a degree, they vary but mostly they still
> want you to give them step by step instructions, Step
> 1, Step 2, Step 3, so they can find the answer. I was
> surprised to find this.

As Australia is firmly ranked as a low power-distance tolerance culture compared to the other 39 countries of Hofstede's list, it can be inferred that the majority of international students to Australia are likely to appear to their Australian teachers to display similar teacher- dependent learner behaviour that may be dysfunctional within the conventional student centred Australian curriculum.

Student induction

Many participants spoke of the need to induct new students into the actual processes of learning and of teaching characteristic of the Australian university before addressing the course objectives and the specific field of study:

> AM: Yes, in the beginning I make them understand
> what we mean by lectures and what we mean by

tutorials. Because they expect that you will be shouting

two hours in tutorials as well, and if you don't, then

they say that you didn't teach.

Non-teacher directed class time may appear un-educational to students from cultural backgrounds where the teacher is expected to direct all class time with students listening quietly. Failure to draw attention to the distinctions between teacher-centred and student- centred education processes can result in such confusion as evident for 42% of surveyed international postgraduate students at Curtin University who were "uncertain whether the academic staff were sources of information and guidance" (Zifirdaus 1998, p.2).

Student comparison across institutions

One participant contrasted the learning approach of domestic students at other Australian Universities that she had experienced with the international student population approach of the case study campus:

> ALD: Students over there are much more conscious,
>
> knowledgeable and much more career oriented towards
>
> their studies. If they have enrolled in a course, the
>
> first principle is that they understand this is their duty
>
> to find out what is where. They have been told
>
> everything is on the web site. It is their duty to browse
>
> and find out where. It is not teacher's duty.

Teacher workload and accountability

Participant responses demonstrated that demands placed on teachers with dependent learners are intensified and also that these demands are escalated when the learners are also second language students and communication is more difficult and time consuming. Many participants believed that management did not appreciate the extra workload associated with such learners. The same participant reported that she had been called to a meeting with her academic manager to address a complaint from a student who had not been able to contact her teacher for two days prior to the exam which, she argued, had caused her to fail the course which ran for twelve weeks.

> ALD: I had a student last semester who said, 'I couldn't get hold of XXXXX and I failed because I couldn't get hold of her'. Can you believe that? And, 'She is responsible, XXXXX should take the responsibility for my failure'. That is exactly what she said: 'XXXXX should take the responsibility of my failure.' In double quotes! I thought, My God, what is that? Because she couldn't get to seek help from me for two days prior to the final exam!

Whilst most participants agreed that students were over dependent on teachers within an Australian university context, one participant, whilst agreeing that international students were more dependent on teachers than domestic students did not perceive this as a problem. In fact, the independent learning tool of the electronic dictionary was seen as displacing the teacher as the appropriate source of knowledge and authority.

ALA: Chinese and Korean students, they are always
the ones with the dictionary... quite often they are
wrong. I say, I am the best dictionary in the class. Put
your dictionary away. If you don't understand
something, ask me. Well at first they are too shy and
they pretend they are not looking at their dictionary
and you hear the little electronic voice. (They say
something unrecognisable then anyway.) But then I
explain you see your dictionary only gave you one
word, whereas I can give you lots of words... I can see
it this way or that way, I can do lots of things, so use
me as your dictionary, and hopefully they become
game enough to ask questions like what does this word
mean?

Teaching strategies

Participants identified teacher-dependence as the most significant problem for both
international students and their teachers in the context of Australian University
pedagogy. This outcome confirmed findings by Ballard and Clanchy (1997) that
described the primary expectations of Australian academics as independence, self-
reliance and critical thinking. Teachers adopted conventional teacher-centred
teaching strategies where appropriate in exercising leadership in the classroom,
providing more direction and in enumerating specifically the tasks and pathways for
completion required of students to learn the materials and pass the assessment tasks.
Ultimately, teachers developed a hybrid response to learning styles for their attempts

to lead a teacher-dependent group through a learner-centred program designed for independent learners.

Research Question 2.2: What are teachers' perceptions of student communication problems in the Australian University and workforce?

When asked to identify international student communication problems, participants described problems that they perceived to impact negatively on students' lives both within and without the academic context. Problems experienced in the general Australian community and workforce were perceived to affect academic progress. Vocational training staff participants were naturally focused on international student experience in the workforce.

Reluctance to ask questions

In terms of communication problems, the majority of participants identified a widely documented reluctance on the part of international students to ask questions (Klerx & Wang, 1998; Jiang, Hawkins & Bransgrove, 1998; Zifirdaus, 1998) and a tendency to remain silent in class discussions (Gay 2003). Teachers described this as either a lack of assertiveness or a lack of initiative, typically individualist culture values (Hofstede 1986). Whilst it is worth remembering that such classroom behaviour in a collectivist and high power-distance culture would be exemplary (Hofstede 1986), participants pointed out repercussions of this in both the university context and the wider context of the Australian work force:

> ALA: I suppose the obvious problem for our students
> is the use of initiative or the waiting to be told.. ...You
> have to tell them, in this country it is not impolite to

ask questions. We actually think it is intelligent

because you get answers.

The vocational training staff participating in the Workshops perceived this reluctance

to ask questions as a lack of assertiveness and described workplace problems that

these students experienced as a consequence of a lack of assertiveness:

> VTA: It is a problem for them I think because they are
>
> not assertive. If an employer tells them something,
>
> they will not say 'I don't understand, can you give me
>
> an example or explain in a different way?' We had a
>
> situation with one young woman who was working in a
>
> bank and she was supposed to send an email about an
>
> electronic transfer and she wasn't quite sure what she
>
> was supposed to do. She didn't ask the manager and
>
> she didn't send the email on the day it was supposed
>
> to go and it cost the bank about $100, 000 in
>
> commission.

Vocational training staff reported that their training tactic was to turn this 'weakness'

into a 'strength' by teaching students about effective communication strategies to ask

for clarification.

> VTA: If an employer thinks that because you have to
>
> ask that you are a bit thick or whatever, then they are
>
> obviously not the employer for you, because you

would rather have your staff clarify it from the first

point than actually go and make it incorrect... and that

is where the confidence comes in for the students to

actually ask as a senior manager or whoever to ask

them to clarify the question.

Intelligent questions from the interviewee are listed as integral to a successful job

interview within Australian organisations (Egan & Horne 2004; Hays 2004) so it is

likely that international students, with their reluctance to ask questions, will find it

harder to enter the workforce in the first place on the basis of a selection interview.

One participant suggested that a reluctance on the part of international students to

ask questions in classes could be "about trying to save not only their own face but

the face of the teacher by not questioning them" and this concern to protect mutual

face is identified by Hofstede (1986) as a typical classroom behaviour pattern for

students from high-power-distance cultures. The solution for the participants was to

focus on creating an environment based on two way communication where students

feel comfortable asking whatever questions they need to ask.

VTB: One of the things teachers might say to them is:

'there is no such thing as a silly question'. People

often won't ask the question, they are waiting for

somebody else to ask the question.

Most participants felt that if students could build confidence to ask questions of

teachers and employers and other figures of authority, they would benefit

academically and vocationally. Further research to identify university classroom

teaching methods that assist students develop an ability and a willingness to ask questions could hold benefits for international students across their academic and professional endeavours in Australian society.

Less critical questioning

One academic commented that even students with strong English language skills were unable to produce high quality academic work from research conducted on their own initiative. They were perceived to have problems posing critical questions for themselves as well as in class discussion. A tendency for non-critical or less critical academic work by international students is a finding common to many studies of international students (Gay 2003; Jiang, Hawkins & Bransgrove 1998; Kutieleh & Egege 2004).

> ALA:...in most cases, not in all but most, they just
> look up very simplistic web sites, they don't move
> from their machine. And that is research. ... they don't
> like initiative much...

Modest self-presentation

Several participants felt that when asked to summarise their strengths and weaknesses in an employment interview, international students excelled in articulating their weaknesses but found it very hard to describe their strengths. This observation is supported by findings measuring international student levels of self-concept as lower than Australian students across every concept of the study except mathematics and religious/spiritual values (Jiang, Hawkins & Bransgrove 1998). It could be, however, that the findings of this study have simply identified greater

modesty on the part of international students when referring to their own abilities in comparison to Australian students. How they actually value their own abilities and to what extent they are prepared to express these values to others are perhaps different as a consequence of culturally acceptable norms of what it is appropriate to say when referring to the self.

This cultural difference was perceived by teachers to be a cultural problem where students were too modest to be effective in a competitive Australian work force that requires workers to sell themselves and emphasise their strengths in a job interview. 'Modesty in self presentation' has been identified as a valued behaviour within Asian cultures (Chan 1991; Kitano & Daniels 1995; Nakanishi 1994 in Gay 2003) but is less valued in a strongly individualist society, such as Australia (Hofstede 1986). Interview technique experts tend to advise not only that you 'know your own strengths' but that you find an opportunity to voice them in interview (Egan & Horne 2004).

In individualist cultures, the job market tends to work by competition based on merit whereas, in collectivist cultures, an individual may be more likely to enter a workplace because of some preexisting relationship with the in-group of the company. Hence, the job interview may be perceived as a formality marking the candidate's commitment to a group, rather than an individual opportunity to outshine other candidates, if the job interview exists at all. This appointment to a position through association with existing in-group members is particularly likely in cultures that are both collectivist and have a high tolerance for power-distance (Hofstede 1986). Neither of these cultural dimensions applies to Australians.

Work and pay

Many participants expressed concerns about the international student experiences in the Australian work force. Their 'problems' with language and the attendant reactions of employers and other employees were perceived as problematic. The vocational training staff had particularly strong concerns about the expectations of employers who hire international students. They claimed that many employers sought to take advantage of restrictions placed on international students in terms of working while studying. Many students were working for cash rather than wages to get any employment at all or so that they could work in excess of the 20 hour per week limit imposed by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMIA). These students often worked for sub standard rates and were helpless to recover money from employers who decided not to pay.

Employer expectations about language competence

Another problem was employer expectations that a student studying at an Australian university, even a second language student, will have perfect grammar. One participant acted frequently as a professional referee for her students and recounted her position on their language competence in the context of what it allows them to do in the workforce. She recommended to employers that they must be realistic:

> LSTR: I say, you are employing someone here with
> bilingual or multilingual capacities and if you want that,
> if you want someone with fluency in another language
> as well as contacts and cultural understanding in
> another culture or group of cultures then you have to
> actually give on what you expect.

Mentoring at work

Certain tasks are more appropriate for international students than others in the Australian workplace and certain kinds of organisations will benefit more from employing them, especially organisations that have interests or alliances overseas. One participant suggested that the international student or bilingual professional needs to create an alliance with a native speaker of the 'other' tongue to perform with confidence in written business contexts particularly.

> LSTR: I say to students you will need a life mentor who is a first language English speaker for most of your professional life and it shouldn't be an issue of cheating... it is perfectly appropriate to have a relationship with another professional who has the other language and share that final edit for each other for the rest of their lives. I say to employers, you need to read over their text before you send it out. Otherwise, face to face it is easy for them try to work out uncertainties in communication. On paper though, if you want them sending out external public text I would check it. That is something you need to do if you want the other benefits of employing people from diverse cultures. Some organisations and industries do genuinely benefit from that other cultural context, others are not so interested.

Job interviews

The vocational training staff participants suggested that a useful document for them to produce would be targeting Australian employers with advice on how to get the best out of interviewing culturally diverse second language candidates. Giving them time to frame a response during the interview was considered an important strategy. They also suggested that they might gather data on the typical job interview in the student's home country culture to identify the different expectations and processes involved in a successful Australian job interview. One teacher recalled her own shift in strategy for succeeding in an interview run by a Japanese employer:

> LSTA: I would normally go in to a job interview to
> say how experienced I am and why I could offer as far
> as my knowledge. I went completely the other way...
> what I needed to learn, how wonderful Japan is.
> Nothing about my experience... and I got it.

Student liaison group

During the course of the interviews with the teaching staff and the vocational trainers, a proposal to develop a campus 'liaison' group of culturally diverse students who were achieving good grades in their courses was developed. It was felt that this group could make professional presentations to recruiters and employers about the benefits of a culturally diverse work force and act as a showcase for the campus community. The researcher and vocational staff recruited students by soliciting lecturer recommendations and then inviting these students to become members. The group is named 'Cross-cultural University Liaison Team' and was launched at the Campus in August 2004 with a presentation lunch led by the students. The formation of this

group provided an opportunity for students to showcase their translator skills and intercultural networking potential on a web page linked to the university page but also open to potential employers. It was intended that this group would also work in peer support of students who were having difficulty adjusting to the the Australian university context.

In summary, teachers were knowledgeable about the range of challenges facing their international students, including emotional, social and academic challenges. They displayed empathy, sympathy and a duty of care for these students but also anxiety over what they perceived to be inadequate educational approaches and institutional support structures for international students and their teachers. Teachers identified a tendency for most of their international students to be teacher-dependent learners whilst the Australian university curriculum tends to be designed for independent learners. Careful induction of students into this unfamiliar and even diametric educational approach was considered to be essential. Teachers described an additional characteristic of international students to be a reluctance to ask questions, particularly critical questions. They identified this as a problem for international students across their academic and professional practice in the Australian community. Teachers also identified inappropriate expectations of Australian employers of international students. They also suggested strategies to assist international students to communicate more effectively in the Australian academic environment and workforce including job interview training, mentoring relationships at the workplace and better promotion of international students' knowledge and skills to employers.

4.3 Effects of cultural theory on teacher's perceptions of international students (Research Question 3)

In this section, results for Research Question 3 and three sub-questions 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 are described and discussed. Handouts on a range of accessible theories of either intercultural sojourning or intercultural communication were provided for teachers in discussion at Workshop One and prior to Workshop Two in order to assist them to build more complex understanding of their students' encultured beliefs, customs and values. The selected theories were also intended to establish some strategic theoretical resources for teachers when they attempt to interpret and affect student behaviour by their own communications.

Research Question Three: How do theoretical concepts used in the training program to reframe the intercultural study sojourn affect teachers' perceptions of the international student?

It was considered useful in the study of this thesis to identify teachers' responses to alternative framings of the international student compared to the conventional method of identifying them as Non English Speaking Background (NESB) or English as a Second Language (ESL) students. In the training program developed for this study international students were defined in Workshop texts and activities as bilinguists and multilinguists. Teachers were asked to consider the effects of this shift in definition. This led all participants to reflect on the role of language itself, and specifically, the changing nature of English as a result of its status as a global language and the implications of this for university teaching and assessment. Participants were also asked to respond to the definition of the international study sojourn as heroic (Campbell 1946 in Hart 1999). As Campbell has pointed out, all societies possess myths of heroic endeavor and achievement and there are cross-culturally consistent

elements to this endeavour (Campbell 1946). This was considered as an accessible theoretical framework for teachers by which they might reconsider tendencies to focus on the discrete challenges and 'inevitable' failures of the overseas study sojourn and, instead, see the value of the enterprise as an holistic achievement.

In addition to theories of the sojourn, teachers were provided with readings from culture-general theorists differentiating cultures according to dimensions or tendencies. These theories included: Hofstede's individualism/collectivism and power-distance tolerance dimensions of culture (1984, 1986); Hall's high and low context theory explaining culturally different communication patterns and reasoning (1959); and, Stewart's activity orientation theory differentiating cultures by their view on human activity (1972). It was an objective of this study to identify whether teachers could and would usefully apply such culture-general theories to their own teaching and learning context.

Research Question 3.1: How does the definition of international student as multilingual or bilingual sojourner affect teachers' perceptions?

An important personal ability

All participants agreed that bilingualism or multilingualism was an important personal ability that deserved recognition. One participant commented, 'We should remember when we have a student here, they are fluent in their own tongue and competent in English'. Another said, 'Absolutely, I see my students as multilinguists.' Several participants suggested how this concept could be valued in educational practices. One participant said that he frequently reminded students that they had an advantage over most Australian students as they spoke more than one language, 'I use that concept in class all the time, to spur students on.' Conceiving of the international student as a

bilinguist or multilinguist rather than a NESB student was deemed by most participants as an important pedagogical practice for providing successful intercultural education in English only:

> LSTR: I start all presentations to our teachers with
> 'All our students speak two languages and some of
> them speak five. English is one of those and not always
> their best one'. That is a different approach from 'we
> teach people who speak English as a second language'
> as that is to focus on the lack of skill or the second
> rateness rather than the impressive set of language
> skills they have. I can usually see people like our
> Indian teachers and Japanese teachers nodding their
> head because some of our Indian students speak six or
> seven languages, they are amazing, we have to
> somehow try and value that in our Uni, it is an
> academic talent.

Valuing other languages

Most participants expressed regret at their own limited capacities in other languages and those of the nation, Australia, as a whole:

> LSTB: Valuing other languages is a big problem in this
> country because we are not a multilingual country, we
> are lucky to say we have one language. I have two
> other languages at a 'get by' level but we are talking

about cultures like most of the Indian cultures have six languages and we have one.

Global use of English

The global status of English (see Bryson 1990; Kachru 1996; and Pennycook 1995) and the implications of this for both students and teachers was a topic of much discussion in Workshops and interviews and was frequently introduced by participants when discussing bilingualism and multilingualism. The implications of the commodification of English as a global language has worrying ideological implications for many English language university teachers. One commented, 'So the future will be computer- literate and English-literate versus illiterate.' Several participants recognised that the educational pursuit of English can have negative as well as positive outcomes:

> LSTD: I had a friend from the Phillipines whose family
> migrated here when he was in his teens and he can't
> speak English properly but can't speak Filipino either,
> so he has sort of ended up partly illiterate in two
> languages.

Varieties of English

Many participants were aware of and referred to the many varieties of English and the many dialects that exist across the globe and across the international student population. In this respect many teachers felt that it was anomalous to speak of one English language:

LSTB: I have been conscious for a very long time there are many different kinds of Englishes. I read this again recently, that there is no such thing as an English language, only dialects. It is all just various dialects and I am a firm believer languages are not static or universal in the sense there is only one English. Even in Australia there are many different kinds of English depending on class, background and the state you are from. It is going to be different in India, Indonesia, they have national varieties of English which are not better or worse than what we have.

Accents

Ironically, the particular brand of English that is valued as a commodity by international students, is not always Australian English. One participant commented, 'Even in English teaching there were a number of jobs that I did not get because I am not from North America'.

Participants perceive that particular accents in English are valued by English language students more than others. As a consequence of the global spread of American popular culture the American accent has high value across international student groups. The Australian accent is not as highly valued but it is still privileged as a first language English accent and preferred to second language English accents. At the case study campus many teaching staff and administrative staff have second language English accents and this causes some concerns for both students and teachers:

LSTR: We live in a multicultural country and we have a

multicultural staff room and a heavily accented staff

group. A lot of students complain that they can't

understand the accent of the teacher or other students.

This is frustrating... I get pissed off when students

want to be moved to different classes because they

can't understand the teacher's accent. It's like, wake up

to yourself buddy, you have an accent yourself and so

does everyone else here. It can lead to the really absurd

scenario where the student is complaining to you about

someone's accent but you can't understand exactly

what they are saying because they have such a heavy

accent themselves! How do we create an educational

environment where learners actually want to become

competent in understanding different accents in English

instead of criticising people who present to them in

English with an accent?

Most participants agreed that learning to understand different accents in English was

an important skill for international students:

LSTE: I think they should be exposed to a range of

accents. I think it is a great thing to have people

speaking English with different accents. It will be

beneficial for the students even in their everyday lives.

If they have only one way of listening, they won't

improve.

Listening skills

Many teachers claimed that they had developed listening skills that enabled better understanding of any accent over time. Many participants had years of experience in teaching English to non-English Speaking Background students and one said, 'I have become good at deciphering.' The ability to understand English in various accents, most commonly developed through exposure rather than training was perceived as a valuable teaching aid. One participant commented that they sometimes felt pressured in the classroom when students asked questions, if they were unable to make out the student's accent:

> LSTR: I have one student, a Chinese girl, she makes me sweat when she talks to me,... when she says something,... and sometimes it is in front of a class of other students and I just look at her and I think, 'Christ, what the hell did you just say?' I know it is English but, ...you know,... you just look at them. It's very frightening actually, especially when you are an English teacher because you think that, well, if they can't explain it to you, there is probably no other English speaker in the country that can understand them.

Being able to learn to understand an accent in any language seems to depend on the ability to develop higher level listening skills and is identified in this study as a valuable intercultural communication skill that can benefit both teachers and learners.

Explicit valuing of this skill is required in the classrooms of Australian universities with international students as it seems currently to be undervalued, by students in particular, who may privilege some accents in English over others.

English use by students

Most participants remarked on international student English usages and described what they perceived to be important to this usage in the university context:

> ALC: I say ... grammar is not the most important thing.
> Go to the Learning Skills Unit and get help on more
> than grammar. Even native born speakers can write a
> lousy essay, I tell them.

Some participants expressed an initial shock or disappointment in the English expression of their students:

> LSTR: I was shocked when I first got here in 1996, and
> I was asked to read a first year student's assignment
> and someone said 'help this student', I thought, (laugh)
> you've got to be joking! I cannot fix this... The
> students can enter a university with intermediate level
> of English language skills from college. They would do
> much better if we enrolled them as advanced English
> speakers. But I guess these are marketing imperatives.
> Universities compete for full fee paying enrolment and
> English entry standards are one of the factors students

consider.

Anxiety over inadequate English entry standards and testing is a common finding in studies seeking the perceptions of Australian academics teaching international students (Klerx & Wang 1998; Zifirdaus 1998). Although many of the participants in this study expressed the same concerns, most participants had adapted to their students' different usages of English over time and their anxiety decreased as they became used to working within a different language assessment paradigm that acknowledged usages rather a single usage.

Assessment of student assignments

Many of the teachers had developed highly pragmatic approaches to assessing students in response to the problematic usages of English in their assignments:

> ALB: In terms of marking assignments I say, look I am
>
> not here to teach you English or critique your English
>
> but the bottom line is, if I can't understand what's on
>
> the page, you have got a problem, and not just with me
>
> but everyone.

Indeed, development of English language skills is not an explicit objective for any of the academic programs at the case study campus although many teachers did attempt to assist students to develop these skills. English expression usually figures as a 'presentation' element in marking criteria for course work and it is weighted from 5-15% of the overall mark. It seems both possible and justifiable to assess second language or bilinguist and multilinguist student text in a different manner compared to assessing native speaker text:

LSTR: There is no way that you can give marks if you can't understand it, that's fair enough. But if there is a developing idea in there, and you can get your head around it, you know that if they were in a truly global context they may have a few other languages to help them out with the finer points of the meaning... so I think there is justification for that.

