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Intercultural Experience and Learning Among EAP International Students

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Abstract

The trend toward greater enrolment of EFL speaking international students into institutions of higher education (IHE) in the West, is well documented. In response to this drive for greater levels of international participation, a newer trend has arisen; among these institutions more and more students who do not meet the language proficiency criteria are being accepted on the condition that they undergo and complete programs at specified language education institutions.

This shift in cross-border EFL student enrolment practice is responsible for the creation of adjunct language schools, where students who have been accepted to a given university may be educated in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) on the campus itself. In Canada, the completion of such an adjunct EAP bridge program eliminates the need for an EFL student to retake any of the recognized English proficiency tests, such as the IELTS, in order to commence their intended academic programs.

While the student perspective in study-abroad has been researched and reported in a significant number of contexts, the adjunct EAP student experience is not quite like any of these other contexts. Thus far, little research attention has been paid to the lived experience of cross-border language learners who are attending adjunct EAP programs. In consideration of the rapid growth in the number of EAP initiatives, and the evolving nature of EAP education, this research seeks to encounter, document, and interpret the voices of those students for whom adjunct EAP programs are the chosen way to enter IHE.

This study found that the participants who were most satisfied with their cross-cultural experience were those who felt included in campus life in both the formal and informal domains. This finding points to the important role universities have in providing effective and supportive learning and living environments for this particular group of international students.

Key words:

International Higher Education

English for Academic Purposes

Cross-border Higher Education

Intercultural experience

Study-abroad

International Student

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Chapter One: Introduction

This research centers on the lived experience of globally mobile university students in the 21st century. Cross-border education is not new, but in each era of history it has manifested under different circumstances. Modern history assumes the reification of the bounded nation-state. The discourses of the nation-state are significant in how we talk about cross-border higher education, because of the political, economic and social interests that are at stake. These interests, in the 21st century, form the causes and conditions that make being a cross-border university student different at this point in history from that of any other.

One can contrast and compare the 21st century conditions with those of the past. During the middle ages, scholars departed from far-flung places in North-western Europe to arrive at centres of learning such as the Sorbonne in France, Oxford in England, often in training for the clergy or the crown. The common tongue was Latin, giving no preference to the languages that would become attached to nation-states in the future. Further back in time, during the Classical Period, Ancient Greece was not a nation-state but a network of autonomous city-states and kingdoms. The great philosopher Aristotle had been sent from Macedonia to Athens, a city named for a deity of wisdom and war, to study under Plato. At age 37, Aristotle was recalled to Macedonia to tutor the young Alexander the Great in all matters of politics, rhetoric and history. More recently, during the Enlightenment, Paris attracted the more secular intelligentsia from across Europe, as far as Ireland and Russia. In nineteenth century Canada, a young Louis Riel had to travel from the not-

yet confederated Saskatchewan to the earliest French university in Quebec where he studied law and went on to become a champion of the rights of the Métis, a linguistic, religious and racial minority in the newly confederated Canada.

The present era of cross-border education began after World War II, and research on the cross-border study experience began in the 1960s. Over the subsequent decades and leading to the present moment, scholars have theorized the phenomena of international student adaptation and success from social, psychological and academic perspectives. Up to this point, research on cross-border student has mainly been of the problem-solution type, comparing cross-border students to domestic students. In these studies, the cultural and linguistic practices of international students have been positioned as inherently deficient in comparison with domestic students, and researchers have proposed a number of solutions to the international student “problem.” One pervasive “problem” is that many cross-border students don’t know how to perform according to expectations in the Anglo-Western university, nor do they automatically know how to perform in cross-cultural interactions in class and after class. Blaming the newcomer for their differences and for their cross-cultural inexperience reflects attitudes that are inherently ethnocentric. In addition, the focus on intercultural deficits can render invisible vital information about the ways in which international students overcome hurdles. Deficit-based discourses may also undermine efforts to initiate and sustain positive images of international student participation in Higher Education in the West.

Language and culture stand as contested dimensions of International Higher Education (IHE). On one hand, the overall university rhetoric asserts that international students will contribute to the international climate of Canadian universities for the benefit of local students. On the other hand, despite the explosion in cross-border education in the past two decades, during which cross-border enrolment quadrupled to over 4 million students in 2014, universities still struggle with under-staffed, underfunded and short-sighted delivery of support services for international students (Marginson & Sawir, 2011)

EFL bridge programs for cross-border students have existed for decades but did not become a formal, evidence-based field until the mid-1990s (Hyland Hamp-Lyons, 2002, p. 3). It is important that that evidence-based decisions about language education continue to be made in response to waves of change in IHE recruitment, because once academic fitness has been ascertained, language is the first concern for students and their receiving institutions. One significant wave of change takes the form of the trend towards conditional acceptance to a given institution riding on whether or not a student completes a “bridge” program that will enable them to meet or exceed the language proficiency requirements of their intended academic program. Increasing numbers of universities across Canada are establishing bridging programs on their own campuses. These universities view graduation from their own bridge-schools as enough proof of language proficiency for cross-border students to enter their intended academic program.

We can expect that the university-situated Bridge EAP phenomenon will continue to grow in order to accommodate the ever-increasing demand for

admission to Anglo-Western universities and colleges and the increasing recruitment targets of these institutions. Qualitative and quantitative studies have made clear that the growing markets for Anglo-Western Higher Education are complicated by shortcomings in the language learning background of many aspiring globally mobile students. Recruiting students into degree programs for which they do not yet have the communicative proficiencies is unscrupulous, and the push to increase international enrollment has left many institutions seeking solutions to the language gap (Dooley, 2010, p. 184).

While language and cultural learning enables students to manage daily life and academic life abroad, students don't necessarily appreciate their EAP courses *right away*. Dooley (2010) followed some former EAP students over the course of their undergraduate years and found that many of them had come to appreciate their pre-enrolment EAP courses only after reaching the upper years of their degrees, where they were pressed to employ the academic literacies introduced and practiced in their EAP classes.

My interview-based inquiry took place at a large, research-intensive university in Southern Ontario, paying attention to the experiences of cross-border students while attending their bridge programs. The research questions of the study are:

- What are the intercultural experiences of cross-border EAP students?
- How do participants make sense of their intercultural experiences?
- What role does language play in their intercultural lives abroad?

- How well do the findings of this study correlate with the discourses of International Education as Self-formation (IESF) Theory (Marginson and Sawir, 2011)?

The researcher was interested also in understanding questions of identity in cross-border study because of her own cross-cultural experiences of being a “foreigner” engaged in language and cultural teaching and learning. The research questions were formed in consideration of Marginson and Sawir’s definition of identity: “Identity is what a person understands themselves or others to be” (Marginson & Sawir, 2011, p. 137).

In order to approach the narratives of experience, learning and identity, the researcher invited EAP students to participate in a series of interviews about their lives in Canada, and there were ten volunteers. Nine of the participants were preparing to enter and complete undergraduate degree programs, primarily in the fields of business and engineering. The tenth was an exchange student in Health Sciences, attending the language school in order to be more prepared for her year of study-abroad.

EAP participant narratives about their cross-cultural learning provided a foundation for understanding their lived experience, and for considering the advantages of adjunct or integrated EAP programs for both students and universities. Effective EAP programs have the potential to benefit the global aspirations of international students as well as the bottom-line and the prestige of receiving academic institutions. It is the perception of the researcher that EAP programs may reach their potential if student language and culture learning

experiences are well-supported across environments. This support of cultural and language learning requires not only effective pedagogical methods, but also university initiatives that allow EAP students to experience a sense of belonging within the community of the university.

The findings of this research point to several conditions that impose opportunities for, and constraints upon, the well-being of EAP students in the language-learning phase of their study-abroad experience. Overall, the participants who felt included in campus life were the most satisfied with their cross-cultural experience, and it is argued that receiving universities have the responsibility to provide effective learning and living supports for this particular group of international students.

Chapter Two: Background and Context

2.1 Cross-Border International Higher Education (IHE)

The rate at which participation in cross-border Higher Education has accelerated in recent years has brought about a need for institutions in the receiving countries to respond to the changing profile of Higher Education. The explosion of demand for higher education, especially Anglo-Western higher education from students in EFL countries has led to competition between Anglo-Western universities to attract these students (Marginson, 2006; in Briguglio, 2011, p. 318). As the numbers continue to rise, and as universities seek to re-brand themselves as international (Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada, 2014, p. 11; CBIE, 2014), it is necessary to probe deeper into the processes and outcomes of IHE for students, local and international, and for university communities, in order to plan the transformation or augmentation of university structures and supports.

The major differences between cross-border Higher Education participation today than in previous generations are the diversity of the sending countries -- in particular, but not only, China (Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada, 2014, p. 5); (CBIE, 2018a, p. 1), -- and the decreasing age range of cross-border students, given that international undergraduates now outnumber international graduate students in many locations (CBIE, 2018b, p. 2). In the past, study-abroad for undergraduates was typically a year or less in duration, but now many cross-border students study abroad for up to five years in order to complete their entire degrees. This long period of studying abroad comes at a critical point in their development as young adults. One final notable difference between the

publications of 1995 and of 2012-2018 is the increased rhetoric of cross-border education as an economic boon to the bottom line of universities, towns and countries in a time of economic uncertainty and diminishing public investment in Higher Education (Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy, 2012).

Increasing needs for sophistication in the workforce has led to the rise of community colleges and university colleges which cater to the middle class. Wherever there is a growing middle class, one sees a growth in demand for post-secondary education (FATDC, 2014). Limited access to Higher Education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) in developing countries initiated the flow of students at the graduate level, from the Global South to the Global North and West long before those terms were coined. Although engineering is now taught at the tertiary level in countries where there is a high demand for engineers, such as South Korea and Angola, it is recognized that engineering education in the West is taught with modern techniques, using modern equipment and comes with the added value of competency in the English language.

On the other side of the coin, participation in Higher Education for cross-border students offers benefits practically unknown to their parents' generation, where global mobility, multilingualism, and top tier education were not available to any but the highest echelons of society. Changes in the ability of parents to pay for study-abroad, and the development of scholarships for study-abroad for less affluent students has permitted students from the Global South to consider whether it is best for them to go abroad, and if so, where. The above factors explain the

necessity of academic inquiry into the quality of life and learning for this new generation of mobile students.

2.1.1 The China Factor

One cannot describe the 21st century explosion in cross-border Higher Education without considering the mass participation of Chinese students in International Higher Education. Despite the significant expansion of tertiary education delivery in China since the mid-90s, participants in this study affirmed that there is still intense competition among secondary school students to access the more prestigious universities and most wanted programs within China. A degree from a Chinese university is no guarantee of employment after graduation (Gao, 2008 p. 601). Employment insecurity within China has created additional pressures on families who “hope for social mobility and for financial returns through education” (p. 601). This concern is exacerbated by the one-child policy in a nation where adults are legally responsible to care for their aging parents in the absence of old age security and other sponsored forms of retirement income.