One participant justified a pragmatic approach to marking student assignments in second language English:

LSTR: I don't know if a person using English in the second language can ever be usefully measured against a native speaker standard. Second language students should be measured for excellence in the the context of them being second language speakers, as bilinguists or multilinguists some of whom have actually become brilliant English speakers and some of whom are just competent. Either way, it is quite an achievement.

This is backed up by Kachru's claim that second language speakers are erroneously judged by standard English grammar as they have a more catholic grammar as a result of their multilingualism (Kachru 1996). Teachers can grow to accommodate this distinction in their approach to assessing international students. Teachers are able to justify this in the context of the spread of English so that we can now meaningfully

speak of 'global' usages of English, the recourse their international students have to other languages by which to communicate and the fact that English language is not a core criteria for assessment in the programs international students prefer, usually within the schools of business and technology. One academic commented, 'You will all be examined for your knowledge of the course not necessarily how well you express yourself. It's an equity issue really.'

A pragmatic approach to assessment is something teachers developed over time and saw as a pattern of change across the sector:

> LSTR: If you imagine that you did submit in French at
> the Sorbonne, do you imagine that that lecturer in that
> decade (1960s) in that country would mark your
> French language and assignment with the same attitude
> that you approach it now?

> ALA: I don't think so. I think they would be tougher
> then. I think now I would get a better deal. They are,
> everybody is more experienced with people from many
> different countries and customs and languages and
> backgrounds and they have realised you can't expect
> people to speak whatever the language is to the level
> we have grown up with.

Many participants commented on a tension between their desire to assess the students pragmatically as second language students and their pedagogical desire to

assist them develop their expression, 'It is problematic because on the one hand I am trying to help them get it out in the way they mean, because I always fought to do that too... But on the other hand, I hear myself saying the most important thing is not perfect grammar.'

Appropriate assessment criteria

One participant suggested that evidence of further learning and competence in language over the course of university study was an appropriate assessment criteria for second language university students:

> LSTA: I think there does have to be some standard.
> There has to be something to say they have reached a
> Uni but within that there has to be a level of flexibility
> as well ... when they come here if they have a particular
> level of English, part of being here is learning, and it is
> not that they should leave with the same level they
> came with. There should be a progression while they
> are here in their content and learning but also in their
> language and understanding.

Teachers in Australian universities may be able to assess international student language use more successfully and more equitably, by seeking to assess students for progress made in expression over the term of the course, rather than against a single standard of grammatical correctness constructed by and for native English speakers against which they can never realistically hope to excel as non-native speakers.

The alternative approach to a such pragmatic approach to assessment of international students was seen as inflexible and unrealistic and even inequitable:

> LSTB: We all joke about the poor expression but some teachers are vitriolic... they simply won't tolerate or accept grammatical error or lack of clarity. It is not a joke, I use the term 'language Nazi'. That's what it is. It is a form of Nazism, this is not pure so we have to get rid of it. You end up with a farcical situation like the French with Academie Francais with nationally regulated language. Just too bad for them that kids on the street (not just the kids) are using words that are not in that language. Language changes. Look at Shakespeare and English today. Look at the varieties of English in local news agent, read *Financial Review* and then *Ralph* magazine. Not the same thing.

An appropriate and pragmatic approach to valuing multilingualism and bilingualism in university teaching and learning is to practise culturally and linguistically contextualised assessment of international student texts.

Research Question 3.2: How does the hero's model (Campbell 1946 in Hart 1999) affect teachers' perceptions of the study sojourn?

It was considered useful to this study to identify in what ways the overseas study sojourn could be perceived as an heroic undertaking by Australian teachers. Heroic undertakings are by definition high-risk undertakings and the early stages of entrance

into the unknown 'other world' normally induce great anxiety and uncertainty which we may refer to as culture shock in the context of the heroic study sojourn. Most participants displayed admiration for the perseverance of international students attempting to pass Australian university courses. However, most participants also qualified their admiration with reference to what they perceived as inappropriate motivations for the study sojourn. Several participants questioned the wisdom of students with ordinary academic and English language skill, undertaking what for many participants was so difficult that it was almost unachievable:

> LSTR: A hero must have some weaponry or at least
> the skills to convert available resources into some
> effective tool for overcoming the trials. A hero without
> that is more likely to end up a victim!

All participants felt that the hero model was to some degree applicable to the student experience of academic sojourn although they did not tend to perceive of the students as heroic prior to reading Hart's theory (1999). One academic commented: ' They are heroic... in the sense they have stepped into a new culture and must struggle for the first semesters; educationally they are heroic and they struggle.'

However, many participants also felt that this 'heroism' was compromised by the other agendas that students and educational providers brought to the international educational transaction. There is a growing tendency for international students to enrol in courses and programs that can qualify them for permanent residency on the basis of possessing certified knowledge and skills in areas where the Australian work force is suffering an under-supply. For some participants, this was perceived as a

173

cynical purpose to a higher education and should not be a feature of University education that providers promote or exploit although there was a conviction that this kind of promotion was occurring, particularly with overseas agents. Students who are perceived to be selecting university programs according to the potential they hold for permanent residency rather than for genuine educational purposes were perceived by some participants as non-heroic and even potentially threatening. This teacher anxiety over students' educational objectives fits the collectivist/individualist dichotomy that Hofstede (1986) drew where collectivists were found to see "education as a way of gaining prestige... and of joining a higher status group" whereas, in individualist cultures "education is a way of improving one's economic worth and self respect based on ability and confidence" (Hofstede 1986, p. 2). Another distinguishing feature between the educational objectives of collectivists and individualists is that collectivists believe that "acquiring certificates, even through illegal means, (cheating or corruption) is more important than acquiring competence" whereas, individualists believe that "competence is more important than acquiring certificates" (Hofstede 1986, p.2). Such oppositional and deeply encultured values about the purpose of education imply that many Australian teachers may be unable to see the overseas study sojourn as heroic unless the purpose of the sojourn is individualist, that is, to pursue competence by legal means and not for the sake of certification or enhanced social status.

Another participant felt that the overseas study sojourn still qualified as an heroic project even if undertaken as a step towards applying for permanent residency through immigration as immigration itself is heroic.:

LSTC: I think it is very brave. I don't know if I would

ever do it. ...I know there is great cynicism that

students are doing study to immigrate and many do

want to immigrate I think that is very heroic, more

heroic than I think studying in English in a foreign

country . To immigrate on your own! If I was going to

do it, I would think about returning and always have

that sense.

Several participants commented on the heroism involved in the students' efforts to

conform to and sometimes challenge the bureaucratic system of university education:

ALC: They are heroic in coping with the whole

infrastructure (the administrative, bureaucratic

side)...Some of them struggle enormously to get things:

under staffing; slowness of process. All kinds of

heroism going on. I have seen a student go though six

steps to get their name on my class list. I said to this

young woman: you are a hero: nine weeks of

persistence.

At the early stage of the study sojourn/heroic journey the student hero may display

symptoms of culture shock that have been compared to symptoms of schizophrenia

(Weaver in Hart 1999) including "heightened anxiety, illogical thinking and

withdrawal from reality," (Hart 1999, p.8). Several participants referred to the

international study sojourn as a kind of madness and referred to a tension that they

experienced between perceiving of the students as heroic but also unrealistic.

ALC: What would be a bit mad,... if I went to another country to study in another language (I would only go if I were adequately prepared), but if I went and I knew that I was not prepared – and I know there are students here like this, that would be a little bit mad. We have some students like this… they just want to get in and swim as fast as they can. They don't see it as mad. Observers see it as a bit mad. They have confidence in their ability to find a solution which is touching but… They believe if they just hang in there… their cousins have done it...the ones who throw themselves in though they are not good swimmers… they only have determination and hope. Strikes me as mad but not them...You have reminded me of another form of heroism… no madness I mean. I have students who have to write 3000 word reports, work in groups, be good time managers: they have three jobs. Always harried, always saying to me... can I hand it in later? They are tired, that is a kind of craziness.

The perseverance of the students was begrudgingly admired by some teachers as many felt that the students' own lack of preparation and lack of understanding of the preexisting knowledge and skills required to achieve in an overseas university program contributed significantly to their own hardships.

Entry to University, particularly postgraduate programs is granted on the basis of an assessment of past study in overseas countries and some participants felt this prior study was of highly variable quality and attested to variable levels of English competence. In addition to the complex problem of accurately assessing overseas study programs used as the basis of entry to Australian programs, the absence of entry testing for English competence conducted by the case study university was seen by some participants as a regrettable and institutionally convenient factor contributing to the variable English competence of students. This variable competence was perceived as problematic for the individual student and their teachers but one participant felt that it was potentially problematic for the Australian community:

> ALB: Look I have a problem with any student coming into a different country and language and trying to study. To be honest with you I think the only reason it exists in such profusion in this country is that is linked to immigration. What is happening in this Uni is an extended scam... Not a total scam but a scam in the sense if you say to someone, your English is great come on in, you shouldn't have a problem, the teachers are great, all these services are provided, come in, come on in and at the end of it you might even get your residency..., that is where the scam is, not testing applicants, they just say, yeah come in... I don't want to put the spotlight on this place. It's going on at other universities increasingly... but these students are

graduating, some with Masters, and they cannot speak an adequate amount of English. Think of the impact of this in science and engineering. We put this screw in this bolt and the bridge should stand up. Oh that bolt, I thought you meant the other bolt (laugh).

All participants responded in the negative when asked if they would attempt a degree in an overseas country in a second language, even a participant with fluent Japanese and seven years living experience in Japan said: "The thought of studying at University in Japanese to me is comical." Others with only limited fluency in another language agreed:

LSTR: There is no way, even if I was offered three years free tuition in college Japanese, I don't think I would go. But Japanese is not the language of globalisation, technology and international trade. So I haven't got that imperative but our students do. So we are sort of caught in an ethical dilemma I suppose.

ALA: I had very good French when I was in my early twenties but I always knew I would never have enough language to study at the Sorbonne in French. I never had the guts to do it.

In summary, most participants found that elements of the students' intercultural study sojourn across language could be described as heroic but also unrealistic

depending on the degree of preparation and focus the students were able to bring to the task and also depending on whether their objectives were 'truly' educational within an individualist paradigm. All participants judged themselves under prepared and unwilling for such a challenge. The hero model proved a useful tool in the training program as it helped identify and distinguish appropriate educational objectives as perceived by teachers and students. The distinction in core educational objectives between collectivist culture learners and individualist culture teachers can mean that Australian teachers may view the study sojourn with disdain rather than as heroic. The hero model also prompted participants to identify and articulate aspects of overseas study sojourn that they did perceive as heroic and this included personal qualities of courage and persistence that enabled students to decide to take the formidable challenge of studying overseas in the first place, and then to persevere through phases of homesickness, cultural disorientation and academic failure to achieve their qualification.

> LSTB: What amazes me is their persistence. The persistence of human nature... But it amazes me how many of them get through. The majority get through but they are not Einsteins or Rockefellers. They do something that for me, I couldn't do, wouldn't even want to contemplate doing... and I wouldn't expect a child of mine to do it either, I wouldn't dare.

The hero model proved a useful intercultural training tool as it prompted participants to identify both heroic and non-heroic aspects of the overseas study sojourn from the perspectives of Australian university teachers.

3.3 How useful are culture-general theories to teaching and learning practice in the university context?

In the multidimensional training program developed for the study in this thesis, culture-general theories were introduced to participants to provide a theoretical element to their learning about the effects of cultural difference on the teaching and learning process in Australian university. It was found that for most participants, the culture-general theories introduced in the Workshops were new to them. These theories included Hofstede's dimensions of power-distance, individualism and collectivism (1984, 1986), Hall's theory of low context and high context cultures (1959) and Stewart's theory of activity orientation (1972). Participants all felt that these theories were useful and many of them spontaneously applied the various theories to aspects of their practice and, in interviews, demonstrated that they had reflected on these theories, developed an understanding of the theories and a willingness and ability to use them:

> LSTC: The definitions and descriptions were all quite
> new. I think they apply to my teaching job, I find them
> really interesting. Each one tends to encourage me to
> think of something else and then I find a link with each
> of the others...

Several participants said that these culture-general theories were useful because they developed one's perception of the complexities of intercultural communication. As one participant put it: 'They help you to put some reasoning behind student behaviour instead of pulling your hair out and thinking "Why don't you get it?!"'. All participants felt that it was useful to build teacher awareness of these theories in

Australian universities and the explanatory value of four of these theories is discussed next in relation to how teachers made sense of their students' study sojourn.

Research Question 3.3.1: power-distance tolerance (Hofstede 1984, 1986)

Australia has been identified as a culture with relatively low power-distance tolerance and participants expressed discomfort with the students' habits for liberal use of honorifics when addressing teachers. "I suppose I can relate to power-distance tolerance theory in the sense when students first start here and have a first appointment there are a lot of 'Sirs', and I tell them you don't have to call me Sir. So to begin with there is that hierarchy." Most participants expressed discomfort with this form of address and attempted to establish a more democratic teaching and learning relationship with mixed success. "I have just given up trying to stop them calling me 'Madam', it is their code to use the honorific but it makes me uncomfortable. It makes me feel old". Such unquestioning deference to the teacher is a common characteristic of students from high power-distance cultures (Hofstede 1986) and was seen by several participants to be detrimental to a student's ability to engage freely and critically with and even challenge the ideas put before them in their university programs. It was also seen as a contributing factor to student unwillingness to ask questions in class. As challenging the teacher's ideas and speaking up in class are valued behaviours for low power-distance culture teachers, reluctance of students to do so was seen as a negative aspect of their learner behaviour, even though such reluctance was due to respect for a teacher. Further, the extravagant gratitude displayed by students for acts that teachers perceived to be part of their everyday work was also mentioned by several participants to be disconcerting and inappropriate: "The gratitude can sometimes be overwhelming too,

like, Honoured Lady and sincere most wonderful Madam, God Bless and all that. I just marked his assignment!"

Differing degrees of power-distance tolerance were also seen to be problematic for international students entering the Australian work force where assertive behaviour and competitive performance are valued:

> LSTR: We are not in a position to force the
>
> employers to be equitable or to value different cultures.
>
> You can't, you can only equip your students with the
>
> knowledge and expectation of what that highly cultured
>
> workplace interview is going to be like. I mean, the job
>
> interview is probably more cultured, or certainly
>
> equally cultured as a wedding! So sort of structured,
>
> fixed and formalised that it is very cultured. I suppose
>
> in their own cultures, their idea of a job interview might
>
> be very different. They may benefit by deference and
>
> modesty in the presence of an employer, but here it is
>
> different.

Some participants suggested that high power-distance tolerance may be part of the reason why students frequently approached the lecturer to request a change in grade. One participant described such an interaction where a student pleaded repeatedly for a Pass even though the teacher explained that even if she wanted to it was beyond her power to do that. Students at the case study campus must, and do, appeal to the Faculty for a review of grade if they wish but often not before they have appealed to

the individual teacher. One participant reported that "there is an assumption that you could do it if you want to, you just don't want to. It is very frustrating for both parties." The collectivist expectation that a teacher can give preferential treatment to individuals where they deem it is warranted, conflicts with the individualist expectation that teachers are strictly impartial (Hofstede 1986). This collectivist/individualist aspect to the intercultural teaching and learning relationship was felt by teachers to also be an outcome of high power-distance tolerance assumptions where students perceived the teacher to possess the power to over-rule or dismiss university-wide policy and regulation.

.

Research Question 3.3.2: Individualism/collectivism (Hofstede 1984, 1986)
The individualist/collectivist dimension of cultural difference defined by Hofstede (1984) was briefly outlined to the group and became a favourite theoretical tool for analysis in teacher interviews. Several participants recounted their own overseas sojourn experiences in explaining why they thought this theory was useful as an explanatory framework.

> LSTR: When I was in Japan I had my five year old
> daughter with me and she attended a local Kindy that I
> also taught in one day a week. I was working 1pm to
> 9pm every other weekday and was not able to see my
> daughter very much as Kindy ran from 9am sharp or
> God help you, until after 4pm. She was not able to
> speak Japanese so it was a bit of a challenge for her. I
> went to speak (through an interpreter) to the Principal
> of the Kindy to explain my problem and ask him if I

would be allowed to bring her in a bit later in the mornings but he refused. His argument was that all the children must be treated the same and no-one was special. I was very disappointed and I wanted to say to him, it is clearly and irrefutably evident that she is different to the other children but he wasn't going to allow any exceptions, part of being a good collectivist! Perhaps he thought that something like that might attract discrimination by making her stand out.

Individual excellence is a respected achievement in individualist countries like Australia and the collectivist commitment to the good of the group rather than the excellence of the individual struck many participants as 'strange':

> LSTC: Reminds me of one of the very first I think, moments when I was in my first year of teaching at XXX High School where there were very few Aboriginal students in the school. I had a group of students and one would be happier to work with a particular group and fail than work on his own or work with another group that would pass. Because that wasn't his goal. Working with the group he wanted was far more important to him than passing.

Individualists generally perceive that groups are formed to achieve an outcome in relation to a task and group members may change as the task at hand changes

(Hofstede 1986) but collectivists form in-groups for many reasons that are not associated with any particular task or challenge. These reasons are often due to a sense of social obligation, social dependence and the need to achieve and endow others with a sense of belonging (Lustig & Koester 2003). One participant expressed her bewilderment teaching in Japan when she became involved in assisting to coach the after school sporting clubs which were tellingly named 'social clubs'. She expected that individual sporting performance would be the measure of who did and didn't get on a sporting team but found that, instead, a complex social hierarchy decided who were and were not to be members of a team and this was often dictated by seniority in age regardless of sporting talent. "For the first year that you were in the social club you had to pick up the balls for the older students. You weren't even allowed to play! Teams were not really a team. It was not who was best at the sport and worked best together, it was who was senior and due a place on the team." In the context of the collectivist/individualist dimension, it can be argued that the teams were simply Japanese style 'teams' rather than Australian style 'teams' and the student from the previous example wanted to stay with his group and fail school assignments because the sense of social belonging developed by and for members of a group is more important than any material outcome to a task. These observations about collectivist culture values and practices have implications for intercultural group work in university contexts that are described further in the findings in Research Question 5.

Research Question 3.3.3: Activity orientation (Stewart 1972)
All participants agreed that this theory had relevant explanatory value. One participant voiced the natural concern of any member of a 'doing' culture:

LSTE: I think it is very important to be aware of these

intercultural theories but apart from being aware of

them, what can you *do* with them? Be more lenient?

Is that what it means?

University study was perceived by participants to be structured within a 'doing' paradigm and many of the students enrolled were identified as from 'being' or 'becoming' cultures. This was seen to cause various problems for students and teachers, for example, the concept of time and the importance of time in relation to punctuality and meeting deadlines was a topic of much discussion. Many participants complained that their students frequently arrived at classes half an hour to an hour late. The vocational training staff felt that this was a significant problem for students entering the Australian work force, "We have to convince them that they must be there 10 minutes early or the interview is over." Many academics complained that time management by students was poor and applications by students for extensions on assignments were frequent and often not justified. At the case study university, a significant number of students also apply for deferred exams and this was linked by one participant to the common practice in Indian institutions where examinations are scheduled with more flexibility taking into account when the student chooses to sit for them. A teacher reflected on the effect a rigid western conceptualisation of time might have on students who are from 'being' cultures:

LSTR: I suppose the 'person' of the Aussie

University is such a 'doing' culture, 'do it by then',

very structured, no exceptions with measured penalties

for not doing things. Rigid time tabling and measuring,

a 'being' person could be quite overwhelmed.

One participant theorised that a 'being' cultural paradigm might explain the difficulty a lot of students have practising critical thinking:

> ALC: It may be that those students that struggle most with critical thinking could be those from the being cultures. I mean, if you are a fatalist, what's the point of thinking critically?
>
> They just sit and smile through it and you get the impression that it's fine with them but it just doesn't mean very much at any deep level. They will do it to get through something but in the long term it is not something they will use a lot. I get so many dreamy eyed students, Indians especially, and they look blissful throughout and that could be being culture meeting a doing lecturer. I am not getting through on any deep level. They are the students who hand in the assignment and you just get this rudimentary critical thought, Almost a compromise, pure pragmatism at work. I think a teacher who can see that behaviour from the perspective of different cultural activity orientation will understand the classroom situation much better so that theory is directly applicable and very interesting.

This raises a fundamental problem for 'doing' culture teachers with 'being' culture students: how to motivate students to be 'critical' in the interest of solving problems when 'being' culture members have a fundamental belief that life is not a series of problems to be solved, but a series of events to be experienced (Lustig & Koester, 2003). Further research may seek to identify how teachers may assist 'being' culture students to re-orient their activity orientation in a 'doing' culture university and/or how 'doing' culture teachers may revise their teaching method and materials to accommodate a 'being' culture orientation.

Research Question 3.3.4: High context and low context cultures (Hall 1959)

It was noted by all participants that most of the international students enrolled at the case study campus were from high context cultures whereas the majority of teaching and administrative staff were from low context cultures. Using Hall's theory (1959) to understand this difference in the significance attached to explicit messages and the significance attached to non-explicit, contextual messages or meaning between cultural groups was considered useful by teachers. Several participants suggested that Hall's theory (1959) partly explained the reluctance of students to express their views and ask questions in class, although this is a conventional behaviour for collectivist culture members (Hofstede 1986). High context cultures identified by Hall (1959) include Japan, Mexico and Latino countries which also tend to be listed as collectivist rather than individualist cultures in Hofstede's ranking (1986). Defining characteristics of high context cultures include 'strong people bonds' and 'reserved reactions' (Lustig & Koester 2003, p. 135) and these characteristics may be consistent with those of collectivist culture members who may practice reserved behaviour to maintain the status quo and who are heavily represented in the student population of the case study campus.

Understanding the culturally different behaviour of teachers and learners in the context of their high or low context culture background was a useful complement to understanding them from a collectivist/individualist perspective. High or low context theory (Hall 1959) places an emphasis on the significance of the communicative context, in this case, teaching and learning, and tries to explain the effect of this context on people from different backgrounds in relation to what they are, and are not, able or prepared to do as communicators. Low context teaching may not be a very effective method for facilitating learning for these high context students but as students are unlikely to express their concerns explicitly, being from high context cultures, the low context teacher may never know:

> ALC: It also leads to a situation where teachers speak
> too much and seem arrogant or rude and overbearing. I
> think an Aussie teacher would probably be seen to over
> verablise a point where it seems to them that they are
> not quite saying enough. Where students sit there and
> think well this lecturer is a little bit over the top but
> they never verbalise that. It creates problems like that
> and we should be aware of these distinctions

Another useful insight that many participants experienced when discussing this theory was related to the inadvertent communication they were engaging in on a contextual level with their context sensitive students:

> LSTC: I look at myself coming from a low context
> cultural condition, used to very explicit communication

and teaching experience with students coming (and I think the majority of our students here) coming from high context cultures and so there's a lot of meaning that is probably implied in their perceptions of maybe what I am doing or saying or even the situation we are in that I am completely unaware of, possibly, in that sense and I would love to be more informed about what sort of meaning they do gather from the situation.

Some participants reported tension between themselves and students on occasions when they sent inadvertent messages either through body language or embedded situational behaviour, "something I have missed", that they were unaware of. They were also concerned that they may say something explicitly which students may perceive as relatively unimportant compared to other contextual elements of the message. Many participants commented on the power of the explicit statement or verbal message in a low context culture and the problem that they had sustaining the integrity of their statements with high context students:

LSTB: I think a lot of the time we do say 'No' and in this culture it does mean 'No'. To some students you have to say it 100 times before they understand and even then there is a sense you are being unhelpful. You can do it, but you won't. A lot of them have difficulty understanding that we will keep on saying 'No', no matter what... I think a lot of the students, the cultures they come from, if you want something, if you

complain enough, you will get it.

Hall's theory (1959) of high and low context cultures proved a useful intercultural training theory because it assisted teachers to identify possible cultural reasons for a reported student capacity to construe meanings that the teacher did not intentionally construct or when students fail to recognise the importance placed on explicit messages in Australian university practice. This theory assisted teachers to recognise possible cultural reasons, further to a collectivist reading, that may promote reserved classroom behaviour in students and also caused teachers to reflect on possibilities for adapting their own low context teaching styles to accommodate high context learners.

4.4 Teaching strategies for cultural diversity (Research Question 4)

In this section results for Research Question 4 and sub question 4.1 are described and discussed. An important aim for the study in this thesis was to identify and disseminate pedagogical strategies that teachers felt contributed to successful teaching and learning experiences across culture. No such guidance existed in documented form or in professional development program options prior to this study at the case study campus.

Research Question 4: What teaching strategies are effective in negotiating the cultural diversity of teachers and learners?

Although teachers were not interculturally trained they had each been practising for a minimum of two years at the case study campus. This question sought to identify strategies that teachers had developed through their own initiative and tested in their ongoing practice of teaching and learning across culture that they perceived to be

effective in teaching international students.

Meta-tutorials

The majority of research participants referred to an extra classroom procedure required by international student groups that one participant termed as a 'meta-tutorial' and an 'extra dimension' to teaching at University. That is where the course materials and the problems set for the students are secondary to assisting students to develop fundamental generic academic skills necessary both for a critical approach in researching the course topic and also for responding in required assessment formats. That is, international students need to be taught how to learn in an Australian university and how to demonstrate that learning in report and essay format where domestic students were perceived to have pre-existing understanding and competence in such educational practices. It was felt that this was a valuable teaching necessity for overseas students trying to negotiate an academic field in the context of the Australian university.

> ALC: The first report is a major struggle and I have to spend the next two weeks explaining to them how they critically reflect. Almost like a join the dots diagram... they see the comments and the red on their essay and these comments say you need evidence of critical reflection and then they say something to me that makes it clear to me that they don't know what critical thinking is. They never say that, they give me a very high context way of understanding that they don't know how to do it. I say give me a proposition and

they don't know what that is so I explain. It is back to the basics but all students have to learn it but these struggle more. I write some propositions on the board and explain what they are, literally true or false you know. And I say, now the proposition can only be stated as such. They find it interesting but it turns the class into a critical thinking class and strays from the course material.

Pacing of speech

A common anxiety associated with this practice was the consciousness of the time constraints of the course schedule and the need to 'get through' the content material in the same time frame as domestic students but still create 'extra' time to explain fundamentals. One teacher commented, "It takes a while, you can't teach someone to think critically in an hour, it is an entire course." All teachers referred to the need for them to slow down their speaking and also modify their use of language. This itself compounded the time problem.

> ALB: Speaking slowly, modifying language use, asking questions you wouldn't ask a normal say, first language English person. Discussing topics: include all religions or no religions, be sensitive to people's beliefs try not to leave out, marginalise or offend any of them.

Referral to Learning Skills Unit

Referring students to the campus Learning Skills Unit was mentioned as a key

learning support strategy for all participants. The Unit's ability to offer dedicated student assistance was seen as an important contribution to the student's ability to cope with the courses and was seen to a enhance the teachers' ability to cope with the demands of the students in terms of time. One teacher said: "I keep on telling them, 'Go to the LSU, they can give you a whole hour on your problem only whenever you need it'. I talk about that all the time". This dependence on the study skills support unit suggests that in order for Australian teachers to focus on getting through the actual course materials and activities, an academic support unit is critical for international students. In particular, providing individual attention for students with academic problems was difficult for lecturers with large classes but was considered a highly valuable service, especially for new students. An effective study skills support unit for international students was perceived also to function to support academics and was most effective when support included individual attention, in addition to written guides and regular group sessions.

Guidance in answering the set questions

Another problem teachers noted for students was what some participants defined as an inability to understand and answer the actual question. As noted by Fox (1994 in Gay 2003, p.331) and mentioned in Chapter 3 of this thesis, international students tend to write extensive background information with plentiful narrative as well as include personal experience and opinion in their academic assignments. One teacher commented, "They spend three quarters of a page doing background history and one quarter of a page answering the question." The organisation of ideas in written and verbal discourse is influenced by culture (Ballard 1990; Gay 2003). Divergent tendencies in textual organisation between cultural groups have been defined as 'topic-centred' versus 'topic-associative' textual organisation (Gay 2003, p.326).

Australians prefer the first process in which, 'cognitive processing moves deductively from discrete parts to a cumulative whole with a discernible closure," (Gay 2003, p.326). Other cultural groups, particularly those from 'being' or 'becoming' cultures rather than 'doing' cultures (Stewart 1972), may prefer a topic-associative style of textual organisation which is "episodic, anecdotal, thematic and integrative... ," and "...may address more than one issue at a time," (Gay 2003). For a topic-centred teacher who is unfamiliar with this discourse style, it may appear "rambling, disjointed and as if the speaker never ends a thought before going on to something else," (Gay 2003, p. 326). This topic-associative style also features a tendency for responding to questions indirectly and great attention to introductions which may be "extensive enough to prompt such comments from teachers as, "Get to the point" or "Is this relevant?" (Gay 2003). Further research may seek to identify to what extent culturally different patterns of textual organisation feature in international student assignment work and whether teacher awareness of such patterns influences their approach to teaching and evaluating their students.

Guidance in distinguishing the task element

One participant recommended that teachers should try to distinguish the task element of the question from the topic of the question which many international students had difficulty doing:

> ALA: When I am trying to make them choose a topic, I
> go through it and try to point out the difference
> between the topic area or the subject and the academic
> task: the topic is not what the question is. Like in film
> and television, we are not saying what's your favourite

film, or tell me everything you know about the film industry. ..That is often a bit complex, because they don't make that distinction they just see the subject. There was one question about festivals and they all fell into the trap of telling me about what their major state festival is. It doesn't matter how many times I say, 'It is not asking you about that, ...look! Can you tell me any words in the question that ask you about your state festival?' So trying to go through things like that.

It is very important to topic-centred teachers that students answer the question and only the question that they are asked. In addition, textual progress is linear, piece by piece, rather than circular and a topic-centred teacher may demand this textual organisation of their students regardless of cultural background:

ALA: I talk like a broken record about a paragraph that the main point is the first sentence, all the other things are not another point but explanations, examples something that by the end of the paragraph you are now clearer about that point. But I can't actually spend the time to teach them how to write! I can spend an hour somewhere because I have taught writing.

Student writing guides

Essay and report writing guides at the case study campus also promote topic-centred textual organisation and such structuring is frequently outlined as mandatory in

Course Profiles which describe assignment structure and format and assessment criteria which are linked to these textual elements. In such a thoroughly topic-centred context, students benefit from adjusting their textual styles to be topic-centred but teachers may also be better positioned to assess their students' work if they have an understanding of the influence of culture on textual organisation. Teaching international students critical thinking skills and topic-centred textual organisation skills was deemed by most participants to be crucial to their success at Australian universities but outside the capacity of academics who were committed to their own course schedules and topics and, in many cases, unskilled in teaching study skills in this context.

Clarification of sentences and vocabulary

Several lecturers commented on the need for clarifying meaning not just at the textual level in terms of how the parts relate to the whole, but also at the sentence level and at the level of vocabulary. One commented, "Sometimes it is too much when each and every sentence has to be elaborated, restated and explained." Students are required to read complex academic text and respond to it in their assignments. This is perceived as very problematic both in terms of quantity of text and complexity. One teacher commented, "I tell them the course is going to be difficult and so are the articles, but try not to panic, just try and get the main idea." The problems in comprehension and expression of academic text experienced by international students appear to be overwhelming for Australian academics who may not have the time or the expertise to teach academic communication skills for Australian university study. Such skills are not generally required of academics with Australian students and seem most effectively provided by a dedicated and specialist study skills support program.

Encouragement of class discussion

Class discussion was seen to be a useful tool for clarifying meaning and learning to apply ideas for all participants but particularly academics who engaged with students in large groups rather than one to one. Many teachers sought to elicit existing knowledge from students (about their own culture or cultural artifacts that are well known) and use this to do three things: to get students to identify a text or context that they actually know in order that they might apply and test concepts or theories; to create a culturally diverse and inclusive classroom; and to facilitate student learning of other cultures whilst learning for their academic topic. One participant suggested discussion of creative topics was a useful strategy for starting cross-cultural group discussion and gaining trust:

> ALA: If you are talking about something creative,
> people are going to open up. I use that in class all the
> time. Who is interested in this or that or the other?
> And the number of students I used to find who were
> interested in drawing, painting or design or whatever!
> They loved to talk about it. So you would rabbit on
> about that and then you could go into other areas
> because then they had gained your trust. So I don't
> care what the subject is I often start off conversation
> on that creative level which appears to have nothing to
> do with anything but which I am deliberately using.

Assistance through group work

Non-academic topics may be less threatening to international students and may assist

them overcome a reluctance to participate in group discussions. Many participants suggested that international students benefitted greatly from participation in group work activity and some felt that this may be related to the high concentration of students at the case study campus from collectivist cultures (Hofstede 1986). Participants identified various teaching strategies that facilitated effective intercultural group work. Some of these strategies were not perceived as commensurate with traditional pedagogical objectives of creating multicultural groups, an objective particularly important for English language teaching where first language conversation between students was seen as unhelpful to the immediate objective of learning and practising English.

> LSTR: If you have got an Australian class and you are
> looking at it as a multicultural class and you are trying
> to create multicultural groups, it may be the approach
> from an Australian Anglo background where you are
> trying to create something a little more diverse and
> highlight it, whereas here, the students are often in
> some kind of emotional upheaval being away from
> home and are craving their own culture for
> companionship and they feel especially early in a
> course or program, when they are put in same culture
> groups and they are presenting their country, it makes
> them feel better. Somehow it gives them some
> anchorage and then later, they can move into more
> diverse groups, when they have had a chance to learn
> about them.

Peer support in same cultural groups

One participant observed a tendency for students of the same culture to sit together and suggested that this could be usefully exploited: "I have devised a set of discussion questions and go around and say, OK what is the Indonesian view on this? Who's going to tell me what your representative view is? And get things out of them so each group can see no-one is more or less important and everybody has something to say that might be interesting."

Many participants commented that their students learned a great deal about other cultures incidentally to the formal material studied as part of their course. This knowledge was perceived as highly beneficial both by students and teachers. "If you put them in same culture groups in lesson one, they get to present their culture together, like showcase their culture and they get really involved and they learn about other cultures and then they feel more comfortable talking about their own." One academic commented that the most frequent feedback she received from students about the course she taught was, "I loved learning about the other cultures." Another said, "They learn so much informal knowledge about other cultures which they find fascinating, much more interesting than the (laugh) impervious theory of the course they are supposed to be studying." Putting students into same culture groups for an early session in the course was also seen as a means of relieving some of the time demands international students can place on the teacher: "You have such a short time and that support gives them a sense of ease because you know, they feel that person next to me understands what I feel." The intercultural awareness and sensitivity training program assisted teachers to identify strategies for group work in class that they felt were beneficial in culturally diverse classrooms.

One to one consultations

All teachers reported spending extensive amounts of time consulting with students on a one to one basis but particularly the Learning Skills Unit tutors. One LSU teacher emphasised the importance of taking time to recognise the students as individuals rather than generalising them as representatives of a particular cultural group:

> LSTC: That first moment we meet people is very
>
> important. Perhaps in our rush to get into that
>
> assignment we forget to make eye contact and don't
>
> discover where they are from and make contact with
>
> those individuals and not make those generalizations
>
> and get caught up in those culture-specific, you know,
>
> stereotypes about cultures. That would be the danger I
>
> guess, thinking she's a this or that, you know, whereas
>
> they could fit anywhere as an individual.

Recognising the cultural differences that distinguish people, or culture-specific knowledge, can lead to stereotyping defined as "beliefs about a group of people that give insufficient attention to individual differences among the group's members" (Brislin 2000, p.198). As the learning skills tutor pointed out above, it is important to maintain an awareness that in all cultures, individuals differ from each other whilst they also share certain group characteristics (Gudykunst & Kim 1997). Adler (1997 in Brislin 2000, pp.203-4) argues that stereotypes can be functional if they are: consciously held; descriptive rather than evaluative; accurate based on evidence; used only as a 'first best guess' guide to communication; and are modifiable. Culture-specific training conventionally approaches cultural difference through enumerating

specific beliefs, values and practices that distinguish one cultural group from other cultural groups and may inevitably contribute to stereotyping. Culture-general theories were considered useful in this intercultural training program because they described tendencies of belief and practice around which all cultures differ. Culture-general theory builds a descriptive matrix of alternative world views and related systems for communication of meaning across which different cultures merge and diverge and resists the tendency to isolate any one cultural group. Indeed, as the training workshops and interviews progressed, participants developed a preference for referring to specific cultural group members as 'collectivists', or 'being culture members', in place of 'Chinese' or 'Indian.' This is still generalising or stereotyping which is a normal and necessary human function of organising and remembering information (Brislin 2000). However, striving for complexity in thinking about members of other cultures is essential to developing intercultural awareness and sensitivity (Gudykunst 2003; Gudykunst & Kim 1997; O'Sullivan, 1994). Culture-general theories assisted teachers develop more complex stereotypes of their students and encouraged them to communicate across culture with an awareness of both cultural norms and individual diversity. This level of sensitivity in intercultural communication was most achievable in one to one scenarios.

Continuous listening and checking

Many teachers reported that students have difficulty expressing their ideas in a second language and this requires that teachers listen intensively and concept check continuously which is, again, time consuming:

> LSTE: It is often uncertain... you try and understand
> where they are coming from. Usually, I reword what

they said to me and check if that is the same message. It's the same reading their writing: tell me in your own words. If I completely don't understand why or what they are doing, I guess it makes me frustrated but I just ask them to tell me more and keep the focus on my understanding, not them. If they keep talking eventually there has to be some understanding

Mutual respect and sense of humour

Many participants found elements of the work they were doing across culture and language humorous and enjoyable as well as challenging and risky:

> LSTB: I think treating people with a certain amount of respect but also a sense of humour helps a lot. If you have a sense of humour you will be surprised what you can get away with but also, unfortunately, you may be surprised at who you can offend. I am quite proud of the fact that here I have never had a student say to me: 'You have offended me'. To me that is a kind of success... What surprises me is that I do tend to make these students laugh and I am surprised at the universality of the humour, which I thought would be pretty peculiar to my culture...

The simulation of Workshop One generated laughter amongst workshop participants, as well as other emotional responses. One participant reflected on the amusement

some students experienced in response to some of the presentations and ideas that were put to them:

> LSTR: Some people respond to limited clarity with
> humour (I am accustomed to limited clarity) and others
> are disturbed by it. I think some of our students find it
> a bit hard to take any of this seriously... and they
> laugh a bit, giggle and talk under their breath to friends:
> 'What the Hell are they on about?'

Another participant felt that whilst the task of teaching international students in Australian university in the medium of English was challenging to the point of being absurd, it was also a ground breaking educational undertaking:

> ALC: Is it beneficial to teach these students in English?
> The sum total of suffering has increased therefore the
> World is a stronger place, you know (laughter). As you
> know I think this campus is in a very important
> position. It is a sort of open laboratory... an
> experiment in motion.

Participants identified useful group work strategies, a dedicated study skills support program for international students with individual modes of assistance available, complex thinking about cultural identity and a sense of humour and willingness to experiment as valuable strategies for teaching intercultural groups at Australian university.

Research Question 4.1: What knowledge, skills, attitudes and practices should/not distinguish intercultural teachers from intracultural?

It was considered useful for the study of this thesis to identify whether teaching across cultures demanded different knowledge, skills, attitudes and practices of university teachers compared to teaching within the same culture. In terms of teaching experience with domestic Australian students, half of the participants had experience of such intracultural teaching. They identified what one participant called an 'extra dimension' to teaching international students or a 'meta-lesson', a kind of lesson about the lesson that was not necessary with domestic Australian students to the same extent:

> ALC: I find myself doing things here that I don't do at XXXXX Uni or any other campus until recently. I don't do it in other campuses as much but other campuses are increasingly multicultural...there is an extra dimension in teaching here... I think the approach to lectures and tutorials has to be adjusted and that's why that extra dimension is needed. In the classrooms...you can't just give the lecture and say 'right that's it. See you next week' quite as much as you can... that's the meta-level which I think needs to come up at end of every lecture and tutorial.

Extra teaching challenges

Most participants agreed that academics across the rest of the Australian higher education sector probably did not want to enrol greater numbers of international

students into their programs because of the extra challenges involved in teaching them. These challenges require that teachers review both their teaching method and materials so that they are simple, interculturally appropriate and inclusive. This requires knowledge of other cultures and also requires an understanding of teaching and learning processes and culturally different pedagogies. Australian university teachers may not have this knowledge.

More labour intensive teaching

Participants felt that teaching international students was a more labour intensive task than teaching domestic Australian students in terms of lesson planning to include 'the lesson about the lesson,' extended and repeated explanations (in curricular and extra curricular), modeling of thought processes and textual organisation, slower and less certain interpersonal communication, and greater need for interpersonal communication between teachers and learners from linguistically and culturally different backgrounds. In this context, it seems that teachers were required to make at least a partial shift away from an Australian model of student-centred learning culture and practise a greater degree of class leadership and control than they would otherwise practise with Australian students.

Familiarity with Government regulations

Teachers felt that it was necessary for them to understand the DIMIA regulations as well as Educational Services for Overseas Students (ESOS 2000) legislation in order to understand the heavily regulated international student study context and the frequent effects of this regulation. International students are required to enrol in full time courses and allowed to work 20 hours per week maximum. International student fees are approximately $12000 per year and are due up front. Students must

successfully complete 50% of their courses over a year and must maintain 80% attendance of their courses. If they do not fulfill these requirements, they can be deported. This creates significant pressure for students, particularly new students and students from countries with weaker economies and limited resources such as Bangladesh. Some participants felt that these social and economic factors were contributing to the limited performance of international students in academic assessment tasks:

> ALC: There are much too many students working too much outside Uni. It pulls the range of grades down. Students have two or three jobs and study full time. They are not allowed to study part time.

Teachers as regulators

All participants expressed discomfort with the degree of governance and control that the DIMIA and by default, the University, and the teacher had over the experience of an international student. The teachers are, in effect, the regulators as they collect the attendance data and decide the grades. This teacher monitored data has serious legal, financial and psychological implications for international students and in this respect a 'teacher's duty of care' is escalated in the international student context. The regulatory nature of international student enrolment redefines the role of the Australian university teacher and challenges some core principles to the learner-centred pedagogy conventional to domestic Australian university practice. As Australia is a highly individualist culture (Hofstede 1986) which places a very high value on privacy and the autonomy of all individuals (Lustig & Koester 2003), including learners, it is not surprising that Australian teachers find their required

participation in the strict regulation of the educational experience of international students discomfitting:

> LSTB: Yeah, the moment you say to a student that 'DIMIA will hear about this', the moment they hear that magic word... very scary! I mean, if you are here on a visa, what is it? Department Immigration and Indigenous Affairs? They want to know all about you, everything, address, phone number, bank details, where you are, all those grossly intrusive (on your privacy) things. If it were our government, and we had to do that, we would be jumping up and down. I have always been surprised that the orientation here is compulsory and attendance is taken and if they don't go they have to come in and explain why. That is Already into that authoritarian model. I think we can do well without having to do that.

Another participant expressed discomfort with the government categorisation of countries by risk and attendant restrictions on students from particular cultural backgrounds: "Well, we have 'category four' countries which I found quite amazing ...when I first discovered the DIMIA ranks whole countries by perceived risk of going Absent Without Leave and puts all kinds of restrictions on university applications from citizens of those countries."

University teaching in the context of extensive regulatory requirements attached to

maintenance of international student visas was seen as more stressful than teaching groups of domestic students who are relatively free from such restrictions of government authorities. The international student visa system imposed a more teacher-centred pedagogical paradigm on teachers and learners than is conventional in the domestic Australian university sector. Students from collectivist cultures may wrongly assume that the apparent teacher-centred elements to their university study in Australia are attended by other common collectivist features of teacher-centred education where teachers are expected to give preferential treatment to some students (Hofstede 1986) but in fact, as individualists, Australian teachers aim to be strictly impartial (Hofstede 1986). If students believe that teachers can award grades preferentially, they may also believe that they can award grades with discretion and this may be a factor contributing to the high number of submissions for review of grade (over 1200 last semester with 3600 enrolments). This can also lead to intercultural conflicts and academic participant reported frequent incidents of students appealing to them to change their grades for no other reason than that they needed to pass, but also incidents of students accusing teachers (unfairly) of racial discrimination in grading. Culture-general theories, such as the individualist/collectivist dimension of culture (Hofstede 1986) constitute useful knowledge for Australian university teachers with international students as they assist teachers to anticipate, identify and negotiate the culturally different expectations and problems of international students.