According to Gao (2008), “emerging Chinese middle-class families” view tertiary education and English skills as “essential to securing a better future for their children” (p. 601). Parents spend a lot of money on English language education at home and, when possible, send their children to English medium institutions abroad to gain credentials not accessible to any but the most elite university students within China.

2.1.2 Preferences for Inner Circle Study

Kachru (1982) carved up the world into three circles of English use: The Inner Circle, of those nations where English is a first language, the Outer Circle, of post-colonial nations in which higher education and elite positions in society remained dependent on English usage, and the Expanding Circle, those countries who strive to embrace English in order to participate in the global flow of knowledge, innovation and development (p. 12).

The major players in international education have long been the United States and the United Kingdom, who received 21% and 12% of the global total of cross-border students in 2014 (OECD, 2014). In 2017 the percentages for the US and the UK were 24% and 11% (Study International, 2019). Many of the minor players have been seeking a greater share of the cross-border market. In 2014, Australia and Canada had 12% and 2% respectively with Australia dropping to 7% and Canada increasing to 7% by 2017 (Study International, 2019). Canada and Australia have much to gain from continuing to transform their International Higher Education sectors. At the time of the study, these two countries had significant differences in their market shares, despite Canada's more than adequate capacity for internationalization, and strong commitment to every aspect of education and innovation (AUCC, 2014; DFAIT, 2014). The Canadian effort has paid off according to the statistics cited above.

2.1.3 The Australian Example

International Education is Australia's fourth largest source of revenue and much effort has been applied to further expansion of international enrollment. Of the roughly 600,000 international students in Australia in 2014, 40,000 were

enrolled in English Language programs, and 184,000 in Higher Education. The importance of international student recruitment, language preparation, and participation in Higher Education in Australia remains significant motivation for Australian research into student experience. English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) is the national body for oversight of the EAP sector, to which Canada had, at the time of this study, no corresponding organization. Data on Canadian IHE was reported in Citizen and Immigration visa statistics.

Australia and Canada may be compared because of their similarity in GDP and population, unlike the giant of international education, the United States, which enrolls more new tertiary international students every year than the entire population of international students in either Australia or Canada (Institute of International Education (IIE), 2014). Therefore, findings from IHE sites in Australia may be relevant to the Canadian situation.

2.2 Higher Education, Prestige & Branding in Canada

In the mid-2000s, research noted that Canada was performing under-capacity in the process of developing a solid national policy and attracting larger numbers of international students. In fact, until 2014, Canada was the only Western country that did not have a national internationalization policy. The development of a national policy had been complicated by Canada's unique division of the education sector by province. All policies regarding education at any level were enacted at the provincial level, which made coordination between the different branches of government impossible to achieve without concerted effort (CBIE, 2014).

An important piece of the national strategy is the “branding” of Canada, of provinces, and of specific institutions, such as *Riverside University* (pseudonym), which is the university hosting the bridging program examined in this research, Branding is created through advertisement and publication, all in the effort to become well-known to prospective students. Name recognition is an important factor in parent and student destination choices, for whom not all diplomas are equal in economic or social capital. High prestige names like Oxford in the UK and Harvard in the United States draw a lot of applicants. In the case of China, study-abroad agents know the rankings, costs, and prerequisites for a wide range of universities in different countries. They assist the student to establish a destination: first by country and then by reputation within that country, and agents then recommend institutions in consideration of student marks, majors, and of the family budget for going abroad.

Prior to 2014, a number of individual Canadian universities took the initiative to establish and promote their brand, in order to compete in the recruitment market. For example, *Riverside* is among the Canadian universities who regularly participate in expositions abroad, extolling not only the academic reputation of the institution, but also the quality of the university experience. The Canadian brand has often been promoted as a less-expensive, high quality choice for students considering more than one country (CBIE, 2014).

Branding may work to offset a singular focus on the rankings of universities, a metric that informs the decisions of many families, especially in China, where the ranking of universities is a national practice. Globally, there are a number of private

organizations who rank universities based upon “the quality and productivity of research, teaching quality assessments, graduate employment rates, degree of internationalization, resources on campus, both social and infrastructural, online technology, social responsibility, innovation output, scholarships, accessibility” in order to determine which institutions qualify as World Class (QS Stars, n.d.). Within Canada, *Riverside University* is one of the top four universities in QS Stars, and one of the top thirteen universities in another (uniRank, 2014).

Branding is even more actively carried out by the universities themselves. When universities brand themselves, they are not only promoting a means to a diploma, but also a type of experience. At this point in history, student satisfaction with their experience has become increasingly important. The ubiquitous presence of social media empowers consumer word of mouth on global social networking platforms. Major businesses and institutions who are concerned with their reputation have a social media presence. With greater connectivity in the world, student narratives of their experiences may very well play a pivotal role in attracting other cross-border students to a given part of the world or a given institution.

The 2014 achievement of a national policy through the coordination of players is a strong indication that Canada is about to undergo a surge of growth in enrolment of students whose first languages are not English. At that time, IHE students in Canada come primarily from China, India, Korea, Saudi Arabia and France, but the greatest amount of growth in the 2012-2013 school year came from Nigeria (+29%), Russia (+24%), China (+18%) and Brazil (+17%) (CBIE, 2014).