Level of student achievement

International students were perceived by their teachers to be fairly low achieving in terms of average grades for courses, particularly in the first semesters of both undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Currently, 13% of students enrolled at the

campus fail 50% of their courses and the highest failure rate is amongst newly

enrolled students. Perceiving international students as low-achievers is not an

uncommon occurrence amongst Australian academics. In fact, it can be such a strong

perception that some academics may not even consider any genuine adaptation of

teaching style to be worth the effort. This is clearly articulated in the following

discussion question in a workshop at the University of Canberra:

> Should there be a hidden curriculum for international
>
> students, whereby sufficient reductions in standards
>
> are made, so that such students pass their courses and
>
> subsequently, International student funds are
>
> preserved? (Phillips 1993, p.197)

All academic participants agreed that in their courses, credit and distinction level

students were rare. Each of these participants quickly contextualised what they

perceived as relatively low grades for international students in comparison with

domestic Australian students with observations on the problems of studying in a

second language and in a foreign community:

> LSTR: Now if you went to another country and
>
> studied in another language, you would probably
>
> sacrifice something in your performance... inevitably
>
> you would end up struggling as a pass student rather
>
> than excelling as a distinction student... Even if you are
>
> a hyper intelligent student, you would be unlikely to
>
> excel in a second language degree.

Sensitivity to cultural and linguistic difference

This claim supports Pennycook's view that linguistic ability is not indicative of academic ability (Pennycook 1995) and whilst academics with ongoing experience in teaching across culture may be able and prepared to acknowledge this whilst teaching and assessing international students, other academics across the Australian university sector are not (Zifirdaus 1998). Ellingsworth offers a possible explanation of this inability or unwillingness of the host community academic to adapt communication style and content, "where the initiator has more status/power than the respondent, he or she may use that advantage as a substitute for adaptive behaviour and may continue to do so throughout the interaction." (Ellingsworth in Gudykunst & Kim 1984, p.276). From the perspective of intercultural sensitivity, this would place such academics at the denial end of M. Bennet's continuum (1986): where international students are not perceived as 'different' but 'worse'. The ability to be sensitive to cultural difference and its effects on student academic performance was considered a necessity for effective teaching and learning across cultures.

Common attitudes that intercultural teachers display in their approach to their practice include a willingness and ability to adapt teaching practice and materials, a firm sense of the contextual challenges that their students face and a pragmatic and linguistically democratic approach to evaluation of international student progress in Australian university practice. This study identified the following intercultural communication skills as beneficial for teaching culturally diverse international students: intensive listening skills, skills for recognising accented English, skills in identifying and addressing people from other cultures appropriately. Knowledge of DIMIA and ESOS regulations, teaching and learning theories, culture-general theories and their applications in academic practice, and culture-specific knowledge was considered to be highly beneficial to effective teaching across cultures in Australian

university. These attitudes, skills and understandings may usefully distinguish intracultural teaching from intercultural teaching.

4.5 Teachers' perceptions of Australian models of education for culturally diverse learners (Research Question 5)

In this section, results for Research Question 5 are described and discussed. Australian models of education are continuing to prove popular with international students and Australia is a "clear global pacesetter," (Gallagher 2002, p.1) as a provider of international education. This is argued to be partly a consequence of systemic features including "Australia's generally open and interactive approaches to learning,... and (arguably) the existence of consumer protection and quality assurance regimens" (Gallagher 2002, p.1). It was considered useful to this study to seek evaluations of how well Australian models of higher education serve international students, from the perspectives of teachers located at the core of the sector, in this case, a predominantly international student campus.

Research Question 5: What are teachers' perceptions of Australian models of education for culturally diverse groups of learners?

Problems of fit

Many participants reported experiencing a problem of fit between the educational materials and methods implicit in the university courses and the international student audience. This study found that the problem of 'fit' reached back into the earliest teaching experiences of those participants who were originally teaching English in ESL and EFL contexts.

LSTR: A lesson that appeared in every elementary

ESL syllabus I taught before Uni teaching was 'describing people' and a lot of the vocabulary we teach was irrelevant to the Asian students I was teaching because we teach them to identify: does this person in the picture have brown hair, blonde hair , orange hair, red hair is it curly, frizzy hair? And then they have free production activities where they to go about the room describing other students and they have to guess which student is being described. But then I thought, God, I have a roomful of people with dark straight hair and dark eyes. How long can this take!? It is such an ethnocentric lesson and it is designed for people... Europeans...who seem to be a type of people who have greater variations of hair colour and noses and eye colours and stuff than a lot of other racial types and it struck me as a very culturally insensitive lesson in all the ESL books.

Other participants encountered problems of fit trying to apply the communicative language teaching method to EFL scenarios. One teacher was criticised by a student in her class in China on the last day of her employment in the school. He was not happy with the way she had taught the class. The teaching was not very book focused and he felt the class could have learned more. This had a profound effect on the teacher who was applying text book communicative language teaching method from the TESOL course she had completed but it was not a method that many of her Chinese students could appreciate. The communicative method was perceived by

research participants from ESL/EFL teacher backgrounds to be fundamentally designed for ESL contexts where it was feasible to expect students to interact with speakers of the target language on a regular basis. In EFL environments, there is almost no opportunity for out of class exposure to or practice in the target language. Hence, functional English was not functioning.

> LSTA: When I did TESOL I did it in Japan but the course material was from Australia and it was heavily focused on the ESL environment. Then my situation I was applying to was EFL and I thought, it doesn't really fit quite the way you think it should. In EFL environments they don't get the opportunity for practice which is so core to communicative method

Restrictions on teachers

Participants felt that a willingness and an ability to 'adapt' method or pedagogy as well as materials was a required element for successful teaching and learning across cultures. Teachers at the case study campus felt a tension, however, between this need to adapt material and method and the restrictions placed on them in regard to changing the courses they taught or the way they are delivered and assessed in their current university workplace. One teacher referred to his job as playing 'piggy in the middle':

> LSTB: We have great scope to give students advice but we don't have any authority. There are good sides and bad sides to that. I think what we have to do, what I

do anyway, is teach the students about the system
here. What the system expects of them.

In the context of working at a predominantly international student campus rather than the state university body of the joint venture, lecturers at the case study campus are restricted from authoring or developing the actual courses. That is a task the case study campus contracts the 'home' university to complete and academics employed at the case study campus have significantly higher teaching loads than the state university academics whose workloads include research and contributing to ongoing course design and development. Teachers at the case study campus felt that this restricted their capacity to create effective teaching and learning experiences tailored to international student needs:

> AD: I am effectively an assistant lecturer to the lecturer
> on the state campus. I don't and can't set the exam, I
> don't and can't mark it. How do you change a course
> to accommodate intercultural students when you don't
> have the authority?

Campus differences

The state funded, authoring campus has an international student enrolment of around 10% compared to the international student campus which has an enrolment of over 90% international students. In the interests of quality standards and compliance, as well as being an outcome of the provider agreement between the 'home' university and the predominantly international student campus, students study the same material and complete the same tasks as the domestic Australian students on the state

campus. Courses and assessment tasks tend to be structured according to Australian pedagogical principles which is not surprising as they are authored by Australian teachers in a state funded university with largely Australian students.

> LSTR: Our university curriculum was not written to accommodate this cultural diversity so we actually have a problem of fit as far as I am concerned and we are bearing that load, the lecturers and the teachers are trying to bear that load of creating a better fit without making any formal changes to the course so there are problems, there is anxiety.

This limit to the teacher's capacity to revise, rewrite or even write a course represents a serious challenge to the capacity for even interculturally aware and sensitive university teachers to create interculturally friendly, appropriate and successful teaching and learning experiences for their students. It also sets up a challenge for the continuing professional development of teachers at the case study campus.

Australia-specific course materials

Teachers described some of the cultural problems they identified with the course materials, for example, many courses and prescribed text books and readings offered case studies of Australian scenarios often involving extensive slang and Australia-specific government and institutional policies and regulations that international students are completely unfamiliar with and may never encounter in their postgraduate careers. They are required to research and write essays and reports in a

second language in formats that they have not been instructed to work in. One participant linked such unrealistic tasks and academic expectations to the level of plagiarism in the campus:

> LSTR: They (the students) are just required to conform
> and if they can't conform because they can't practise
> the cultural norms then they often fake it...
> plagiarism,...or buying an essay because it is
> desperation and an unrealistic expectation that they
> will be able by osmosis to become willing and able to
> practise our required standard of academic expression..

Appropriate learning and assessment

Several participants admitted to straying from class tutorial exercises set by the state university academics because they simply did not work with international student groups. This was despite the Faculty policy to complete the same assessment tasks based on the same materials on every campus. One teacher was persuaded to stick to the tutorial plan by her Coordinator. The task was for each student to select a discussion question and undertake a prescribed reading then give an oral presentation to the class explaining main points of the article and posing three questions for the class that were generated by their research. The teacher found the students naturally reluctant to give oral presentations in their second language in front of the class and that, moreover, they were even more challenged by the task of reading, comprehending and effectively critiquing academic articles that were difficult for them to understand.

ALA: The presentations were painful in the extreme. All the other kids thought 'Good it's not me' and switched off and didn't listen to the poor kid struggling out the front and when they came to their questions you would see the other students jump, 'Oh, sorry I don't know, I wasn't listening'. I just thought this is a waste of time. Many of them were either not reading the articles or not understanding them.

This participant's solution was to locate the oral presentations in small groups instead of in front of the class. The teacher felt that oral presentation to the whole class required an additional set of skills that there was not time to teach these students in the twelve weeks within which they had to cover the content of the actual course.

Another academic found a similar problem in a postgraduate class which was structured around group seminars where students would be required to read complex academic texts and then give presentations explaining and evaluating these texts for the rest of the class:

ALC: They can't understand the readings, they can't speak sensibly to them if they can't understand them, they haven't really had enough time to read them again and again until they understand them.

Setting up same language reading and discussion in small groups was proposed as a

possible solution to this :

> LSTR: If you have discussion groups in the same language, like a home culture reading group, understanding comes through discussing and explaining to someone and that is one way to learn about any topic. Native language discussion, if you can structure it, would be useful. Some of them can't have really engaging discussion about the bus timetable in English.

The Learning Skills Unit teachers were all keenly aware of the problems that international students had both consuming and producing academic texts common to Australian University practices and standards.

> LSTR: The LSU is positioned there solidly between the different cultural paradigms of what university study is about. We are trying to impart the Australian culturally learned way of response, step by step in classes and in individual consultation. They have to learn from scratch, how to find academic text, how to read it, how to quote from it and then how to frame their own ideas and express them as argument in essays or as data in reports. It takes time to learn it and to unlearn other 'academic' practices that don't work in the Australian context, and we have better results with some than others, you know that's the variation of life.

Learning Skills Unit teachers read multiple assignments from the entire range of university courses and so were in a good position to critique some of the assignment tasks and identified what they considered was good practice in this respect for international students.

> LSTA: The best structure is the revised ##### course where the first assignment is an annotated bibliography covering several articles, and then an essay due several weeks later. That is brilliant! There were more like that: a first assignment weighted very low and due early in term. But some of the courses assignment one is due in week eight and worth 50% and if you fail it, you may well have failed the course. Whereas if assignment one is due week four and is worth a low mark and is teaching the process required to complete assignment two in terms of reading, evaluating reading and referencing maybe they will have more chance to pass the course.

Setting an early, low-weighted assessment task was perceived as a beneficial practice for academics as well as their intercultural students , as many were attempting to view a first draft of student assignments in order to assess whether students were on track before they submitted work for formal assessment anyway. This contributed to additional 'assessment' workload for academics who were willing to undertake it as it effectively meant marking the same assignment twice: informally and then formally. Hence, if a first assignment was due early, involved research and

referencing, was weighted low in terms of marks but was, nevertheless, a genuine assessment piece, both the students and the teachers may benefit. Early, low-weighted assessment tasks requiring quotation and referencing skills were perceived as a particularly good strategy for circumventing plagiarism in main assessment tasks as students had an opportunity to learn how to avoid it before they can do irrecoverable damage with a major submission. Such an assessment policy may also create greater motivation for students to apply themselves to exams. One participant explained that many of the courses required students to pass all assessment tasks in order to pass the course and that a large number of students did not attend their final examination because they had already failed the course in their assignment element so there was no point. Opportunities need to exist for case study campus academics to give feedback to and collaborate with state university course designers and developers about culturally sensitive features of course design, process, materials and assessment tasks and criteria to more effectively accommodate the needs of international learners.

Customer service approach

Many participants commented on an ideological tension between the current University customer service approach to the enterprise with the case study campus management positioning students as 'clients' or 'customers' rather than 'students' (who are ideally, 'always right' and in this context, should therefore pass their courses), and a more traditional university model of assessment by merit against impartial and immutable assessment criteria:

> LSTR: I feel there is a tension between compliance and
>
> regulation on the one hand, and equity on the other,
>
> because this university is such a complex number of

distant campuses now but everything has to be regulated, done on the same day, at the same time, in the same format etc or we could be accused of disadvantaging or advantaging students, right? So, we have got compliance measures and auditing systems all over the place but whilst this guarantees certain equitable measures, it might also guarantee an inability to accommodate differences, like true handicaps, such as, the linguistic handicap in this context, this sort of thing. There is a kind of corporate-institutional tension going on.

Quality systems

Ironically perhaps, the internal quality system and auditing process was perceived to set up another barrier to the possibility of teachers adapting the teaching materials and processes prescribed in Course Profiles for a better fit with international student needs.

Several participants expressed some discomfort working in an educational environment requiring impartial and consistent assessment practice but also requiring commercially advantageous outcomes in terms of student progress. Several participants commented that many students held the inappropriate expectation that high fees somehow justified high pass rates. It was suggested that students had culturally different perceptions of what 'good customer service' from university educators would mean and that it was beyond the capacity of Australian academics to deliver on some of these perceptions:

LSTR: Many students have the expectation that one of their lecturer's primary roles is to provide good customer service in return for significantly large amounts of money and they expect you to be constantly available and to grade them very generously. But then there is this other contradictory model operating amongst students which is 'the esteemed teacher' model from a lot of Asia where the teacher is right and you mustn't argue with the teacher, and there is a bit of a conflict for them and for teachers. And sometimes the students will swing one way or the other depending what's working for them. And of course, management here are pushing the customer service model very, very hard so sometimes a teacher gets stuck in the middle. And you don't know which model is going to be dragged in front of you.

Student failure

International students' reactions to failing their courses were a source of concern and in In Workshop Three a role play was conducted around an intercultural problem where students protested against the grades they were given for a particular course by holding a hunger strike on the front steps of the campus (see Appendix 7). This role play was designed to provide an opportunity for teachers to work through some of the concerns that they associated with such student expectations and to envisage the scenario from the perspective of the students. In the role play scenario, the students accused the teachers of 'failing too many of them'. The group discussed the

concept of failing or being failed and what it meant to switch from active to passive tense.

> LSTR: I don't think it is acceptable to say that 'you have been failed' or to say 'I have been failed', you know, they mean '*you* failed me'. I always say to students, 'No, *you* failed, I marked. These are the course expectations, that is what you have been taught, and that was the assessment and you were given all that to begin with and you failed to meet the minimum criteria'. But in the customer service model, it's like, 'Well, I paid, I want my pass'.

The same participant explained how another student had asked to be moved from one class to another in the same course. When it was not possible, she asked why he needed to do it and was told the teacher was 'disgusting' because he failed international students who paid a lot of hard earned money to enrol in the course. She commented:

> LSTR: For many students it is mainly about money! In most commercial environments, money talks but it doesn't talk here in the university context.! You can't get a refund because you fail. I think that they find that a little hard sometimes trying to reconcile those two different worlds.

Student expectations

Participants agreed that there was significant student perception that teachers were there to provide good customer service and for many of them this meant that as long as they handed in their assignments they would pass the course. This is not an inconsistent assumption for collectivist and high power-distance tolerance culture members, for whom obeying the teacher may be adequate justification for passing a course regardless of the competence level of the work. Whilst this caused frustrations for the Australian teachers, they all resisted any compulsion to award grades on a paying customer principle:

> ALD: I think it is very accurate to talk about the
> customer service model of campus management here,
> but it is not right that if students are paying money,
> they should pass the course. There are certain
> expectations as well - from them - apart from paying
> the fees. It has probably got to be that way with every
> university.

Many participants commented on the students' unrealistic expectations to receive what they needed and when they needed it. One was disciplined by management as she was unavailable to students for two days. Hence, university management of delivery of higher education to international students was seen to be problematic by teachers because, in the case study campus model, it restricted a teacher's authority to author, or even significantly adapt, teaching materials and processes. In addition, management at the case study campus was perceived to be vulnerable to productivity imperatives that may conflict with impartial educational values. Students also

225

caused teachers discomfort when they invoked their rights as customers and appeared to step out of the traditional role of obedient student. Many participants observed that it was difficult for international students to take the word 'No' seriously. Some participants suggested that this was a cultural effect as many students came from cultures where a straight 'No' is not a message they are accustomed to give or accept. Apart from the personal appeals or demands to change grades or to review assessment tasks, some of the student's demands on teacher time were also seen as inappropriate. One teacher recounted an exchange with an international student who repeatedly pleaded for another appointment to check an assignment even when shown that the appointment diary for that day was full. The student was offered a cancellation or to leave the assignment but insisted on having an appointment. The teacher thought that:

> LSTR: There is obviously a perception on their behalf
> that there is another layer of decision making, like, I
> think it is related to power-distance: 'I know you can
> make this decision I just have to persist', and at home
> it may be a behaviour that is rewarded in some way,
> like you are expected to court someone's protection or
> favoritism and it can be really annoying for westerners.

It seems paradoxical that teachers, who are perceived by high power-distance and collectivist culture members to be the rightful and ultimate authorities of their practice (Hofstede 1986), cannot always convince these students to accept their decisions. A member of a culture that is more tolerant of significant power discrepancies amongst community members will presumably have developed skills

for negotiating these power differentials to their own advantage. One of these skills is to be able to elicit preferential treatment from people in positions of authority (Hofstede 1986). Hence, whilst international students may tend to invest Australian teachers with significant power to make decisions over teaching and learning matters, they simultaneously invest these teachers with the power to over-rule their own decisions. One of the participants had a novel piece of advice:

> LSTB: A lot of the students we see, come from a culture where 'No' doesn't necessarily mean 'No' and there are ways of turning it into a 'Yes'. We have to find ways of saying 'No', but saying 'Yes' at the same time. (Laugh) Sounds weird I know.

Some Asian cultures, Japanese in particular, avoid saying 'No' at all (Irwin 1996). It could be that some students do not even hear 'No,' as a meaningful utterance in intercultural exchange. For others, it may be an invitation to open negotiations with an authority figure. Either way, Australian teachers have a need to convince their culturally different students that educational decisions will be impartial and not-negotiable within Australian university on grounds other than competence or equity.

Australian models of university education have limited application to effective teaching and learning for international students when they include ethnocentric topics, issues and language, when they cannot be revised and adapted by intercultural teachers and when the core values defining the educational roles and responsibilities of teachers and learners are not shared by and clear to all parties to the undertaking, including educational management groups.

4.6 Teachers' perceptions of valuing languages other than English (Research Question 6)

In this section, results for Research Question 6 are described and discussed. As multilingualism is a valuable global ability and resource, and, as global dominance by the English language threatens the existence of other languages (Crystal 1997), it was considered useful to this study to assess whether Australian university teachers were prepared to work with other language elements in the teaching and learning process and, if so, what ideas they had considered over the course of the training program to accommodate this.

Research Question 6: How is it possible to value other languages in an English-medium university course? How has training influenced teachers' perceptions of this?

Class Exercises

All participants felt that some effort to include and value other languages in the Australian university context and particularly for international students was justified. One participant reported on her experiences of using two languages in teaching and justified recourse to first language in second language study on the basis that it provided for deeper understanding of complex issues. She described a class debate exercise:

> LSTA: We took discrimination as the topic and the two
> teams had to research and find their points. It was
> done in English but only to a point when we realised
> they are never going to be able to do this so we decided
> to run it twice. First they did it Japanese and they

went off. We had to call time out a few times and the
English version worked well. But I honestly think if
they had done it just in English they would have been
terrified and they would have been able to develop
much less understanding. At the end they said can we
do it again? I am so glad they did it.

University documents

Many participants mentioned the possibility of the university producing both
spoken and written academic text in other languages but all participants also found
this a problematic practice largely because of equity and resourcing concerns:

> ALC: It can be done and how is hotly debated. It may
> be desirable but it always raises the spectre of
> discrimination. Other students are very quick to
> identify things as introducing another inequity. We can
> only ever chose a certain number of languages. We do
> not have unlimited resources.

Policy texts

With reference to the multiple layers of policies, rules and restrictions related to
teaching international students, including university wide regulations, course
requirements international student visa laws and regulations and international student
rights as defined in ESOS, several participants suggested that translation of these
texts into different languages would be useful. Many participants commented on the
complexity of these regulations and policies in terms of the language used and also the

sheer volume of text covering policy/regulation. One academic stated: "Explicitness doesn't work in English in this university context because it is not possible to be both explicit and simple in regard to these rules." Hence, several participants agreed that policy texts should be available in other languages.

Student assignments

Several participants felt that instead the students might be allowed to submit elements of their work where necessary in a first language and that this may be resourced by the university in the form of providing teachers with access to translator services.

> LSTR: You are a teacher you read some of the
>
> students' really poor English text and you think, God!
>
> You can't see what they are thinking inside their head.
>
> If you can at least read some annotated first language
>
> notes... Resourcing is a problem because we would
>
> have to pay someone to read it out, not assess it,
>
> teachers can do that, but read out what it says.   It
>
> might be petty cheap. I wonder if it is worth it and
>
> what other ways we can make it a genuinely
>
> international education where it is OK to write some
>
> sentences in another language in an essay.

Other participants pointed out that it was accepted practice in humanities subjects for English speakers to submit work with Latin or Greek expressions. One participant pointed out that whilst he had done that in his undergraduate assignments

he had first confirmed that his lecturers knew Latin or Greek or else he would translate

> LSTB: If they are going to put it in another language and I think it is a fantastic idea, but maybe if they submit work in their first language they could also put in an abstract translation, what that document says in English. It would be good for them to put ideas from another culture into English, things you can say in English might be impossible to say in another language and visa versa, I don't see a problem with using other languages.

Student demand for global English

Several participants expressed concern over the possibility that students might not want other languages being built into a university program that they had enrolled in precisely because it was offered in English language, the global language. One commented: 'They come here for the status of going home with a degree in English.' They argued that allowing students to express themselves in their first language would not help them improve their situation in an English medium university or workplace. Further research could seek to identify student perceptions of the value of the English element to their Australian university study and also the academic outcomes of a policy that allowed students to make textual submissions in more than one language.

One participant argued that agreeing to receive student text with 'other language'

elements was well-justified:

> LSTR: I think it is justified, if we want to talk about
> offering a global education in English. We have bilingual
> and multilingual students the majority of which are not
> going be speaking English in their target workplace with
> native English speakers as the norm. Most of the time
> they will be switching between their other languages
> and using English when necessary. So perhaps they
> should be allowed to study as they intend to practice.

Resourcing of translation

Participants agreed that if the first language submission was supplementary to the text required in English, the equity problem would be largely overcome. However many participants expressed concern at how this process would be resourced at assessment.

> ALC:It becomes entirely an issue of resourcing if it is
> supplementary work. Academic staff already have
> heavy marking loads. Are staff going to undertake
> translation in assessment voluntarily?

> LSTR: It has to be resourced, but I think it would pay
> the organisation in terms of probably bench mark
> practice in global education.

Same language study groups

Another suggestion put forward in place of offering translation support for teachers reading supplementary home language text was creating same language study groups with the task of finding home language articles about specific topics and discussing them in order to bring them to the classes and translate their articles for other groups. All participants perceived this as a valuable way of including other languages while contributing to the learning of the group as a whole.

> LSTR: Bring the main ideas back to the group as paraphrase. That would be great, they would be doing all English language researchers a favour by doing that. It would need to be structured and purposeful though, you know, you would have to give them a table that asked for field of study/ problematic/ is it empirical? is it theoretical? So on. Also if they have case studies maybe we can get them to find home country example organisations.

Case studies

One participant felt that students wanted to learn from case studies focused on American or British or Australian organisations because, 'That's where they want to work'. Another participant argued that the students were misconceiving their workplace value in overseas companies if they thought that knowledge of other cultures was not part of why they would be hired by an organisation of a different cultural background.

LSTR: Couldn't we convince them that this kind of knowledge of their home country practice is part of their value in US or overseas? Everyone in the class will learn more about different cultural paradigms at work if students research a home culture case and that will benefit all of them.

Although there is wide support for developing opportunities for international students to use languages other than English in their study, the assessment of such work would need additional resourcing from management groups. Ironically, resistance to such a policy may come from the students themselves, if they perceive English to be a core value to their Australian qualification. Teachers felt, nevertheless, that it was a justified move in that it supports multilingualism and multiculturalism and would reflect, more realistically, the reality of the linguistic environment in which international students are likely to work. Intercultural awareness and sensitivity training provided a useful forum in which teachers could creatively discuss alternative language policies and their merit in teaching international students.

4.7 Pedagogical implications of the study (Research Question 7)

As the number of international student enrolments is increasing across Australian universities, and this growth is predicted to intensify (Gallagher 2002), the experiences and perceptions of Australian academics who have been teaching culturally diverse groups of international students at Australian university for a number of years were sought in Research Question 7. Teaching strategies that were identified by participants as appropriate and effective for culturally diverse students

during the staff development training program and the qualitative research conducted as part of the study for this thesis are described in this section.

Research Question 7: What are the pedagogical implications for Australian teachers with intercultural classes?

Teacher training

Participants generally felt that teacher training, particularly training in teaching across cultures, was beneficial to academics and teachers in Australian universities with students from diverse cultural groups. Training formats needed to be ongoing or continuing and occurring whilst teachers were immersed in the teaching context rather than prior to starting. Teacher training that included language teaching was also perceived by many participants as beneficial as it enabled teachers to assist students to clarify the expression of their ideas in English which is one of the overall objectives of their overseas sojourn. Training in culture-specific knowledge was also deemed to be useful for Australian teachers with culturally diverse groups.

Student counselling and learning support

Teachers demonstrated sensitivity to the risks and challenges involved in crossing culture for study purposes with their compassionate observations of student experiences. All participants expressed sympathy for the new students who were often in the grip of intense culture shock during the early part of the sojourn. It was acknowledged by participants that students in their first semester or first year of study require support across various aspects of their lives. Several participants recommended an on-site counsellor would be a useful resource for international students. All participants commented on the need for more frequent or extended interpersonal communication with international students on the individual level as

well as the class level and this was seen as difficult for academics to manage within their existing teaching, assessment and administrative workloads. In this context, proactive learning support teachers and vocational trainers were seen as an important feature to providing both students and academics with support commensurate to the intensified needs of intercultural students.

Student induction

Participants noted that it was necessary to provide international students with extensive induction to Australian academic processes and formats, including researching techniques, textual referencing skills, critical reading and critical thinking, skills involved in building an argument and providing evidence for that argument, oral presentations, essay, reports, exams, and case study work. Teachers offered a strong and universal warning not to assume knowledge and skills that Australian students may have and that may be secondary but necessary to the actual content and objectives of the particular course.

Assignment guidance

Explicit and detailed directions in how to respond to assignment questions were also beneficial for international students. For academics, this may involve analysing the question and breaking it down into topic and task related components; modelling of assignment structures at paragraph and whole text level and modelling the critical method for students. Including instruction on language (grammar and syntax) as well as the generic features and norms of academic text in lessons was perceived as a valuable classroom activity. Draft submission reviews were conducted by some academics, as recommended by Ballard (1990), but this practice was perceived as an unsustainable extra duty and teachers felt that review of assessment design so that

courses required early submission of low weighted assessment tasks was a more appropriate and legitimate way of accommodating the feedback needs of international students.

Classroom strategies

Classroom practice required slowing down oral presentation and explaining concepts through definitions and examples. Seeking to establish clarification was recommended through restatement of ideas in multiple formats and seeking clarification of student understanding was also recommended through asking students to explain concepts and tasks in their own words. Classroom strategies that are sensitive to different cultural beliefs and practices, inclusive of these diverse cultural systems and that can even exploit these differences towards building whole group knowledge of cultural difference were valued. Forming same culture discussion groups and reading groups was recommended particularly for first year students.

Appropriate assessment

Fundamental adaptations that teachers of diverse cultural groups can expect to make include a reappraisal of assessment criteria for English expression in the context of second language usage. Pragmatic assessment of language skills is required and this translates to looking for meaning and clarity rather than grammatical accuracy. Allowing other language text as supplementary assignment material was perceived as desirable but only where the educational provider was prepared to resource the translation of such text. As the international student sector is a high profit sector for Australian educational institutions, a willingness to negotiate commercial imperatives in an educational context was perceived to benefit teachers.

Appropriate course materials

An ability to negotiate and adapt course material written for Australian students without actually straying from the formal objectives and assessment tasks of the prescribed course was seen as necessary to case study campus teachers. Recognition of this as a legitimate pedagogical strategy for accommodating the needs and interests of international students within Australian university contexts was seen as desirable. Australian University providers need to assist teachers to develop skills required to effectively work with international student groups and second language training (or university support for such training) for interested teachers was seen as highly desirable. Teachers also recommended that it would be advantageous to Australian university providers to hire teachers who had existing skills in a second language. Teachers of international students also needed a knowledge of the regulatory systems governing the international student sojourn.

In summary, a range of pedagogical adaptations was recommended by participants in order to create effective teaching and learning experiences for culturally diverse students in Australian universities. Training opportunities for teachers were recommended in order to assist them to develop intercultural sensitivity and awareness, competence in a second language and culture-specific knowledge. These skills and qualities were deemed to facilitate a teacher's willingness and capacity to make the pedagogical adaptations that benefit culturally diverse students. Institutional support through provision of effective student support services (academic and personal) was also recommended. Wide ranging pedagogical adaptations were suggested in relation to course materials, course assessment and class room practices with an emphasis on thorough international student induction to Australian academic processes and formats.

4.8 Use of email communication facility by participants

Computer mediated teaching and learning modes were not a conventional part of the educational practices at the case study campus. Indeed, in order to meet the regulations of an international student visa in Australia, international students must be enrolled as 'internal' students with demonstrated face to face attendance at 80% of the lectures and tutorials that make up their courses. As the teachers at the case study campus engaged in no external or distance-education activity, neither the training design or the analysis of evidence conducted for the study in this thesis sought to explore appropriate intercultural training, and the effects of such training, on computer mediated teaching and learning scenarios.

However, an email communication facility was developed for this staff development program. This email facility was primarily used to transmit information needed to organise training events and distribute training materials. Although such a computer mediated facility had potential to extend the learning involved in the face to face workshops, this potential was not fully exploited in training design or specifically examined in the research conducted for the study in this thesis. Further research may seek to identify effective 'on-line' intercultural training programs for the professional development of university teachers. Further research might also seek to identify appropriate intercultural training programs for Australian teachers delivering predominantly online courses to culturally diverse students.

Logistical questions from participants

The researcher created a group address email facility several weeks prior to Workshop One where anyone in the group could post a message to the group or to other individuals in the group. A total of 10 messages were sent by the researcher to

the participants. The majority of these messages were logistical in content announcing time and place of workshops, reminding, postponing. Several participants used this facility to communicate with the researcher generally with questions about the workshops, what they should bring or messages seeking confirmation of schedule. The researcher posted four messages which contained either links to electronic texts that were related to development of intercultural awareness and sensitivity, such as cultural assimilator tests (see Cultural Studies 2000), or scanned readings for workshops, or database links to journal articles related to the topic. The e-discussion group was extremely useful in terms of communicating essential logistical information and also transmitting further learning documents of course materials.

Potential for collaborative discussion

The email communication list did not develop into a 'discussion' group as the participants only ever wrote to the researcher, not the group. No participants posted any related material for further learning in relation to the topic of the training program. Only half of the eleven participants had completed the readings prior to workshops and all of them said this was because they found it difficult to find time. In summary, the potential of electronic communication in this format to generate collaborative discussion among participants to support action learning during the course of the staff development program of three Workshops was not realised. Participants were simply too busy to engage in collaborative learning in this electronic form.

4.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, results for each Research Question were given from the following sources of evidence: participants' experiences during a series of Staff Development

Workshops, interviews with participants, participant observation and email communication list. An analysis of these results and research findings was also provided for each of the seven Research Questions and sub-questions. These results identified interculturally aware and sensitive teaching and learning methods and attitudes, the influence of experiential and theoretical intercultural training on academic perceptions of international students and their problems, limitations of current Australian models of university education for culturally diverse international students and strategies for addressing these limitations.

In the next chapter, a discussion of the major findings and of the study, given a particular context and rationale, is provided.

Chapter Five: Discussion of Major Findings of the Study

In this thesis an investigation of typical intercultural problems in teaching and learning at Australian universities was undertaken through action research. The first aim of the research was to investigate and facilitate intercultural awareness and sensitivity among Australian university staff at a case study campus. Developing the intercultural communication competence per se of these staff was not directly attempted given the limited availability of staff to participate in continuing professional education programs, if indeed these could be designed. In response to the first aim, an educational intervention in the form of a needs based intercultural awareness and sensitivity Staff Development program was designed and offered to teaching staff at a case study campus. Evaluation of the effect of this training was conducted through interpretive research methods to ascertain teachers' perceptions of aspects of their professional practice and to address the second aim of the research. This was to identify interculturally sensitive and aware teaching strategies that could become resources at the case study campus and communicated to the wider university sector, especially in Australia. The research design was also predicated on an assumption that teachers' and students' intercultural communication competence would be enhanced to some degree as a consequence of teachers' increased intercultural awareness and sensitivity. The Staff Development program aimed to increase teachers' intercultural awareness and sensitivity so that this would translate into better teaching and learning values and practices. In other words, an indirect outcome of the research would be improved intercultural communication competence for both teachers and their students.

5.1 The context and rationale for this study

It was established that there is increasing cultural diversity of students and teachers in Australian universities. In addition, there is continuing growth in the area of full fee paying international student education. Given these trends, it was established and argued in this thesis that teachers would welcome and benefit from professional development opportunities to increase further their existing intercultural awareness and sensitivity in academic practice. Using an action research method, the researcher designed and implemented a Staff Development training program of three linked Workshops attended by eleven of the teaching staff at a case study university campus primarily dedicated to providing educational services to international students. In depth interviews were also conducted with the eleven participants during this process.

The researcher's attempts to locate any previous studies of intercultural training programs conducted for teachers at university were unsuccessful. Searches on Educationline (2004) and EdResearchOnline (2004) and Informit (2004) databases were completed using the search terms 'intercultural training' and 'Australian university' or 'university'. Results of these searches of journal databases generally identified reports about intercultural training experiences (or intercultural experiences for which there was no training) situated in business environments rather than academic environments. These kinds of articles were most frequently published in trade-journals targeting training industry professionals and/or their customers (see Beasely 2002). Other search results tended to identify articles reporting on research conducted into discrete academic practices in relation to intercultural awareness, such as cultural factors of assessment in relation to culturally diverse contexts at university (Mackinnon & Manathunga 2003) or lesson design in critical thinking for

intercultural university classes (Kutieleh & Egege 2004). Intercultural sensitivity and awareness training is regularly offered and evaluated in business contexts (Brislin & Yoshida 1994; Lustig & Koester 2003).

The absence of qualitative or quantitative research in relation to the effects of intercultural training for university teachers in Australia or overseas, suggested that it would be useful to design, implement and evaluate such a program for a group of teachers in a culturally diverse Australian university campus. As Saee (1999) has pointed out, intercultural training has tended to focus on the role of the cultural sojourner (usually a business professional and in higher education, a student) rather than the role of the cultural host (in this case, a teacher). An aim in the study of this thesis was to explore the intercultural experiences of host culture teachers rather than their students, as this is an area that has been overlooked in intercultural training research to date.

5.2 Development of the thesis

In Chapter One it was important to establish the difference between intercultural awareness and sensitivity and intercultural communication competence per se. This clarification focused the two aims of the thesis towards directly enhancing the first aim while indirectly working on the second. It was argued that the scope of the study would be limited to finding a means to investigate the intercultural aspects of university teachers' work given the lack of research on this in higher education.

In addition, it was pointed out that there is a national trend of continuing and significant growth in the cultural diversity of students enrolling in higher education in Australia over the last two decades. There is also continuing cultural diversification of

the general population in Australia. Moreover, there are institutional and government strategies and regulations for facilitating provision of higher education for overseas students in Australia. These are the social and policy contexts for modern higher education in Australia. It was argued that these trends towards cultural diversity have implications for the work of Australian university teachers. Nevertheless, neither the universities themselves, or related government departments, or academic committees, have provided intercultural training options for academic staff although this was consistently recommended in both government legislation (ESOS 2000) and the AVCC Charter (2002).

Having established a rationale for the study in Chapter One, the learning outcomes that might be achieved in a Staff Development Program at a case study campus were elaborated in Chapter Two. Selection of useful intercultural communication theories had to be made in consultation with the participating university staff. The list was finally narrowed to six theoretical perspectives: M. Bennet (1986), Gullahorn & Gullahorn (1963), Hart (1999), Hall (1959, 1976), Hofstede (1984, 1986), and Stewart (1972).

An assumption of training design was that culture-general theories, in particular, would prove useful tools of analysis for the teaching and learning interactions at the case study campus. Indeed, participants proved that they were both willing and able to apply these culture- general theories including activity orientation (Stewart 1972), collectivism/individualism and power-distance tolerance indicators (Hofstede 1984, 1986), and low-context/high-context communication styles (Hall 1959), to their own teaching and learning experiences in workshop activities as well as at in-depth interviews held after each of the three workshops in the program. Teachers

progressively and spontaneously adapted their language over the course of the training program, for example, to refer to students by a cultural tendency rather than an ethnic identity - 'a collectivist', rather than a 'Chinese student.' Such an outcome indicated that as a result of their opportunity to learn various theoretical approaches to understanding cultural difference, participants were engaging in more complex thinking about other cultures which was one of the objectives of the Staff Development program conducted for the study in this thesis.

The theoretical perspectives that were explained in Chapter Two represented the intercultural sojourn experientially, such as Gullahorn and Gullahorn's W Curve (1963), M. Bennet's continuum of intercultural awareness (1986) and Hart's (1999) theory of the sojourner as hero . These theories proved to be useful concepts in training activities at the three Workshops. In particular these theories helped teachers to build empathy for the students' experiences of crossing culture. In addition, M. Bennet's continuum (1986) and Hart's theory (1999) also generated critical reflection by the teachers on the theories themselves. From this participants suggested useful revisions to M. Bennet's (1986) continuum and qualifications to Hart's (1999) hero model. Teachers also had discussions about their applications of these models to the context of teaching and learning across cultures at this Australian university.

Another aspect of the social context of the thesis was that there are ideological concerns related to intercultural teaching and learning in Australian universities, particularly in relation to the role of the English language. In Chapter Two it was argued that effective professional teaching practice should adopt a language framework that values culturally-varied usages of English and also, languages other than English, in the teaching and learning processes at Australian universities. This

led to productive discussions of possible strategies for accommodating other languages and 'other' Englishes in university practice at the Staff Development Program and post-workshop interviews.

It was also important in Chapter Two to canvas alternative models of training design in intercultural communication prior to selecting a model for this thesis. The choice of a multidimensional and experiential model for the Staff Development program represented an authentic approach to learning. Training objectives for both experiential and intellectual learning by teachers were intrinsic to the program.

The basis for the study of professional practice in this doctoral thesis was established in Chapters One and Two using social and educational rationales. In Chapters Three and Four the thesis developed as an action research study of a new Staff Development program. This was designed by the researcher and was attended by eleven university staff and the researcher/ participant at a case study Australian campus. Multiple sources of evidence were collected by associated interpretive methods: in-depth interviews of participants, participant observation, researcher journal and email communication list. Participants' action learning insights were collected and discussed in Chapter Four to elucidate seven Research Questions and sub-questions based on the two Research Aims.

5.3 Major Findings of the study

In summary, the issues investigated for this doctoral study of professional practice associated with the seven Research Questions were: prior training in intercultural communication; intercultural awareness and sensitivity of Australian university teachers; teachers' perceptions of international students; the effects of a range of

contemporary intercultural theories on teachers' perceptions of international students; the effectiveness of a multidimensional and experiential model of intercultural training for teachers; teaching strategies that are interculturally aware and sensitive; limitations of Australian models of education for culturally diverse groups of learners; possibilities for valuing languages other than English and for valuing 'other' usages of English in Australian university; and pedagogical implications of a culturally aware and sensitive approach to teaching international students. These issues follow the framework of the seven main Research Questions and major findings for each are discussed next.

5.3.1 Teachers' prior training in intercultural communication

The majority of participants had experienced no formal training in the area of intercultural communication although many participants had completed a higher degree encompassing one or more courses that were focused on aspects of culture and cultural difference. This finding was consistent with the researcher's inability to find research reporting on intercultural training programs for university teachers or staff. Two participants reported attending formal intercultural training that was culture-specific rather than culture-general, aiming to develop awareness of a particular cultural group. Both training programs were evaluated by the relevant participants as inadequate for a range of reasons but primarily because they were not sufficiently needs-based. The length and scope of the programs were not adequate to the needs of the trainees and neither program was perceived as being effectively focused on the field of professional practice for which the participants were being trained.

Although very few of the participants reported any training in intercultural awareness and sensitivity, they all identified themselves at the 'sensitive' end of M.

Bennet's continuum of intercultural sensitivity (1986). Most participants attributed their developed intercultural sensitivity to their opportunities for interaction with people from other cultures rather than formal training or education. Intercultural experience itself, whether through migration, travel overseas, or domestic interaction with culturally different groups, was deemed to build intercultural awareness and sensitivity.

The majority of the 'intercultural' interactions of participants prior to their current workplace experience were in fact 'cross cultural', that is, interaction with one other specific culture. It became evident in the research conducted for the study in this thesis that people who learn culture-specific information from interaction with people of any other cultural group are also able to develop a degree of culture-general understanding in the sense that they tend to recontextualise their own culturally engendered beliefs and values as one of a number of alternative positions. All participants acknowledged, at one stage or another in the workshop context of the Staff Development program and/or in interviews, that their own values and beliefs were culturally constructed and therefore, relative.

The opportunity to build culture-specific knowledge, as well as culture-general knowledge, was valued by participants as they felt that it enabled them to recognise one cultural group from another and this was perceived as an increasingly valuable and empowering ability for Australian university teachers. Hence, whilst it is true that intercultural sensitivity is not natural but is learned (Landis & Bhagat 1996), it seems that it can be 'learned' informally through life experience, as well as formally in training programs.

5.3.2 Teachers and international students

Generally, teacher participants in the research process displayed mixed and ambiguous perceptions of international students as both heroic but also foolhardy or even cynical. Crossing culture and language to complete a university degree was perceived by teachers to be a high-risk undertaking both emotionally and financially. All participants identified the first six months of a study sojourn as the most difficult period which is an observation consistent with intercultural studies of culture shock (see Choi (1997) and Gudykunst (2003)) and cross-cultural adjustment (Kim 1988). This intense but temporary period of culture 'shock' was modelled for participants in the Gullahorn and Gullahorn W Curve (1963) in Workshop One.

Observing the effects of culture shock on students in this initial period of intense uncertainty and anxiety was distressing for teachers. They suffered a kind of second hand culture shock and demonstrated high levels of empathy with new students undergoing intense cultural adjustment. The majority of participants emphasised thorough preparation in the language of instruction as necessary (but not sufficient) to a successful study sojourn. Many international students were perceived to have inadequate preparation in this respect. It was in this scenario that the sojourn was seen as highly stressful as opposed to or as well as heroic. Participants felt that it was inappropriate for teachers to assume that international students who qualify to be enrolled in Australian universities by English competency testing or by virtue of prior study with English as the medium of instruction, are in fact adequately prepared to cope with overseas study. Language learning by itself is not adequate preparation for overseas study sojourn and language testing systems and 'prior study' assessment methods and criteria were not perceived to be of consistent quality. Any assumption by teachers that international students have a particular

level of language ability and therefore should be able to fulfill university course requirements as Australian students do, was seen to be an unhelpful and unrealistic approach to teaching across culture. Indeed, the anxiety for students generated by limitations in their understanding across language and culture was perceived to be more intense because a high level of understanding was assumed. Students with limited competence in the language of instruction can become anxious in teaching and learning environments that do not acknowledge and seek to accommodate the inevitable limitations in student comprehension, expression and understanding. This anxiety can lead international students to mask their learning difficulties rather than attempt to resolve them. Such responses only compound their incomprehension and anxiety.