These facts must be viewed with an understanding that international student security and well-being depends on having communicative proficiencies in the dominant language of the receiving country (Marginson et al., 2010; Marginson & Sawir, 2011) and having spaces in which intercultural interaction may take place (Montgomery, 2010. p. 99). Given the future enrolment expectations, it follows that:

- a) accessible language education should be a high priority
- b) universities must offer coordinated language and cultural learning support;
- c) this support must enable English proficiencies needed by sojourners in a novel cultural climate; and
- d) the physical living and learning environments should be expanded or revised with internationalization in mind.

It is argued that a university that offers appropriate supports for international students will achieve higher student retention, greater engagement of international students within the university, and ultimately an enhanced reputation on the world stage (Embleton et al., 2011, p. 12; Aydinol, 2013, p. 3).

In summary, English Language Learning programs and student-friendly infrastructure must not be overlooked as institutions prepare for the doubling of the population of IHE students in Canada from 2012 to 2022 (Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy, 2012). The purpose of this research is to deeply examine the transitional language and cultural experiences of ten EAP students in one location with the purpose of furthering an understanding of the

ways in which universities may prepare for the upcoming waves of international expansion.

International students come to *Riverside University* for the same reasons they choose other well-ranked institutions: broader economic prospects, (cosmopolitan) cultural capital, prestige, and the ability to move within the receiving country's society (Marginson et al., 2010, p. 38). Also of importance in the choice of universities is the English language climate. While English medium Higher Education is offered in the Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle of English-speaking countries, students are drawn to the Inner Circle nations for the reasons listed above. The economic benefits of studying abroad are especially strong for those who develop communicative competence in English as a result of the study-abroad experience.

Canada seeks to attract students by advertising its “safety, strong education system, tolerant society, opportunities for full-time work and cost advantage” (CBIE 2014).

2.3 The Urgency of English Academic Literacy Education

Despite the ubiquitous presence of private and public sites of English Language Teaching (ELT) in the Expanding Circle, a significant proportion of aspiring international students either fail to meet the IELTS or TOEFL grades, or, having met the proficiency scores, still struggle to communicate and to comprehend spoken English. The language proficiency of cross-border EFL students also remains a significant concern for professors in their approaches to teaching and assessment.

EFL international students report that the English language landscape is still their biggest problem in study-abroad, in both the formal and informal domains.

Marketing to the middle class in the global south leads to concerns about the ethics of advertising an intercultural academic experience to students who may not have sufficient English language skills to profit from this intercultural academic environment. In not having full knowledge of the language expectations in study-abroad, some students may be disadvantaged in their preparation for a cross-border experience in an Anglophone environment. The fact that difficulties with language have been reported by a significant number of students past and present suggests that Bridging or Pathway programs within a university, as part of a conditional acceptance plan, may make a university more attractive to aspiring L2/NNS international students. It would be fair to say that if the trajectory for cross-border education continues as expected, bridging programs such as EAP will remain critically important as long as L2 globally mobiles students' reach exceeds their grasp in the language proficiencies required and desired by receiving institutions.

2.3.1 The Language Paradox

The paradox that exists regarding language proficiency is that the belief that studying in an English-speaking country will automatically result in the ability to speak English well. There is evidence that this is not so (Beck, 2008).

The other side of the paradox is that EFL students are required to demonstrate language proficiencies as part of their application process. However, the threshold scores on proficiency tests that serve as gatekeepers for universities in the most popular cross-border destinations are inadequate proof that any given

student can cope with the language demands of lectures, labs and lunch halls. It is possible that the proficiencies needed for the demands of academic and social life are not well captured by these tests.

At issue then, is how an aspiring cross-border student may become sufficiently proficient to manage the interdependent academic and social domains prior to and during their study-abroad experience. This research is concerned with the experiences of language and cultural learning among students who were not initially able to achieve the threshold proficiency scores, and subsequently chose to prepare for full-time degree studies in a bridging program.

Language Education is crucial for aspiring international students to become self-directed agents of their own development in multiple spheres of their lives. This research offers a glimpse into the perceptions of a group of students on the precipice of international education, preparing to dive in the water, and hoping to be able to swim.

2.3.2 English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

One might ask: is EAP a potent solution, or only a potential solution? Even today, as I go about my daily life in or around the university, when I use the expression “EAP” I get a blank stare. There is an aura of invisibility about intensive English courses despite their importance in the modern academic world. English for Academic Purposes (EAP) began as a sub-branch of English for Special Purposes (ESP) which emerged as a professional field in the late 20th century, when business, politics and academics had become dominated by the presence of EFL speakers (Jordan, 2002, p. 69). Proficiency in English had become a basic requirement for

participating in these fields at a professional or international level. EAP became a recognized teaching profession in the 1990s, in response to the increasing numbers of international students arriving for tertiary studies in Anglo-Western countries, first in the United States and the United Kingdom, and then in Australia. Each of these countries has developed a national organization for standards in teaching and assessment and for disseminating research specific to the field. At the time this study commenced, in 2013, Canada had not.

In the early period, EAP was offered as support on an “ad-hoc, as needed” basis, without pre-planning for the probable needs of the rising tide of enrolment of foreign students for whom English was not the first language (Jordan, p. 70). The earliest multi-sited needs analysis in the UK found that incoming graduate students were most concerned about their oral and writing skills, in that order (Jordan & MacKay, 1972; in Jordan, 2002, p. 70).

Despite the 1972 findings that oral skills were the most problematic for those students, EAP units continued to offer mainly remedial writing support to students who were not meeting the participation and assignment requirements of the courses in which they were already enrolled. In some locations, this style of EAP delivery continues today. It is obvious that the horse is already out of the barn when an EFL international student is in his or her second or third month of a term before he or she is identified as needing language support. It is very wasteful to have a student commence a course for which he or she is not linguistically prepared to succeed.

In Australia, where IHE is the 4th largest source of revenue, roughly 25% of the students in HE are international. Australian institutions have had to carefully balance their need to recruit students from abroad with their need to ensure that the language proficiency of admitted students was sufficient for academic work. When a great number of promising applicants were unable to provide proof of proficiency through the accepted proficiency tests, Australian universities began offering “pre-tertiary programs as pathways to tertiary study” (Dooley, 2010, p. 164).

Without EAP research from Australia, at the time of writing, there would be no previous phenomenological studies of this particular population. The majority of EAP research is centred on curriculum and teaching, despite the rising awareness that identity studies are essential to the understanding of motivation, perseverance and outcomes in intercultural education (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 413). Dooley (2010) provides the sole study of EAP bridge student perceptions.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Framing

Introduction

This research has been conducted based upon paradigm of social constructivist theory which “attends to the meaning-making activities of active agents and cognizing human beings” (Vygotsky, 1978; in Lincoln, 2005, p. 60). In the *social* constructivist paradigm, personal identity is deemed to be constructed from an individual’s experience as a social being. Identity as “self in context” is understood to be the *lens* through which meaning is made from events, interaction and symbols (Gee, 2000, p. 99). This paradigm was chosen for its value in theorizing the interrelationship between identity and language learning and the interconnections between language learning, identity and cultural adaptation. Two theories within this paradigm -- Language Learner Identity Theory (LLIT) (Norton, 2000) and The Theory of International Education as Self-Formation (IESF) (Marginson and Sawir, 2011; Marginson, 2014) -- were chosen for their suitability as foundations for engaging the research objectives.

3.1 Language Learner Identity Theory

Until the mid-1990s, research in language acquisition had not paid a great deal of attention to identity. It was at that time that applied linguists began looking at the role of the social environment in language learning processes and outcomes (Block, 2003).

Norton’s Language Learner Identity Theory was formulated in the context of Canadian immigrant language learners, but holds up to scrutiny in theorizing language learner identity (LLI) in cross-border higher education. LLIT theorizes that

language learner identity is multiple, a site of struggle, and subject to change (Norton, 2000, p. 5). The critical stance within this theory, modelled on poststructuralist feminist theory (Weedon, 1997), considers how *power relations* inherent in learning environments affect a learner's ability to "access the target language community" (Norton, 2000, p. 73). Language learning is thereby "a relational activity that occurs between specific speakers situated in specific social contexts" (Norton & McKinney, 2011, p. 79).

Norton & McKinney (2011) wrote that the degree of integration of the individual language learner into the larger social environment profoundly influences their processes of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) (p. 73). Norton (2000) holds that in the process of taking on another language as one's own, it is important to have opportunities to practice the language from a position of authority, perhaps initially at the periphery of the target community (Lave & Wenger, 1991), but not as a marginalized speaker. The literature presented in the next chapter shows that many second language learners and users feel marginalized in their academic classrooms. They also feel restricted in their social opportunities because they are linguistically and culturally different.

Language learning identity theory emphasises the individual's struggle to acquire communicative proficiencies within a given environment. From the point of view of the learner, the struggle to be accepted becomes essential and personal. It is natural for second language users to wish to be viewed as competent members of the target community and to be allowed to participate in it. Speakers wish to be "believed, obeyed, respected, [and] distinguished" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 648). The

participants in this research have at least two target communities: that of the community of undergraduate students and instructors and, ultimately, the “imagined community” of English speakers in any part of the world (Norton, 2001).

Identity theorists are interested in language learning in both the formal classroom and the informal, social domains. Learning environments that do not validate the identities and values of a learner may lead to disengagement and the appearance of unmotivated, inhibited learners (Taylor, 2014). International L2 users may be judged by peers and instructors who do not understand how unequal power relations set up the language learner to be viewed and then judged in stereotypical ways, for example, as passive, or unmotivated rather than discouraged. In the informal domain, a given social environment may be constructed to acknowledge some “voices” over others (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 652).

For the EAP teacher, sensitivity to how relations of power may advantage some students over others begins with an understanding of how inhibiting social contexts within a classroom can come to exist. Instructors must not only educate intercultural language learners about the structures and functions of the language; they must also prepare learners to take on authentic and legitimizing voices “in multiple dimensions of their lives” (Norton & McKinney, 2010, p. 73). The multi-dimensional intercultural learner and his or her formation of an authentic and empowered self are the driving discourses of Intercultural Learning as Self-Formation Theory (Marginson & Sawir, 2011).

3.2 International Education as Self-Formation (IESF) Theory

International Education as Self-Formation (Marginson & Sawir, 2011) is “a cultural theory of mobile students as human agents,” which seeks to account for what happens to the identities of cross-border students when they study abroad (p. 137). The authors assert, based on Sawir’s findings from her 2007 empirical study of cross-border EFL speakers in Australia, that the best way to speak of identity change in cross-border international education is as a process of self-formation, which essentially means “working on oneself” a process by which students transform themselves into the “kind of person they want to become” (p. 137). Although the authors claim that the idea of higher education as self-formation is “simple”, the theory contains multiple facets that work in synergy, some of which are outlined here because of their relevance to the research questions.