In addition to the anxiety reported for both students and teachers involved in intercultural university education across language, participants reported greater professional anxiety as a consequence of the heavily regulated nature of overseas student education. The sense of risk was escalated for both parties as a result of the powers vested in Australian government departments, particularly the DIMIA, to intervene, cancel or suspend the study sojourn on account of non-compliance on the part of the institution or the student.

Governance of the international student visa laws was not perceived as facilitative to student adaptation or acculturation. In particular, the requirement that new students undertake a full load of study in their first semester was seen as unrealistic. Teacher participants commented on the intrusiveness of government authorities into international student lives and the resultant stress for international students. The extensive regulations of the sector meant teachers had to learn a great deal of

regulatory information in order to remain 'compliant'. From the perspective of the university-employer, intercultural awareness and sensitivity training for teachers can contribute not only to maintaining courses as CRICOS approved offerings but can also be a forum for clarifying the extensive regulations of international study for Australian university teachers who may otherwise remain ignorant of them.

International students were perceived by their teachers to suffer a lack of assertiveness which handicapped them in the Australian university and workplace context. Australian employers were perceived to have inappropriate expectations of international students especially in regard to language ability. Some employers were also observed by teachers to be exploiting the vulnerabilities of the international student market. Educating employers to understand and appreciate the skills of international students was suggested as a useful strategy. Teachers acknowledged that bilingualism and multilingualism are important skills that deserve to be valued in the university and the workplace. Universities with international student enrolments would benefit by building university-employer relationships through processes and events that showcase international students skills to employer groups. Such a group was formed at the case study campus over the course of the research process and launched in August 2004.

University policy and government legislation defining the parameters of international student education was deemed as particularly complex, dense text that often alienated students. Translation into multiple languages of contractual text regarding university policies on key issues for international students such as, plagiarism or attendance requirements was recommended.

Observing the effects of culture shock on students was distressing for teachers and they felt that an on-site counsellor was justified so that they had somewhere to refer students to when they recognised problems in adaptation. An on-site counsellor was felt to be justified given the dysfunctional degree of uncertainty and anxiety associated with intercultural sojourn outlined in Chapter One of this thesis. A counsellor is effectively a secondary support strategy for teachers in their efforts to cope with the demands of international students.

5.3.3 Reframing teachers' intercultural theories of practice

Culture-general theories proved to be very useful to Australian university teachers in the action learning cycles of this Staff Development program. These theories assisted teachers to interpret and cope with otherwise incomprehensible elements of intercultural interaction. Teachers read and reflected on the culture-general theories of activity orientation (Stewart 1972), collectivism/individualism and power-distance tolerance indicators (Hofstede 1984, 1986), and low-context/high-context communication styles (Hall 1959) over the duration of the Staff Development program. This meant that they had opportunity to apply these theories to their ongoing intercultural teaching practice between workshops and return to the training group context to discuss the value of such theories to their professional practice. Teachers completed a number of action learning cycles and were able to make a range of complex observations about their students' experiences both at Australian university and in the wider Australian community using these culture-general theories.

In the action learning cycles the main observations made by teachers responding to culture-general theories that they were given were:

5.3.4 Appropriate teaching practices for culturally diverse university students

It was found that staff development training in intercultural awareness and sensitivity for teaching staff did stimulate teachers to identify, discuss and reflect collaboratively on what problems they encountered in teaching international students. Including experiential activities in intercultural sensitivity and awareness training programs, such as simulation, encouraged teachers to develop sensitivity and empathy for international students through reference to their own experiences and feelings. Including theories of overseas sojourning and culture-general dimensions and tendencies in training programs helped to develop intercultural awareness and provided teachers with useful analytical tools by which they may better understand the reasoning and motivation behind their student behaviour and their own reactions to this behaviour. These 'better understandings' assisted teachers to identify alternative approaches and strategies for teaching culturally diverse students.

Prior studies researching effective teaching practices for international students have suggested strategies that include: allowing second language students extra time for exams (Klerkx & Wang 1998); accepting first language explanatory footnotes to essays and offering negotiated assessment tasks (University of Sydney 1997); encouraging to teachers to seek and respond to many drafts of the same assignment; and a teaching method that includes plentiful exampling and modelling in order to reveal culturally specific thinking processes (Ballard 1990).

It was also found that the range of intercultural communication theories presented in the Staff Development Workshops did prove helpful in identifying university practices that were interculturally friendly and effective. A range of potentially effective academic approaches and practices for teaching culturally diverse students

at Australian universities was iterated by participants of this study across teaching style, teaching materials, course and assessment design, and assessment criteria. These recommendations tend to identify a teacher's willingness and ability to adapt their teaching approach, style and materials as a necessary and fundamental attribute for successful academic practice with culturally diverse students. Institutions were identified as the stake holders best positioned to ensure teachers were authorised and able to adapt teaching style and material to meet the culturally diverse needs and interests of their students. A teacher's willingness to adapt teaching methods to culturally diverse learners was seen to be enhanced by both intercultural interaction itself, and by intercultural awareness and sensitivity training.

The sorts of interculturally effective teaching and learning methods recommended by participants in this study were recognised as time-consuming and, to an extent, resource intensive. Student support services on campus, offering both academic and personal support, were identified as very important both to the students' well-being and also to the teacher's ability to cope with the demands of international students. Academic Support Units and Counselling Units are able to absorb some of the teaching and mentoring load that is inflated for Australian university teachers with international students. Recommended teaching methods for culturally diverse university students include extensive induction of new students into the Australian university teaching and learning scenario, including the purpose and conventions of lecture and tutorial format, as well as assessment tasks. A reappraisal of assessment task design and assessment criteria was found to be necessary for teachers in the context of assessing academic performance of second language university students who have different linguistic capacities from first language students. In addition, students from outside Australia may have very different understandings of what

makes a good essay or report. Teachers who are aware of this, may adjust both their teaching methods and assessment criteria to account successfully for such difference.

It was found that intercultural participants often feign understanding as a coping mechanism and it is important for teachers to be able to recognise signs of this and have clarification strategies for such scenarios. Ability and confidence in seeking clarification was seen as a vital skill for students. Teachers need to know how to clarify concepts and check for understanding and also know how to impart this skill to students in order for them to function effectively in university, the workplace and the wider Australian community. This particular finding was commensurate with a general theme that developed within the research group and which was repeated by individuals in workshop discussions and roleplay as well as in interviews held after workshops. This theme emphasised the danger of making assumptions across culture about knowledge, understanding or behaviour. 'Never assume anything' was the intercultural 'rule' identified by the majority of participants in the role-play of Workshop Three as the most important principle for teaching successfully across cultures.

Bilingual or multilingual usage of English was acknowledged by research participants to be different from native usage. Bilingual or multilingual usage of English was deemed to be acceptable for university submission within limits of clarity rather than grammatical accuracy. A willingness to practise 'tolerance for difficulty, uncertainty and error', as advocated by Burbules (1996, p.4) was demonstrated by research participant-teachers in their approach to assessing student academic submissions. However, some of these teachers referred to other academics as inflexible in this respect indicating a need for further intercultural sensitivity and awareness training in

the academic teaching community of the case study campus and the Australian sector of higher education generally.

A pragmatic approach to assessing international student English expression was deemed essential to successful and fair practice in Australian university teaching. It was argued by all participants that assessment of global English speakers should be performed in the context of their ability in a second language. Marking for accuracy against native speaker standards was perceived to be unrealistic and inequitable. A pragmatic mode of assessment was advocated by teachers and this was described as privileging clarity and quality of ideas over grammatical accuracy. Strategies for redesigning assessment tasks and schedules to facilitate learning of generic study skills were identified. It was suggested that assessment tasks could be designed to teach formatting and content rules where international students were not aware of these. For example, a focused theoretical research task could be set for submission early in the term requiring students to demonstrate their ability to locate, read and reference texts. This initial submission should carry a low weighting so that students who fail because of poor skills in any of these areas have time to seek academic skills assistance and may still be able to pass the course. A second assessment task with heavier weighting might require the information or theory identified in task one to be applied to a real world problem and presented in report or essay format. Such sequencing and weighting of assessment tasks to give international students an opportunity to learn and get feedback on fundamental skills prior to submission of major assignments was deemed to be highly valuable and also equitable by teachers.

Australian academics developing courses for international students need to be aware that generic academic skills that Australian students might be assumed to have as a

consequence of high school studies are not necessarily in place for international students. International students have widely variant educational experiences prior to their enrolment at Australian universities and they may even hold educational objectives and habits that are incommensurable with conventional Australian university standards and practices. Instruction in generic academic skills especially critical thinking, research and referencing skills, argument, essay writing and report writing were deemed as necessary extra duties for teachers of international students. Demands on teachers' time, both from groups and individuals increased with international students. The whole process of teaching is slowed down and extended. A dedicated academic skills support group or unit is deemed extremely valuable to teachers and students.

5.3.5 Limitations of Australian models of higher education

Teachers need to learn to be adaptable in applying Australian teaching paradigms, methods and materials to culturally diverse groups of learners. They also need the authority to do this. Australian educational paradigms, models and materials may not work for intercultural groups. Internal and external forces of regulation of academic practice although intentioned to create consistent standards across increasingly decentralised and differentiated sites of the case study university, can limit teachers' capacity to be adaptable and responsive to cultural difference. In institutions with 'teaching only' campuses, teachers may not have the authority or opportunity to engage in course design and revision that may benefit intercultural contexts.

The majority of teachers in this study felt that the courses that they delivered to international students were not always designed in a way that made them accessible and/or interesting and relevant to international students. The majority of these

University (NSW), La Trobe University (Vic) and Notre Dame University (WA) with current joint venture Campuses for international students in Sydney). Such tensions between the status of academic staff of the commercial employer and the academic staff of the state employer are likely to require further consideration in the context of providing the best educational opportunities and experiences for international students.

5.3.6 Factors affecting valuing bilingualism, multilingualism and languages other than English in Australian universities

Participants agreed that Australian universities needed to find ways to incorporate and value other languages. Equitable resourcing of this was seen to be a major factor and problem. Participants suggested that the complex and legally binding text of university policy and government regulation should be translated into other languages.

Another factor was concerned with current methods for assessing university applications for Full Fee Paying International student places were perceived to produce inconsistent results in terms of student linguistic competence. An independent internal English language competency testing system was thought to be appropriate but unattractive to institutions seeking to enrol from the international student market. The ability to negotiate accented English usage was deemed to be highly valuable to teachers but undervalued by students. Certain accents were observed to be privileged over others which can lead to inappropriate bias and potential inequities. Opportunity to learn other languages with institutional support was highly desirable to all participants in the Staff Development Program. It was felt that such an opportunity would assist teachers develop further culture-specific

knowledge, greater intercultural sensitivity and awareness and greater intercultural communicative competence at the workplace.

5.3.7 Training program outcomes

It was the intention of this study to assess the effects of a multidimensional intercultural awareness and sensitivity training program on the professional practice of Australian university teachers. It was confirmed that intercultural awareness and sensitivity training for university teaching had been unavailable to teachers prior to this program and yet, was considered by teachers to be a valuable opportunity for professional development. Training was found to be most valuable when it was tailored to a specific professional context. The training program developed for the study in this thesis examined the effects of cultural difference on the teaching and learning context for Australian academics rather than the effects of cultural difference per se. Intercultural training was perceived to be more effective when it was offered as an ongoing program rather than a one-off session. Ongoing programs have the advantage of creating opportunity for reflection and also application of learned ideas in the workplace between training sessions across the program. Training was also perceived to be of value for participants because it was in-service rather than pre-service or pre-sojourn like the bulk of intercultural training that is generally scheduled (Brislin & Yoshida 1994; Lustig & Koester 2003).

As a multidimensional and experiential training program learning activity types were varied to facilitate both intellectual and experiential learning. Activities included simulation, theoretical readings, critical incident narratives, group-discussions and role-play. Variation of training methods itself was identified by participants as a strength of the training program. The simulation of an orientation session for a new

student generated feelings of disbelief and dramatic uncertainty which teachers felt was closely analogous to what they imagined their students felt in their orientation. This in turn, encouraged teachers to empathise with students' experiences in the context of their limited ability to understand the complex environment of the university. Such a simulation is an effective method by which to establish an appropriate emotional basis for considering theoretical options for approaching the difficulties of teaching across culture.

Personal narratives helped to increase awareness of the broad effects of cultural difference on academic practices and expectations and helped to develop collaborative relationships between the participants. These narrated incidents also offered valuable raw and authentic material for application of intercultural theories of communication. In the action learning cycles the opportunity to practise analysing critical incidents in their own academic practice equipped with an expanded repertoire of possible causes and solutions as a result of culture-general theory readings was a benefit to training participants. The role play for Workshop Three was written after Workshop Two when details of the teachers' professional context were clearer to the researcher and their professional concerns were becoming apparent.

The role play in Workshop Three encompassed issues that that teachers identified as critical: a customer service expectation on the part of aggrieved students; un-Australian cultural norms in student protest (hunger strike); and a high risk scenario encompassing both financial or commercial risk and intellectual and moral risk. This role play brought competing groups of protesting students and defiant teachers before a concerned Academic Advisory Committee. The result of a deferred decision is perhaps testimony to the capacity for intercultural training to cause people to

recognise the complexity of communicating across cultures and re-evaluate their assumptions regarding academic practice.

The outcome of the debate in the role play was not a single acceptable position but a conflicted position that required both groups to work harder towards a mutually acceptable outcome. In the closing address, it is possible that the Academic Advisory Committee developed "a way of saying 'No' but saying 'Yes' at the same time" (LSTR). This multidimensional training model proved effective for both experiential and intellectual intercultural learning. The ongoing and relatively long term schedule for training and interviews with participants provided many opportunities for participants to reflect on learned concepts and to apply intercultural theories in their ongoing professional practice. As a result, this training program design was a facilitative type of intervention for an action research study involving action learning for participants.

5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, a discussion of the major findings of this study in the context in intercultural theories outlined in Chapter Two was offered. In addition, the multidimensional experiential training model specific to this study was reveiwed in relation to the Research Aims.

In the following chapter, the major contributions of this study are identified in terms of their implications for Australian university teachers and for Australian universities with international students. Five Recommendatic as are made to assist Australian universities achieve more interculturally sensitive and aware teaching and learning experiences for staff and students. Limitations to this study are discussed as well as directions for future research arising from the study in this thesis.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Five major contributions of this study

In this investigation, there are five main contributions to the knowledge of intercultural awareness and sensitivity in Australian university education. Firstly, Australian teachers' perceptions of international students and particularly, students' learning styles and learning problems were identified in some detail in Section 4.2 and 4.3 of Chapter Four and Section 5.3.2 of Chapter Five. Secondly, a Staff Development Training Program was designed to meet teachers' needs and was evaluated as achieving the learning outcomes of building teachers' intercultural awareness and sensitivity. This program is outlined in Appendices 2, 3, 4, 7 and 10 and can be adapted for other university contexts. Thirdly, it was demonstrated that intercultural awareness and sensitivity training did positively impact on teachers' perceptions of international students and also enabled them to analyse and understand better their intercultural interactions with their students. Fourthly, it was demonstrated that intercultural awareness and sensitivity training did address the anxiety levels of teachers in the training program so that they were less anxious about uncertainty in their professional practice. Finally, as the fifth major contribution, during the training program participants did identify useful, if 'experimental', methods of teaching international students that can be applied by others within Australian educational paradigms as outlined in Section 4.7 of Chapter Four and Section 6.3 of this Chapter.

6.2 Implications for university teachers

It is concluded that there were four major implications for university teachers and other institutionally specific outcomes generated from the study in this thesis.

6.2.1 Teaching and learning styles and preferences

It was perceived as particularly useful for teachers to be aware of cultural distinctions in teaching and in learning styles and preferences. International student learning styles were seen as more teacher-centred and dependent than those of domestic students. In the context of the added uncertainty of communicating across culture and language, this added dependence on explicit instruction and constant support was deemed to be expected and natural. One implication of this study is for teachers to consider adapting their teaching methods to take account of such differences in learning styles and preferences of international students.

6.2.2 Valuing international students

Incorporating student knowledge of their own cultural background in learning is deemed very effective, especially in contributing to whole group learning. This implication for university teachers involves valuing the cultural input that international students can make to learning in their chosen degree and other courses.

6.2.3 Incorporating fun and humour

Intercultural education can be fun and a sense of humour is deemed to be an important contributing factor to successful cultural exchange. Laughter was perceived to be a common and positive reaction to lack of comprehension across culture. Experiential activities could incorporate appropriate humour and exploit the fact that intercultural classroom exercises can be fun.

6.2.4 Using group work

Group work was perceived to be particularly beneficial to international students. Forming same culture study groups is recommended for first year students as it

allows them to learn in their first language as well as English which contributes to in depth learning, contributes to whole class learning, and takes some of the demands off the teacher.

6.3 Institutional outcomes from this study and Recommendations

The major outcomes from this study for the case study campus were: the establishment of a representative and proactive student-workplace liaison team to promote the skills and knowledge of international students to Australian employers; a revised academic induction program for teachers at the Campus with a focus on intercultural awareness and sensitivity in university teaching; and a plan for further intercultural training.

Case study campus management plan to offer a training course in intercultural awareness and sensitivity to administrative staff at the case study campus in October 2005. The aim of the training course is for administrators to experience the difficulty students have negotiating the complex verbal and non-verbal interactions and texts that they must engage with to function legitimately as part of the community of the university.

Participants felt that their workplace was an important site for a study such as this. One referred to the practice of teaching across such a wide range of cultural groups in an Australian university as 'a social experiment'. This description captures a sense of unpreparedness or lack of training in academic teams attempting to teach international students.

Intercultural training creates opportunity for sharing teaching stories and strategies

and stimulates creative generation of new strategies for facilitating effective interaction and cooperation between students, students and teachers, students and employers and students and the bureaucracy. Sharing stories of intercultural incidents was deemed to be beneficial.

In summary, based on these findings and implications for teachers, four recommendations are proposed:

Recommendation 1

At induction, new university teachers at Australian campuses should participate in a teaching workshop focusing on interculturally sensitive and aware teaching approaches and methods, ideally using experiential activities.

Recommendation 2

Australian universities should develop ongoing training for teaching and non-teaching staff in the areas of intercultural awareness and sensitivity and culture specific knowledge.

Recommendation 3

Australian universities should develop ongoing training for teaching staff in the area of culturally different learning styles and preferences.

Recommendation 4

Australian universities should promote and support the learning of languages other than English for teaching and administrative staff in their employ.

Recommendation 5

Australian universities should provide a Learning Support Unit and a Counselling Unit to assist culturally different learners (and indirectly, the teachers of these learners) to adjust to Australian university study and Australian society.

6.4 Limitations of this Study

This study had a number of limitations. Firstly, it was confined to the Australian higher education sector and did not include a focus on overseas university practices nor intercultural education in sectors other than the tertiary context in Australia. Other dimensions of cultural difference, such as gender or ability were not included as part of the study. No quantitative data was included in this study and although qualitative research methods were various, including in-depth interviews, participant observation, researcher journal and email communication list, these did not include other qualitative methods such as, ethnographic observations of teaching practices in the classroom.

The study was limited to one university campus only and did not seek to assess teaching and learning practices across multiple campuses. It was also limited to a total of twelve participants including the researcher/participant and to a series of three workshops conducted during one calendar year.

6.5 Directions for Future Research

A number of issues raised in this study remain unresolved given the limitations of the focus, method, available time and site of this research. Consequently, suggestions for further research are:

1. how to increase the intercultural communication competence of Australian university staff, as distinct from enhancing their intercultural awareness and sensitivity;

2. how to conduct effective training in culture-specific knowledge and skills for Australian university teachers;

3. how to apply M. Bennet's Continuum (1986) to a study of achievable levels of intercultural sensitivity in a *culturally diverse context* rather than to a *cross-cultural context* of only two different cultural groups which was the focus of Bennet's work;.

4. how to determine appropriate group work strategies for culturally diverse university students who have different values and practices in relation to individual compared to group learning;

5. how to differentiate the role and significance of the individual compared to the group in learning experiences designed for culturally diverse university students;

6. how to identify and develop effective intercultural training programs for university teachers involved in computer mediated education;

7. how to determine and evaluate equitable assessment methods for second language university students;

8. how to develop Australian teachers' awareness of culturally different learning styles and preferences;

9. how to determine and analyse implications of trends towards commercialisation in higher education for university systems and management, working conditions of academic and administrative staff and provision of appropriate educational opportunities and learning experiences for full fee paying international students.

These challenges have arisen in the course of the present study as significant dimensions of intercultural awareness and sensitivity for both staff and students at contemporary universities and are yet to be explored by educational researchers.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

'Academics in a Rage against 'Totalitarian' Funding', *The Australian*, 4 October 2004, viewed 25 Feb 2005, www.theaustralian.news.com.au/common/ story_page/0,5744,10960112%5E12332,00.html.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2003, *Australian Demographic Statistics 2002: Special Article - Permanent and long-term movement to Australia*, viewed 12 May 2003, http://www.abs.gov.au.

ABS 2002, *Australian Social Trends 2002, Education - Participation in Education: Overseas students*, viewed 20 March 2003, http://www.abs.gov.au/Ausstats.

ABS 2004, *Australian Social Trends: Education and Training National Summary*, viewed 9 April 2004, http://www.abs.gov.au/Ausstats.

Australian Governement 1986, 'Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act' 1986, viewed 18 March 2004, http://www.hreoc.gov.au/about_the_commission/legislation/index.html

Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) 2002, *Provision of Education to International Students: Code of Practice, Code and Guidelines for Australian Universities*, AVCC, Canberra.

AVCC 1998, *Code of Ethical Practice in the Provision of Education to International Students by Australian Universities*, AVCC, viewed 27 August 2003, http://www.avcc.edu.au:/avcc/pubs/code.htm

Ballard, B 1987, 'Academic Adjustment: the other side of the export', *Higher Education Research & Development*, vol. 6, no. 2. pp.109-119.

Ballard, B 1990, *Teaching Students from Overseas: a brief guide for lecturers and supervisors*, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne.

Ballard, B & Clanchy, J 1991, *Teaching Students from Overseas*, Longman, Melbourne.

Ballard, B & Clanchy, J 1997, *Study Abroad: a manual for Asian students*, 2nd edn, Longman, Kuala Lumpur.

Baptiste, I 2001, 'Qualitative Data Analysis: common phases, strategic differences,' *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, vol.2, no.3, 15 January 2002, http://qualitative-research.net/fqs-e/2-00inhalt-e.htm, pp.1-14.

Barnnin, L 1999, 'The Benefits of Being a Married Man,' *Science Today*, University of California, CBS radio transcript, May 11, 1999, viewed 3 June 2004, http://www.ucop.edu/sciencetoday/pages/archive/transcripts.htm.

Barthel, A (ed.) 1993, *Intercultural Conference: cultural diversity & higher education: has it made a difference? Should it make a difference?* Conference Proceedings, University of Technology, Sydney, 27-29 September, UTS.

Beasley, T 2002, 'Cultural Diversity – what it means for us as learning professionals', *Training and Development in Australia*, vol.29, no.6, pp.19-22.

Befus, C 1988, 'A multilevel approach for culture shock experienced by sojourners', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol.12, pp.381-400.

Bennet, JM 1986, 'Modes of Cross-cultural Training: conceptualising cross-cultural training as education', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol.10, pp.117-134.

Bennet, M 1986 in Phillips, D J 1993, "Ethnogogy. An Approach to University Teaching which Enables Academics to Cope with the Dilemmas and Concerns of teaching International Students", in A. Barthel (ed.) 1993, *Intercultural Conference: cultural diversity & higher education: has it made a difference? Should it make a difference?*, Conference Proceedings, University of Technology, Sydney, pp.27-29.

Boud, D, Keogh, R & Walker, D (eds) 1985 *Reflection: turning experience into learning*, Kogan Page, London.

Braddom, CL, 2003, 'Speakers Guide', *Association of Academic Psychiatrists*, viewed 11 June 2004, http:physciatry.org/annual/speakersguide.htm.

Brislin, R 2000, *Understanding Culture's Influence on Behaviour*, Harcourt, Florida.

Brislin, R & Yoshida, T 1994, *Intercultural Communication Training: an introduction*, SAGE, California.

Bryson, B 1990, *Mother Tongue*, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

Burbules, N 1996, "Postmodern Doubt and Philosophy of Education", *Philosophy of Education*, pp. 39-48, viewed 14 February 1997, http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/PES/1996.html.

Byrne, M & Associates 2000, 'Promoting Global Skills: a workshop for academic staff', Sydney.

Cambridge University 2004, Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, Cambridge University Press, viewed 19 August 2004, http://humanityquest.com/topic/Definitions/index.asp?theme1=empathy.

Campbell, J 1946, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Fontana Press, London.

Cassel, E 2004, 'The importance of gender', *Student Resources for Psychology*, Houghton Mifflin College Divisions, viewed 12 April 2004, http://college.hmco.com/psychology/resources/students/screen/screen_19991129.html

Chalmers, D & Volet, S 1997, 'Common Misconceptions about Students from Sout East Asia Studying in Australia,' *Higher Education Research and Development,* vol. 16, pp. 87-98.

Chan, S 1991, *Asian Americans: an interpretive history*, Twayne Publishers, Boston.

Chapman, D & Hartley, B 1998, 'Negotiating Japanese Cultural Literacy: lived reality versus populist interpretations', Paper presented at Asia in a Global Context Conference, 12th Biennial Conference, Asian Studies Association of Australia, UNSW, Sydney.

Chen, GM & Starosta, WJ 2003, 'A Review of the Concept of Intercultural Awareness', in LA Samovar & RE Porter, (eds.) *Intercultural Communication: a reader,* 10th edn, Wadsworth, Belmont, California, pp.344-353.

Choi, M 1997, 'Korean Students in Australian Universities: Intercultural Issues,' *Higher Education Research & Development*, vol.16, no. 3, pp. 263-280 (online Informit).

Cleveland, H 2003, 'The Limits to Cultural Diversity', in LA Samovar & RE Porter (eds.) 2003 *Intercultural Communication: a reader*, 10th ed., Wadsworth, Belmont, California, pp. 433-435.

Conroy, S 2003, 'A Pathway for Interpretive Phenomenology', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods,* vol.2, no.3, viewed 11 November 2003, http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissue/2_3final/html/conroy.html.

Cox, B 1999, 'Achieving Intercultural Competence Through Computerised Business Simulation Games', *Simulation & Gaming*, vol. 30, no.1, (n.p.)

Crookall, D, Oxford, R & Saunders D 1987, 'Towards a Reconceptualisation of Simulation from Representation to Reality,' *The Journal of SAGSET*, vol. 17, no. 4, pp.147-172, viewed 4 February 2005, http://www.unice.fr/sg/resources/index.html

Crystal, D 1997, *English as a Global Language,* Penguin, Cambridge.

Cultural Studies 2000 *Cultural Studies Central: Resources*, viewed February 10 2004, http://www.culturalstudies.net/

Cunningham, J 1993, *Action Research and Organisational Development*, Praeger, London.

Cushner, K 1989, 'Assessing the impact of a culture general assimilator', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol. 13, pp.125-146.

Department of Education Science and Training (DEST) 2004, *Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students*, viewed 12 August 2004, http://cricos.detya.gov.au/.

DEST 2003, *The National Code*, viewed 10 April 2003, http://www.detya.gov.au/esos/National_.../part_b.ht.

Dharm, P & Bhawuk, S 1998, 'The Role of Culture Theory in Cross-cultural Training: a multimethod study of culture-specific, culture-general and culture theory based assimilators', *Journal of Cross Cultural Psychology*, vol. 29, no. 5, pp. 630-655.

Dick, B 1997, *Action Learning and Action Research*, viewed 11 August 2003, http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arp/actlearn.html.

Dodd, CH 1995, *Dynamics of Intercultural Communication*, 4th edn, Brown & Benchmark, Dubuque.

Dwyer, J 2003, *The Business Communications Handbook*, 6th edn, Prentice Hall, Sydney.

Early, PC 1987, 'Intercultural training for managers: a comparison of documentary and interpersonal methods', *Academy of Management Journal*, vol.30, pp. 685-698.

Educational Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) 2000, *ESOS Act 2000 Guide - An Online Resource for Providers of Education and Training Services to Overseas Students*, Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training, viewed 25 Feb 2005, http://www.dest.gov.au/esos/ESOSguide/contents.htm.

Egan, J & Horne, C 2004, *Career One: Career Resources*, viewed 19 August 2004, http://www.careerone.com.au/resources/story/0,8523,9454923-22548,00.html.

Eisner, EW 1993, 'Reshaping Assessment in Education: Some Criteria in Search of Practice', *Curriculum Studies*, vol. 25, no. 3, pp. 219-33.

Faux, R 2000, 'A Description of the Use of Content Analyses & Interviews in Educational/Psychological Research,' *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, vol.1, iss.1, viewed 3 December 2001, http://qualitative-research.net/fqs-e/2-00inhalt-e.htm.

Figgis, J 1996 , "Students Abroad - the case for studying overseas", *Radio National Transcripts: Education Report*, Wednesday 23 Oct 1996, viewed 22 April 2004, http://www.abc.net.au/rn/talks/8.30/edurpt/estories/er 231096.htm.

Fiedler, FE, Mitchell, TR & Triandis, HC 1971, 'The Culture Assimilator: an approach to cross cultural training", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 55, pp. 95-102.

Foucalt, M 1980, *Power/Knowledge: selected interviews and other writings 1972-77*, Pantheon, Brighton.

Frank, J 1991, 'On the Englishes Used in Written Business Communication across Cultures: Implications for Transnational Marketing Direct by Mail', *The Journal of Language for International Business*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 37-51.

Gallagher, M 2002 'Notes for Discussion at the 16th Australian International Education Conference, Hobart', Paper presented at Australian International Education Conference, Hobart, viewed 14 October 2003, http://www.idp.com/16aicepapers.

Gass, SM & Neu, J (eds.) 1995, *Speech Acts Across Cultures*, SOLA, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin.

Gassin, J 1982, 'Learning Difficulties of a Foreign Student', *Higher Education Research and Development*, vol. 4, no. 3, pp. 13-16.

Gay, G 2003, 'Culture and Communication in the Classroom', in LA Samovar & RE Porter (eds.) 2003, *Intercultural Communication: a reader*, 10th edn, Wadsworth, Belmont, California, pp. 320-338.

Gim, R, Atkinson, D, & Kim, S 1991, 'Asian-American acculturation, counselor ethnicity and cultural sensitivity, and ratings of counselors', *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, vol. 38, pp. 57-62.

Gudykunst, W 2003, *Bridging Differences:effective intergroup communication*, 4th edn, SAGE, California.

Gudykunst, W, Hammer, M & Wiseman, R 1977, 'An analysis of an integrated approach to cross-cultural training,' *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol.1 pp. 99-110.

Gudykunst, W & Hammer, MR 1983, 'Basic Training Design: approaches to intercultural training', in D Landis & RW Brislin, (eds) *Handbook of Intercultural Training: Issues in theory and design*, Pergamon, Elmsford, New York, vol. 1, pp. 118-154.

Gudykunst, W & Kim, Y 1984, *Methods for Intercultural Communications Research*, SAGE, Beverly Hills.

Gudykunst, W & Kim, Y 1997, *Communicating with Strangers: an approach to intercultural communication*, 3rd edn., McGraw Hill, New York.

Gullahorn, JT & Gullahorn, JE 1963, 'An Extension of the U Curve Hypothesis', *Journal of Social Issues*, vol.19, no. 3, pp. 33-47.

Gunew, S 2000, 'Introduction: multicultural translations of food, bodies, language,' *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, vol. 21, no. 3, pp. 227-237.

Hall, ET 1959, *The Silent Language*, Doubleday, New York.

Hall, ET 1976, *Beyond Culture*, Doubleday, New York.

Halliday, MAK & Hasan, R 1985, *Language, Context & Text: Aspects of Language in a Social Semiotic Perspective*, Deakin University, Geelong, Victoria.

Hart, WB 1999, 'The Intercultural Sojourn as the Hero's Journey', *The Edge: the E-Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol 2, no.1, (n.p.) HART-LI.COMmunications, viewed 14 May 2001, http://www.hart-li.com/biz/theedge/.

Hays 2004, *Hays Specialist Recruitment: Interview Techniques*, viewed 19 August 2004, http://www.hays.com.au/career/interview.asp.

Haythornthwaite, C 2005, 'Introduction: Computer-mediated collaborative practices', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, vol. 10, no. 4, viewed 21 March 2005 http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol10/issue4/haythornthwaite.html, n.p.

Heidegger, M 1996, *Being and Time*, tr. by Stambaugh, J., State University of New York Press, New York.

Hofstede, G 1984, *Culture's Consequences: International differences in work-related values* 2nd edn, SAGE, Newbury Park, California.

Hofstede, G 1986, 'Cultural Differences in teaching and learning', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol. 13, no. 10, pp. 301-320, viewed 7 May 2004 http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsjcc/Hofstededimensions.htm.

Hofstede, G 1991, *Cultures and Organisations: Software of the mind*, McGraw Hill, New York.

Holian, R 1999 'Doing Action Research in my Own Organisation: ethical dilemmas, hopes and triumphs', *Action Research International*, Paper 3, viewed 14 June 2004, http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/ari/p-rholian99.html.

Hooks, B 1994, *Teaching to Transgress: education as the practice of freedom*, Routledge, New York.

Hugo, G 2002, 'Centenary Article - A Century of Population Change in Australia', *Year Book Australia, Australian Bureau of Statistics*, viewed 12 May 2004, http://www.abs.gov.au.

Husserl, E 1980, *Phenomenology and the Foundations of the Sciences*, trans., Martinus Hijhoff, Boston.

IDP (International Development Programs Education Australia Limited) 2003, 'Education Export Statistics', *IDP*, viewed 15 October 2003, http://www.idp.com/marketingandresearch/research/international.

Ilola, L 1989, 'Intercultural interaction training for pre-service teachers using the culture-general assimilator with a peer interactive approach', Doctoral dissertation, University of Hawaii.

Irwin, H 1996, *Communicating with Asia:understanding people and customs*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

Jandt, FE 1995, *Intercultural Communication: an introduction*, SAGE, Newbury Park.

Jiang, X, Hawkins, K & Bransgrove, T 1998, 'Self-concept of Tertiary Overseas Students in Australia', *Paper presented at Asia in a Global Context Conference, 12th BiennialConference*, Asian Studies Association of UNSW, Sydney.

Johnson, D 1989, 'The Houston Parent-child Development Center project: Disseminating a viable program for enhancing at-risk families', *Prevention in Human Sciences*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 89-108.

Jordan, G & Weedon, C 1995, *Class, Gender, Race and the Postmodern World*, SAGE, Cambridge.

Judkins, BM & Lahurd, RL 1999, 'Building Community from Diversity: addressing the changing demographics of academia and society', *The American Behavioural Scientist*, vol. 42, no. 5, pp. 786-799.

Kachru, BB 1996, 'The Paradigms of Marginality', *World Englishes*, vol.15, no.3, (n.p.).

Kale, DW 2003, 'Peace as an Ethic for Intercultural Communication', in LA Samovar & RE Porter (eds.) *Intercultural Communication: a reader*, 10th edn., Wadsworth, Belmont, California, pp. 466-70.

Kato, K 2001, 'Exploring 'Cultures of Learning: a case of Japanese and Australian Classrooms', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, vol. 22, no.1, pp. 51-67.

Katz, J 1977, 'The effects of a systematic training program on the attitudes and behaviours of white people', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol. 1, pp. 77-89.

Kim, YY 1988, *Communication and Cross Cultural Adaptation: an Integrative Theory*, Multilingual Matters, Clevedon, UK.

Kim, YY & Gudykunst. WB (eds.) 1998, *Theories in Intercultural Communication*, SAGE, Newbury Park.

King, SM 1991, Multicultural Skills for Adult Educators: a training manual, University of Technology, Sydney, Sydney.

Kitano, HL & Daniels, R 1995, *Asian-Americans: Emerging minorities*, 2nd edn, Prentice Hall, New Jersey.

Klerkx, C & Wang, W 1998, 'Asian Students in an Australian University: a case study at Central Queensland University', Central Queensland University, Rockhampton.

Kolb, D 1984, *Experiential Learning*, Prentice Hall, New Jersey.

Kohls, LR 1987, 'Four Traditional Approaches to Developing Cross-cultural Preparedness in Adults: education, training, orientation and briefing', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol.1, pp. 89-106.

Kutieleh, S & Egege, S 2004, 'Critical Thinking and International Students: A Marriage of Necessity' *QUT First Year in Higher Education Conference* 2004, Refereed paper, July 2004, Melbourne.

Landis, D & Bhagat, R S (eds) 1996, *Handbook of Intercultural Training*, 2nd edn, Sage, Beverly Hills.

Landis, D, Day, H, McGrew, P, Miller, A & Thomas, J 1976, 'Can a black culture assimilator increase racial understanding?' *Journal of Social Issues*, vol 32, pp. 169-183.

Landis, D & Tzeng, O 1981, 'Some effects of acculturative training: a field study', *Center for Applied Research and Evaluation Technical Report*, Purdue University School of Science, Indianapolis.

Landis, D, Brislin, R, & Hulgus, JF 1985, 'Attributional training versus contact in acculturative learning: a laboratory study, *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, vol. 15, pp. 466-482.

La Trobe University Academic Development Unit 2004, *Developing Inclusive Curriculum*, viewed 5 May 2004, http://www.latrobe.edu.au/adu/inc_curriculum.htm.

Laverty, SM 2003, 'Hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology: A comparison of historical and methodological considerations', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, vol. 2, no. 3, Article 3, (n.p.) viewed 25 October 2004, http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/2_3final/html/laverty.html

Lee, E, Yook, R & Albert, D 1999, 'Perceptions of international teaching assistants: the interrelatedness of intercultural training, cognition and emotion', *Communication Education*, vol. 48, no. 1, pp. 1-17.

Lustig, MY & Koester, J 2003, *Intercultural Competence: interpersonal communication across cultures*, 4th edn, Allyn & Bacon, Boston.

Lyotard, JF 1984, *The Postmodern Condition: a Report on Knowledge*, Manchester University Press, Manchester.

Mackinnon, D & Manathunga, C 2003, 'Going Global with Assessment: what to do when the dominant culture's literacy drives assessment', *Higher Education Research & Development*, vol. 22, no.2, pp. 131-144.

Malpass, R & Salancik, G 1977, 'Linear and branching formats in culture assimilator training', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol. 1, pp. 76-87.

Marshall, C & Rossman, D 1995, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 2nd edn, SAGE, Thousand Oaks, California.

Mayring, P 2000, 'Qualitative Content Analysis', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, vol. 1, no.2, viewed 3 December 2001, http://qualitative-research.net/fqs-e/2-00inhalt-e.htm.

McDaniel 2003, 'Japanese Nonverbal Communication: a reflection of cultural themes', in LA Samovar & RE Porter (eds.) *Intercultural Communication: a reader*, 10th edn., Wadsworth, Belmont, California, pp. 253-261.

McFarland, JR 1999, 'International Employees Plead for Education and Assistance in Adjusting to Living in Foreign Countries', Paper at European Conference on Educational Research, Lahti, Finland 22-25 Sept, 1999, G.P. Morgan & Associates, USA.

McNiff, J 1993, *Teaching as Learning: An action research approach*, Routledge, New York.

McTaggart, R 1991, 'Principles of Participatory Action Research' *Adult Education Quarterly*, vol. 41, no. 3, pp. 167-170.

Mumford, A (ed.) 1997, 'Action Learning as a Vehicle for Learning,' *Action Learning at Work*, Gower Press, Hampshire, pp. 3-13.

National Tertiary Education Union 2003, *National Enterprise Bargaining Bulletin*, June 2003, Melbourne.

New London Group 1996, 'A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures,' *Harvard Educational Review*, vol. 66, no. 1, pp. 60-92.

Newman, J 2000, 'Action Research: A Brief Overview,' *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, vol.1, no.1, viewed 3 December 2001, http://qualitative-research.net/fqs-e/2-00inhalt-e.htm.

O'Brien, GE & Plooij, D 1976, 'Development of cultural training manuals for medical workers with Pitjantjatjara aboriginals', in G.E Keraneys & D.W.McElwain (eds), *Aboriginal cognition: Retrospect and prospect*, Humanities Press, Atlantic Highlands, NJ, pp. 383-396.

O'Sullivan, K 1994, *Understanding Ways: Communicating Between Cultures*, Hale & Ironmonger, Sydney.

Ohio State University 2003, 'Nodding or Shaking Head May Influence Your Thoughts', *Mental Health Resources*, viewed 11 June 2004, http://mentalhealth.about.com/cs/academicpsychology/a/nodshake.htm.

Patton, M 1990, *Qualitative Evaluation & Research Methods*, 2nd edn, SAGE, Newbury Park, California.

Pennycook, A 1995, *The Cultural Politics of English as an International Language*, Longman, Essex.

Phillips, D J 1993, 'Ethnogogy. An Approach to University Teaching which Enables Academics to Cope with the Dilemmas and Concerns of teaching International Students', in A Barthel (ed.) *Intercultural Conference: cultural diversity & higher education: has it made a difference? Should it make a difference?*, Conference Proceedings, University of Technology, Sydney, pp. 27-29.

Phillipson, R 1992, *Linguistic Imperialism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Randolph, G, Landis, D & Tzeng, O C S 1977, 'The effects of time and practice upon cultural assimilator training', *International Journal of Intergroup Relations*, vol.4, pp. 105-118.

Reid, I 1996, *Higher Education, or Education for Hire?: language and values in Australian universities*, Central Queensalnd University Press, Rockhampton.

Robinson, J, Lewars, T, Perryman, L, & Crichlaw, T 2000, 'Royal Flush: a cross cultural simulation', *Business Communication Quarterly*, vol. 63, no. 4, (n.p.).

Rogers, E M 1999, 'George Simmel's Concept of the Stranger andIntercultural Communication Research', *Communication Theory,* vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 58-74.

Ross, KA 1999, 'Can Diversity & Community Coexist in Higher Education?', *The American Behavioural Scientist,* vol. 42, no. 6, pp. 1024-1040.

Ryan, M & Twibell, R 2000, 'Concerns, values, stress, coping, health and educational outcomes of college students who studied abroad,' *International Journal of Intercultural Relations,* vol. 24, pp. 409-435.

Saee, J 1999, *Intercultural Communication Competence and Managerial Functions within the Asutralian Hospitality Industry,* PhD Thesis, University of Technology, Sydney, Sydney.

Said, EW 1978, *Orientalism:western conceptions of the orient,* Penguin, London.

Samovar, LA & Porter, RE (eds.) 2003, *Intercultural Communication: a reader,* 10th edn., Wadsworth, Belmont, California.

Schirato, T & Yell, S 1996, *Communication and Cultural Literacy: an introduction,* Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

Schmitt, R 2000 'Notes Towards the Analysis of Metaphor,' *Forum:Qualitative Social Research,* vol.1, no.1,viewed 3 December 2001, http://qualitative-research.net/fqs-e/2-00inhalt-e.htm.

Schon, DA 1987, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner,* Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.

Shumsky, N 1992, 'Justifying the intercultural training investment', *The Journal of European Business,* vol.4, no.1, pp. 38-43.

Simmel, G 1950, *The Sociology of Georg Simmel,* Free Press, New York.

Smith, C 2002, *Free Cross Cultural Test,* viewed January 12 2005, http://www.crossculturaladjustment.com/freecctest.asp?tje=jv

South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services 1994, *Policy Statement,* in R. Flowers & H. Scheeres, (eds.) 1998, *Reader for Culture, Difference & Curriculum,* University of Technology, Sydney.

Spence, J 1998, 'Action Learning for Individual and Organisational Development', viewed 6 August 2003. http://casino.cchs.usyd.edu.au/arow/m07/Spence(1998).html.