3.2.1 Self-formation and Agency

Self-formation, as a humanist concept in education, “is about the growth of an individual’s capabilities and sociability” (p. 145). The purpose of self-formative education is to enhance the learner’s capacity to choose his or her goals in alignment with their personal values. Higher education provides a chance for students to realize their study-abroad objectives through self-directed change. In this way self-formation is tied to the concept of agency when agency is defined as “the sum of a person’s capacity to act” (Marginson & Sawir, 2011, p. 143). Living away from home, students change by necessity (p. 146), and while this process that may be liberating, there is no question that self-directed change is difficult for international students, possibly even more so than for their domestic counterparts.

Marginson and Sawir (2011) describe of self-formation in study-abroad as reflexive, open, historically grounded and complex. By reflexive the authors mean that study-abroad requires people to “identify and challenge their own assumptions.” Self-formation is *open* because in study-abroad there will inevitably occur novel experiences that cannot be predicted. Self-formation is said to be *historically grounded* because of the influence of temporal and spatial forces and conditions on the experience of the individual. In simpler terms, this concept implies that that it matters that the time and place of learning abroad is unique for each individual learner. IESF theory proposes that “the cross-cultural in the outside community as well as inside the classroom shapes the student” (p. 147) usually resulting in a change in identity (p. 148).

In summary, the authors describe self-formation as an intentional process, which occurs in an environment over which learners do not have a great deal of control. Being in a new country, cross-border IHE students must carve out identities for themselves in environments that Marginson and Sawir (2011) describe as both challenging and transformative (p. 137).

3.2.2 Transformative Learning

Marginson and Sawir (2011) theorize that “educational transitions are always associated with a measure of identity change” (p. 142) and that the transitions involved in cross-border education are the most profound and they present examples of how international students are changed by their experiences abroad. Transitioning to International Higher Education is more complex for cross-border intercultural learners than that of students transitioning to university within

their home culture, In contrast to incremental learning, comprising of small steps of learning that builds on previous knowledge, transformative learning is presented as “an imaginative leap into a new appropriation of the world” which enables the individual to view “things” in a different way (p. 140).

3.2.3 “Struggles, doubts and tensions”

In the cross-border setting, the globally mobile student is challenged to learn about themselves and about others. They learn about interpersonal interactions and about the social environment, all while applying themselves to understand and meet the host institution’s academic expectations. While Marginson and Sawir (2011) acknowledge that there are “struggles, doubts and tensions” that arise through the normal course of living and studying in a new country, IESF theory differs from others in the field because the struggles to adapt to new environments are not viewed as pathological. IESF theory steps away from problem-solution psychological models which frame students as the problem and offer recommendations for their remediation (Halic et. al., 2009). IESF theory is critical of theories that position international students as “weak, deficient, or inherently divided” human agents, (Marginson & Sawir, 2011, p. 140). In contrast, in Marginson and Sawir’s (2011) collaborative analysis of international student narratives, found that most cross-border students are strong, self-directed agents shaping themselves in response to challenges presented by the environment (p. 140).

In IESF theory, the authors deem it normal that *struggles, doubts and tensions* go with the territory of studying abroad (p. 138). These tensions may take the form of problems with communication, with feelings of isolation, with attitudes of local

people and with interaction with peers, and may place “limits on the capacity for experience and exploration” (p. 139) of unknown people, places and events over which they have limited control. For example, students in higher education cannot necessarily choose with whom they live, who their professors will be, nor how they will be treated by their peers.

The key factor from the empirical research behind IESF theory is that despite difficulties in the personal, social and academic realms, international students persist. Persistence, and resilience are framed as two of the essential characteristics of successful border-crossing international students. The theory holds that students persist because they are highly motivated to gain the benefits of cross-border study.

The motivation to study abroad includes:

- improving English proficiency;
- acquiring a more sophisticated understanding of the world;
- increasing the potential for future mobility;
- getting a better job with better pay after graduating;
- having the status of a person with a foreign education;
- freedom from the constraints of the home environment (p. 138)

Marginson and Sawir (2011) found that students who became successful intercultural learners employed “strategies of self-formation” such as hybridity and multiplicity, two approaches that are understood to help students manage the complexity of intercultural learning (p. 154). However, the authors indicate that in order to employ these strategies, cross-border students must first have developed

some degree of communicative competence and must have access to cross-cultural experiences (p. 154). In plain terms, this means that intercultural self-formation depends on students having substantial positive interaction with members of the host culture. During these interactions, students must be able to find ways to initiate, respond and relate to others on deeper levels. In this way, students develop networks of associates with both similar and divergent points of view. Through trial and error, by discovering new ways of being in relation to others, students expand their capacities to act, to choose, to relate, to reflect, and to change. This concept parallels Lave and Wenger's (1991) construct of "Communities of Practice" as bracketed in LLIT (Norton, 2000). A community of practice may be academic, or it may be social, but it is one in which EFL speakers may participate as valid and empowered speakers of the target language.

The research upon which IESF Theory is based found that their international participants demonstrated a strong will to succeed even in the absence of "a social environment governed by cosmopolitan norms" (Marginson & Sawir, 2010, p. 163). The authors stridently recommend that universities replace the ethnocentric norms that have dominated Anglo-Western IHE with cosmopolitan administrative and teaching practices that are student centred, pluralistic and cosmopolitan, in support of the self-formation of all students (p. 140).