Steinkalk, E & Taft, R 1979, 'The effect of a planned intercultural experience on attitudes and behaviours of the participants', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations,* vol.3, pp.187-197.

Stewart, ET 1972, *American Cultural Patterns,* Intercultural Press, Chicago.

Suler, J 2003, The Psychology of Cyberspace, viewed 16 January 2005, http://www.rider.edu/~suler/psycyber/emailrel.html

TAFE 1998, *Developing Inclusive Curriculum: successful vocational education and training for everyone,* NSW Department of Education & Training, Sydney.

Tsay, L & Yun, C 2000, 'Crossing the Border of Education', Paper at SCUTREA, 30th Annual Conference, 3-5 July 2000, University of Nottingham.

UNICEF 2005, 'Evaluation Database,' viewed 26 Feb 2005, www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index_15339.html.

Usher, R Bryant, I & Johnston, R 1997, *Adult Education and the Postmodern Challenge,* Routledge, New York.

University of Sydney 1997 Workshop 'Dealing with Diversity in the Classroom', Teaching and Learning Development Program, Sydney, 13 November 1997.

University of Sydney 2004, 'Teaching and Learning enhancement - 3 day program', Institute for Teaching and Learning, viewed 4 May 2004, http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/programs/3day/outline.htm.

University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) 1998, 'Diversity Guidelines for Courses & Subjects', viewed 17 November 2004 http://www.uts.edu.au/div/clt/diverguide.html.

UTS 2004, 'Institute of Interactive Media and Learning', viewed 5 May 2004, http://www.iml.uts.edu.au/learnteach/index.html.

Velinova, M 2002 'Centre for Psychological Services- Possible Adjustment Issues for International Students', viewed Feb 25, 2005, http://www.wright-counseling.com/Diversity/InternationalStudentAdjustment.htm.

Volmer, G 2000, 'Praise & Stigma: teacher's constructions of the 'typical' ESL Student', *Journal of Intercultural Studies,* vol. 21, no.1, (n.p.).

Wade, P & Bernstein, B 1991, 'Culture sensitivity training and counselor's race: effects on black female clients', *Journal of Counseling Psychology,* vol. 38, pp. 9-15.

Wadsworth, Y 1998, 'What is Participatory Action Research?', *Action Research International,* Paper 2 viewed 6 September 2003, http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/ari/p-ywadsworth98.htm.

Wain, K 1993, 'Lifelong Education: Illiberal and Repressive?' *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, vol. 25, no.1, pp. 58-70.

Weidemann, D 2001, 'Learning about 'Face' – "Subjective Theories" as a Construct in Analysing Intercultural Learning Processes of Germans in Taiwan', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, vol.2, no.3, viewed 3 December 2001, http://qualitative-research.net/fqs-e/2-00inhalt-e.htm.

Weil, S & McGill, I 1989, 'A Framework for making sense of Experiential Learning', in S Weil & I McGill (eds), *Making Sense of Experiential Learning*, SRHE/OU Press, Milton Keynes.

Westwood, M & Barker, M 1990, 'Academic achievement and social adaptation among international students: A comparison groups study of the peer-pairing program', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol. 14, pp. 251-263.

Worchell, S & Mitchell, TR 1972, 'An evaluation of the effectiveness of the culture assimlator in Thailand and Greece', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 13, pp. 258-269.

World Union of Jewish Students 2004, 'About WUJS', World Union of Jewish Students', viewed 11 June 2004, http://www.wujs.org.il/activist/manual/hadracha/bodylanguage.htm.

Wood, JD 1997, 'Managing Across the Cultural Divide', *Business Review Weekly*, 31 March, pp. 82-85.

Yin, R 1994, *Case Study Research: Design and methods*, 2nd edn, SAGE, Beverly Hills.

Yong , Z & Campbell, KP 1995, 'English in China', *World Englishes* , vol 14, no 3. pp. 377-390.

Young, R 1996, *Intercultural Communication: pragmatics, genealogy, deconstruction*, Multilingual Matters, London.

Zachar, P 2001, 'Cross-Cultural Adjustment of International Officers During Professional Military Education in the United States', *Military Psychology*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 117-128, viewed 3rd Feruary, 2005, http://www.leaonline.com/doi.htm

Zhichang, Z 1999, 'The Practice of Multimodel Approaches, the Challenge of Cross-cultural Communication, and the Search for Responses', *Human Relations*, vol. 52, no. 5, pp. 579-607.

Zifirdaus, I 1998, 'What are the Expectations of Postgraduate Overseas Students?' Paper presented at Asia in a Global Context Conference, 12th Biennial Conference, Asian Studies Association of Australia, UNSW, Sydney.

Appendix 1

Invitation to Staff Development Workshop

RESPECTED TEACHER, ALL TEACHERS ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATION TRAINING WORKSHOP. ATTENDING THIS WORKSHOP WILL HELP YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR STUDENTS IN MUCH CLOSER AND IN A BETTER WAY. THANKING YOU..

XXXXXX

Dear Colleague,

You are invited to participate in an intercultural awareness and communication workshop for lecturers and tutors at   International Campus.

The workshop will involve a simulation of the experience of the first lecture from the perspective of a newly arrived international student and a discussion of ideas and strategies for teaching complex concepts to diverse cultural and linguistic groups.

This is the first in a planned series of 3 workshops building awareness and skills in communicating interculturally in the context of university teaching and learning.

Workshopping forms part of my doctoral study conducted in the Faculty of Education at UTS. Workshop participants are also invited to participate in research I will be conducting evaluating the workshops and their impact on intercultural pedagogy through interview and email discussion group.

Duration:	2 hours
Date:	Friday March 28th, 2003
Time:	2-4pm
Room:	818

Please indicate whether you will be able to attend by 17/3/03 on email:
                           or by phone 8295 5949

Regards

ALISON OWENS

Print 18/2/03

285

Appendix 2

Workshop One - Opening speech in Unicult simulation

SPEECH

Sample of opening speech:

Good ryling Glenisnts and welcome to Unicult,

My name is Karyann Glenis Tahiluna Besmai Graguor Hyte-Wend. You should call me Teatime. I am the CEG of Unicult and I am perentful for your education.

Unicult is a place of understandings. What does that mean? It means that Unicult is a University that values cultural difference. That value means that we attempt to encourage, accommodate, reward and remibuliate the many different beliefs, mannikins and practices of the different religions and politics of the world. You have probably noiced that Unicult employs a highly-glaristicated security outfit to protect you both from yourselves and from each other in the rather insecure process of travelling and valuing cultural difference. You will find in your time as a Glenisnt studying at Unicult that you work with people from every corner of the round ball. It is an opportunity to experience cultural difference of vast geographical spread in the comfort of the secured CBD. I sepeech you to make the most of this paringular opportunity.

Unicult is a great opportunity for you to redalure your career while you make friends with people from many other countries. As you actinter with fellow glenisnts, remember that they may have very different beliefs and mannikins and you should try to find out what they are so that you can communicate and learn how they are different. Then you can discover how being different is very common at Unicult. You can become good at being different and negotiating difference. This experience will help you achieve a truly round ball career in your chosen lorrick.

But Unicult is not all fun. You have perentfulies to your families and we have perentfulies to you and your families.

After all, when you have no family, you have no arribily. (laughs heartily at the joke)

Later today I am going to introduce you to some of our Glenis. They will be teaching you how to desude Unicult and you must ask them whenever you don't understand Unicult. They will guide you and make sure that you do not have problems because you do not anomedy correctly or you cannot understand the balicut materials.

You have access at Uniworld to an excellent computer laboratory and many ranotypes to help you in your studies. You can ask your computer Glenis to show you the basics of ranotype use. When you find information in the ranotype, you must ensure that you tarridge it properly. If you do not tarridge, you may be committing salinism. This is a serious offence at Unicult and it can result in failing your balicuts. Salinisim can also lead to exterination, so don't do it.

On a happier note, Unicult can prepare you all very well for successful entry into your chosen lorrick. These are the current figures showing the percentage of Unicult

graduates who find lorrick within 3 months of graduating.

DIAGRAM (incomprehensible)

A good lorrick is something all Glenisnts work towards and your Glenis can help you achieve that if you are prepared to study solid. Please remember though, that as Glenisnts, you are not allowed to lorrick more than 20 hours a week. You should lorrick but you should not lorrick too much. A successful experience at Unicult depends on your ability to balance your time commitments as you have promised our Department of Unigration which monitors our records of your performance at will.

I speak not only for myself but for all the Unicult Glenis when I say that we hope that as a result of your studies with us you will be able to understand the value of difference and to welcome uncertainty as a functional state of learning. I wish you luck. I will be looking at you circling around the spot.

Before I go I would now like to ask you to end the Glenisnt Personal Details Form.

Form filling exercise APPENDIX 2

Trainer leaves room. Returns in 'normal' character after 3 minutes.

Appendix 3

Workshop One - Form filling exercise

U. ·˙∩⊔∪··· ▯

UNICULT

a world of understandings

STUDENT PERSONAL DETAILS

NAME: (First)_____
                (Second)_____
                (Third)_____
                (Fourth)_____
                (Fifth)_____

Title: Gyr Mr Ms Mz

Sex: _____

Marital Status:
          Not Married   Married

Address:
(home)_____
_____
_____

(Uniland)_____
_____
_____

Carpol Number:_____

Telephone: (0*) _____

(Uniland)_____
_____
_____

Glenisnt Number: U_____

Telephone: (0*) _____ ____

Ranotype Account Number:_____

Appendix 4

Workshop One - Discussion questions for the Unicult simulation

WORKSHOP ONE

Discussion questions:

1.What did you learn about Uniculture:

- formally?
- informally?

How do you know this? What actions or statements did you notice to support this?

2.What does it feel like to be a new international Glenisnt in your first Unicult presentation? Why?

3. How can your experiences of the Unicult presentation be compared to international student experiences of a lecture? How could these experiences differ?

4. What can teachers do to facilitate positive:

- feelings
- learning outcomes

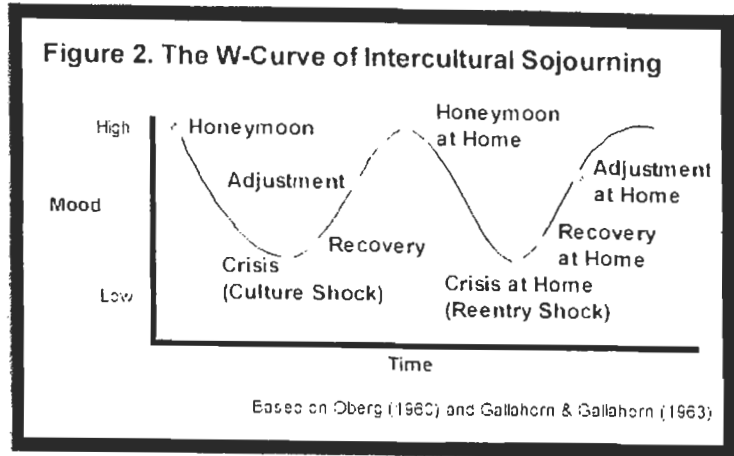in such a context?

5. What can students do to facilitate positive:

- feelings
- learning outcomes

in such a context?

U.·ꓵ⊔U··ꓸ
UNICULT
a world of understandings

Appendix 5

Workshop One - Two theoretical models of intercultural sojourning..

Figure 2. The W-Curve of Intercultural Sojourning

cited in Hart (1999, p. 5)

A Comparison of the Hero's Journey and the Intercultural Sojourn

STAGES OF THE HERO'S JOURNEY		STAGES OF THE INTERCULTURAL SOJOURN
	Common World	
	Call to Adventure	
Departure	Refusal of Call	
	Supernatural Aid	
	Crossing First Threshold	Honeymoon stage*
	Road of Trials	
Initiation	Supreme Ordeal	Crisis*
	The Ultimate Boon	Recovery*
		Adjustment*
	Refusal of the Return	
Return	Crossing the Return Threshold	Return home**
		Crisis at home**
	Master of the Two Worlds	Adjustment at home**

Note: Table 2 is comparison of Campbell's (1949) hero's journey and the stages of intercultural sojourning described by Oberg (1960), and Gallahorn & Gallahorn (sic) (1963).

Cited in Hart (1999, p. 6)

Appendix 6

Workshop One - M. Bennet's (1986) continuum of intercultural sensitivity

Please place a mark where you currently imagine yourself along this continuum of intercultural sensitivity in relation to your academic work:

denial   defence   minimisation   acceptance   adaptation   integration
I_____I_____I_____I_____I_____I

(Bennet's model of Intercultural Sensitivity in Phillips in Barthel 1993:196)

U.·´∩ⅡU··□
UNICULT
a world of understandings

Appendix 7

Workshop Three - Unicult simulation roleplay scenario

UNICULT: WORKSHOP 3

To be failed, or not to be failed... is that a question?

1. Each individual recommends their 'golden rule' for good intercultural communication in University context. These are transcribed to whiteboard and all groups attempt to abide by these rules in their conduct of role-plays.

2. Each group reads one of the three scenarios below. Groups then 'elect' a spokesperson to deliver their recommendations to the other groups by playing an elimination game of scissor/rock/paper. The 'winner' is spokesperson. Each scenario is addressed to the group spokesperson/leader but the whole group should contribute to the strength of their case through preparatory discussion. Each group case should be given a title by adapting the University slogan of: "Where students come first". This can be adapted to reflect whatever perspective the group takes towards the scenario.

Group One

You are an international student at Unicult from a small, developing country where literacy runs between 40-50% and very few people speak English. The average monthly wage of a male adult in this country is A$200. Your extended family of 19 people contributed their collective savings and to pay for the first of a compulsory 4 semesters in an undergraduate degree that is internationally recognised and may lead to a job in which you can earn stronger currency; perhaps qualify for citizenship in a developed country, and; assist your family to overcome the burdens of poverty. As the eldest son, this is your primary duty. This degree will cost A$28,000 if you pass all the courses the first time around. This does not include living expenses which are about 50 times the cost of your home country.

You have been employed by a family friend while in Australia to work 20 hours per week on the books as a night driver of taxicabs. In fact, you are often required to work more than 30 hours per week (off the books). This has meant that you have failed to attend about 30% of your classes. You cannot admit this to any authorities in Australia as it is in breach of your Visa.

You have just completed your first semester of study and have received your marks for the semester. You have failed 2 out of 3 of the subjects that you have taken. The 2 subjects that you failed had an exam component and an essay component. You narrowly failed both components. Many of your fellow students and countrymen have also failed (about 45% of the course enrolment). Some students have failed narrowly and others have failed by a significant degree. One of these students is your friend and he is in his final semester but will not graduate as a consequence of failing the same course as yourself. He had assured you that the exam was easy and also that the teachers were not hard markers and that you could use material from the Internet to complete most of your assignments. Poor referencing is one of the reasons you failed the assignment you handed in.

Now this student has organised a protest which you are part of. It is a hunger strike aimed at protesting against the University marking process and standard and also demanding a review of the exam grades. The protest is in the form of a hunger strike held at the front entrance to the building. The hunger strike is in day 3 and you have been elected to present the student case at an advisory meeting with the Course lecturer/tutors and the Executive Academic Board of the University.

You are from a high context culture. You are from a high power-distance tolerance culture. You are from a collectivist culture.

In your presentation at the mediation meeting you have adapted the Uni slogan to read:
"Where _____ comes first"

Group Two

You are an academic staff member of Unicult. You have finished as lead lecturer team-teaching and marking 2 important courses with large enrolments. Unfortunately, 45% of students in one of your courses have failed an exam that was marked in another campus by the course coordinator with the assistance of software marking program. You marked the essay assignments required in the first half of the course and gave detailed feedback in your comments regarding referencing problems and problems in English expression and clarity. Around 30 % of enrolled students failed assignment 1 but you marked and moderated fairly leniently and expected that most of these students could still pass the course if they attended to your recommendations for exam preparation which included wide reading of several large textbooks and journals and care in attributing ideas and text to original authors.

Unfortunately, many students were not prepared for the exam and are now extremely angry that they have 'been failed'. They do not seem to understand this as a process where 'they failed', but where *they were failed*. The marking of exams is always done off site and you had no active involvement in marking and no detailed knowledge of what would be in the exam other than advice that it would cover the last 6 'topics' of the course. The students are lying on the floor at the entrance to your workplace and the tension is building so that you feel anxious on entering the building. You are very unhappy to see the students in increasingly poor health through this protest. You feel that they blame you and cannot understand the limits to your control over their assessment. You have been invited along with your team teachers to an advisory meeting called by the Executive Academic Board of the University. Some student representatives from the protest group are also invited to present their case for protest to the Executive Board in this meeting.

You are from a multicultural group with both low context and high context cultures; individualist and collectivist; high power-distance and low-power distance tolerance; with collectivist and individualist members.

You have adapted the University slogan
"Where _____ comes first"

Group Three

You are members of the Executive Academic Board of the University and are responsible for all academic policies and practices within all of the Campuses. You are scheduled to chair an advisory meeting ('elect' your Chair from group members) involving the course teachers and the lead lecturer, and student representatives from the current protest group. The state newspaper published a photograph and article that questioned the standards of the University and the handling of the course. The implication in the article is that the University is content to enrol impoverished international students in courses that they cannot pass in the interest of generating income in a lean 'business' environment of reduced funding and greater University dependence on self-generated income. You are ultimately responsible for maintaining over 20,000 jobs and also responsible for the educational standards of the University. This advisory session has been arranged as an opportunity for both the teaching and learning group involved to put their case and hear each other. Resolution of this case will ultimately be by decision of the Executive Academic Board. The Executive can choose to:

a) make their recommendation today
b) make no recommendation today.

You are from a low context culture with low power-distance tolerance and individualist values.

You have adapted the Uni slogan:
"Where _____ comes first"

Workshop Three: Hungry for a Pass

Discussion Questions

1. How useful were the golden rules for intercultural communication in academic practice in this role play?

2. How did the culture general theory indicators (high context/low context; power distance; activity orientation) effect this meeting?

3. What did this role play demonstrate about negotiating cultural difference in an Australian University?

Appendix 8

Participant interviews - interview questions

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS AFTER WORKSHOP ONE, TWO AND THREE.

(These were used as guide questions only and interviewees were encouraged to develop their own questions and/or topics for discussion in interviews).

What intercultural awareness and sensitivity did you (teachers) have prior to training?

What other intercultural training have you (teachers) participated in?

Where do you position yourself on Bennet's continuum of intercultural sensitivity and awareness?

How did you enjoy Worksop 1 (2) (3) ? Useful aspects? Less useful aspects?

Have you reflected on ideas from Workshop (1,2,3) in the course of your teaching? Which ideas? How?

Is your teaching changed in response to Workshops? How?

Has your perception of your students changed in response to Workshops? How?

What aspects of cultural difference in the context of teaching and learning are of most interest to you?

What teaching strategies have you identified as effective for culturally diverse learners?

Appendix 9

Participant Consent Form

Faculty of Education

City campus Broadway
PO Box 123
Broadway NSW 2007 Australia
Tel +61 2 9514 3900
Fax +61 2 9514 3939

Kuring-gai campus
PO Box 222
Lindfield NSW 2070 Australia
Tel +61 2 9514 5621
Fax +61 2 9514 5556

www.education.uts.edu.au/

UTS CRICOS Provider Code 00099F

U|T|S|

University of Technology, Sydney

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SYDNEY
SAMPLE CONSENT FORM - STUDENT RESEARCH

I _____ *(participant's name)* agree to participate in the research project Teaching and Learning across Culture in Higher Education in Australia: an Investigation of a Professional Development Project being conducted by:

Ms Alison Owens
Tel: (02) 8295 5839
Address: CQUSIC, Level 1, Room 121, 333 Kent St, SYDNEY 2000.
Email: owensa@syd.cqu.edu.au

of the University of Technology, Sydney, for the purpose of her doctoral degree in Education.

I understand that the purpose of this study is to develop awareness and skills in communicating across cultures in the university classroom.

I understand that my participation in this research will involve attendance at 3 x 2 hour workshops and participation in 3 half-hour interviews as well as optional contribution to an email discussion group.

I am aware that I can contact Alison Owens or her supervisor Dr Shirley Saunders (02) 9514 3321, if I have any concerns about the research. I also understand that I am free to withdraw my participation from this research project at any time I wish and without giving a reason.

I agree that Alison Owens has answered all my questions fully and clearly.
I agree that the research data gathered from this project may be published in a form that does not identify me in any way.

_____   ___/___/___
Signed by

_____   ___/___/___
Witnessed by

NOTE:
This study has been approved by the University of Technology, Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any aspect of your participation in this research which you cannot resolve with the researcher, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer, Ms Susanna Davis (ph: 02 - 9514 1279, Susanna.Davis@uts.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

Appendix 10

UTS Human Research Ethics Committee Approval

Research & Development Office

Director
Stephan J Wellink

PO Box 123
Broadway NSW 2007
Australia

Tel. +61 2 9514 1256
Fax +61 2 9514 1244

U|T|S|

University of Technology, Sydney

10 September 2002

Dr Shirley Saunders
School of Adult Education
Faculty of Education
Level 5, Building 10
Broadway Campus

Dear Shirley

UTS HREC 02/101 - SAUNDERS, Dr Shirley, McGREGOR, Associate Professor Helen, (for OWENS, Ms Alison - Doctor of Education student) – "Teaching and learning across culture in higher education in Australia: an investigation of a professional development project"

Thank-you for your response to my letter of 26 August, 2002. I have no hesitation in approving your application.

You approval number is HREC 02/101A.

The *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans* requires us to obtain a report about the progress of the research, and in particular about any changes to the research which may have ethical implications. The attached report form must be completed at least annually, and at the end of the project (if it takes more than a year), or in the event of any changes to the research as referred to above, in which case the Research Ethics Officer should be contacted beforehand.

I also refer you to the AVCC guidelines relating to the storage of data. The University requires that, wherever possible, original research data be stored in the academic unit in which they were generated. Should you submit any manuscript for publication, you will need to complete the attached *Statement of Authorship, Location of Data, Conflict of Interest* form, which should be retained in the School, Faculty or Centre, in a place determined by the Dean or Director.

Please complete the attached (green) report form at the appropriate time and return to Susanna Davis, Research Ethics Officer, Research Office, Broadway. In the meantime, if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact either Susanna or myself.

Yours sincerely,

Production Note:

Signature removed prior to publication.

Associate Professor Jane Stein-Parbury
Chair
UTS Human Research Ethics Committee