3.3 Convergence of Complementary Theories

There is a great deal of overlap in the discourses that drive these two theories, LLIT and IEST. The overlap includes key concepts of hybridity, multiplicity, power inequities, discrimination, and situated learning (Lave & Wenger,

1991). LLIT and IESF Theory may be two ways of looking at the same type of phenomena, one through the lens of language learning and the other through the lens of cross-border student experience (Tarc, 2016). LLIT (Norton, 2000) was published at the turn of the current century, at a time when globalizing forces seemed to be at the forefront of the daily lives of individuals and of nations. In the current era, the imperative of English language learning flows from at least two sources. One imperative flows from (im)migrants reaching out to improve their lot in life by settling in a new country. The other flows from citizen of “EFL nations” (Marginson, 2014) seeking positions of power in global discourses by way of a foreign education. It appears that international students embody the global forces within both of these imperatives. They are “the human aspects of forces of internationalization” (Montgomery, 2010, p. xi).

Just over a decade into the 21st century, the explosion of international student participation in higher education began to expose fault lines in the structures of HE institutions who have pushed to recruit international students without foresight into the effects of an unprecedented growth in student numbers. It was at this time that IESF Theory (Marginson & Sawir, 2011) emerged, with the intention of understanding the lives of international students and recommending ways in which institutions may internationalize more effectively.

In tandem, these theories mutually indicate that institutions must pay attention to the contexts in which intercultural L2 learners learn about communication and culture, and make sense of their intercultural learning experiences. For example, it is important to consider how “small-p power-relations”

are happening in the classroom, on the campus and at the community level. Both theories consider that the core of learning is not just the acquisition of knowledge and skills, but also the way in which learning is applied to new situations.

Intercultural learning is the process of fitting new information and experiences into their overall schema of how the world --or language, or culture -- works. That schema, the cross-border student's interpretation of how the world works, "may influence their participation in the social environments available to them, and ultimately the shape of their education" (Montgomery, 2011, p. 15). Furthermore, proficiency in English is "a key factor in shaping international students' experiences" (Halic et. al., 2009, p. 74), because a degree of mastery over the local language grants access to desired social, work and study environments

Both theories under discussion imply that "Communities of Practice" (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 98) strongly influence what is learned. The social dimensions of interaction, formal or informal, direct or mediated by technology, are essential to the emergence of a conscious knowing of *Self* as a conduit of language and culture. Learners must talk with others about their learning in order to construct knowledge (Wenger, 1998, in Ryan, 2006, p. 11).

This research intends to explore document and interpret the knowledge constructed from the lived experience of

1. forming friendships and networks;
2. establishing priorities in becoming "part of" or remaining apart from;
3. recognizing gaps in target knowledge and in taking charge of filling in those gaps;

4. managing uncertainty; and
5. assuming international student identities.

Chapter Four: Research Methods

Introduction

“Man [sic] is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun; I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. It is explication I am after, construing social expressions on their surface enigmatical” (Geertz, 1973, p. 5).

This research is a qualitative interpretive inquiry into the lived experience of a small group of undergraduate students attending an on-campus English Language Academic Literacies program as a condition of admission to *Riverside University* (a pseudonym).

The lived experience of EAP students in a campus setting has rarely been researched (Dooley, 2010, p. 186). The literature at the time of the study did not include studies of the interpersonal, intercultural lived experience of international undergraduate EAP students. Therefore, it was decided that this research should begin at the beginning: as a phenomenological inquiry into perceptions of intercultural experience within this specific population sample.

4.1 Research Questions and Explanation

In order to operationalize the general question of the nature of the lived experience of undergraduate intercultural EAP learners, the follow questions were posed:

1. What are the intercultural experiences of EAP undergraduate international students?

2. How do students interpret their experiences?
3. How well does International Education as Self-formation IESF theory account for the students' narratives?

Also of interest to this inquiry is the following question:

4. What role does language play in the EAP undergraduate student experience?

Research Question #1 inquires into the nature of intercultural experience of International EAP students as they encounter how people behave and how things are done at the university, and in Canadian society. The widest interpretation of intercultural experience is the experience of being in a novel environment. More narrowly, individual intercultural experiences in study-abroad arise out of engagement with local people and with other international students. Experience, then, is a process of interaction, response, and reflection.

Research Question #2 represents the hermeneutic dimensions -- how do student go about making sense of the things that happen to them, and within them, in the new context? This question asks participants to reflect on their own responses to intercultural encounters and to reflect on the ways others respond to them. Students were prompted to reflect on what they think is happening and why things happen the way they do. Research Question #3 takes the form of theory-testing, to consider how well the theory of IESF fits the ground-level analysis of the empirical data in this study.

4.2 Methodology

This study is an empirical inquiry into the experiences and perceptions of one group of students in one particular place and time. The over-arching goal of this

inquiry was to represent and analyze participants' experiences and perceptions. An inductive approach to data collection was taken to elicit data "from an emic perspective while ensuring credibility and dependability" (Davis, 1995, p. 436). Inductive analysis supports such dependability because concepts, themes and models are drawn directly from the raw data (Thomas, 2006, p. 238).

This research employs the fundamental features of interpretivism, the purpose of which is to discern the insider's perspective, and focuses on "meaning from the actor's point of view" through "the construction or co-construction of meaning within a particular social setting" (Davis, 1995, p. 431).

This research is most interested in how participants interpret their new environment and their social interactions within it, how they make choices, and how they contend with the unknown. The key principles of social interaction in this research are understood to be "consciousness, action, and unpredictability," (Livesey, 2006; in Burkheart, 2013, p. 57).

Unpredictability may be attributed to the existence of "multiple interpretations of, and perspectives on, single events and situations," (Cohen et al, 2011, p. 17). "Reality" may appear differently to different students in the same environment (Burkheart, 2013, p. 57). Each individual brings their own frames of interpretation to their experiences. While objective facts are necessary anchors in the pursuit of understanding events, subjective perceptions are facts of a different and, in this type of research, more significant nature.

I argue that a qualitative, inductive, interpretive approach is the best "fit for purpose" in this study because the researcher sets out to become aware of

participants “frames of interpretation” as well as her own (Erickson, 1986; in Davis, p. 437), and because subjectivity lends itself better to interpretation than to measurement (Merriam, 1988, p. 17).

In the manner of social constructivism, this research locates meaning in the encounters between the participants and their social environment. This environment made up of the diverse customs, symbols and relationships encountered after arriving in Canada.

The category of “culture” looms large in this research. Phenomenologically, culture serves as a filter through which students view the actions of others, and with which they determine their own. Students in this research population encounter multiple cultures each day, in their school lives and in their personal time. Therefore, it was important to explore how international students perceived one other and how participants interpreted their interactions with their peers. From these perceptions and interpretations, one may construct an understanding of their lived experiences in study-abroad. Also significant in this research is the dynamic between the researcher and each participant in the co-construction of meaning as they discuss topics that arise by intent or by happenstance (Block, 2000, p. 758).

The third research question is about theory-testing, so this study also includes deductive-style analysis in exploring the relationship of an emergent theory (IESF) to the findings of the empirical inquiry.

4.2.1 The Research Site

Riverside University (a pseudonym) is a large research-intensive university in Southern Ontario, Canada. *Riverside* is in the process of internationalizing, which

includes a plan to greatly increase the enrolment of international students. In 2013, an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) school was established as part of the university's internationalization initiative. The primary function of *The EAP School* (pseud.) was to support academically qualified undergraduate and graduate applicants whose English Language proficiency scores on accepted tests were not high enough to permit direct entry into their academic programs. *The EAP School* began operating in September 2013, with an enrolment of eighty-five students the majority of whom came from mainland China. The next largest group had arrived from Angola, in Central Africa, on full scholarships from the country's largest oil producer. From Angola, nineteen students arrived in September 2013, and twenty-four arrived in September 2014. In the summer and fall of 2014, two cohorts of exchange students arrived from Brazil, and those needing language support were enrolled at *The EAP School*.

Participants reported that other countries represented in the student body of *The EAP School* were from South Korea, Japan, Libya, Saudi Arabia, and Serbia, with only one or two students from each of these countries.

This site was chosen because it is representative of an overall movement in Canada and abroad to facilitate the admission of international students who need to boost their English proficiency prior to entering their degree programs (Dooley, 2010, p. 184). Therefore, I argue that this school is situated at the cutting edge of internationalization and attracts international students who are part of the recent wave of EFL students choosing to study abroad for their undergraduate degrees.

4.2.2 Sampling Strategies

This study employed convenience sampling, because *The EAP School* was immediately local to me, and purposive sampling, because the potential participants were knowledgeable on the subject of the inquiry (Cohen et. al., 2011, p. 156). Inclusion criteria was limited to students enrolled in the EAP school who were willing to commit to six interviews over two months, outside of class time. As a result, participants were self-selected as volunteers from groups of students who had attended an information session offered by the researcher.

4.2.3.1 Recruitment

Volunteer recruitment for research studies is frequently carried out by posting an invitation to participate on notice boards around a campus or community. This strategy was not deemed as fit for purpose because I could not assume that the target population would be motivated to read notices not directly related to their program or interests. Moreover, the university board for research ethics has strict rules about the format for invitations to participate in research projects. The mandatory format for posted invitations to participate contained phrasing and terminology that were not written with the L2 reader in mind. Another recruitment strategy was needed.

An oral presentation, supported by Power Point, could be tailored to support L2 learner understanding. An effective Power Point supported presentation is a multi-modal combination of oral communication, body language, visual images and key words. As a career EFL teacher, I had been accustomed to providing

linguistically accessible content to language learners. In this way, the recruitment strategy fit the context of recruitment.

The recruitment presentation explained the topic and motivation for the research. I used images to emphasize my interest in, and experience with, intercultural language learning. I showed photographs of my interactions with students from Asia, South America and Africa. In retrospect, I realize I may have spoken to an important personal imaginary of each EAP student: to participate in a friendly and inclusive English-speaking environment. I also shared that I knew what it is like to live in a foreign country, to learn a new language, and to encounter a completely different set of social rules. This approach was taken because it seemed to be an effective way for this researcher to connect with the target population.

At the end of the presentation, I responded to students' questions, and gave out business cards, copies of the letter of information, and my email address. I asked individuals to contact me by email if they were interested in participating in the study.

Access to the EAP students was facilitated by the director of the EAP School, and by the head teacher who served as a liaison between the researcher and the classroom teachers who work with their students. The first presentation, in July, recruited students in their third term of their EAP programs, and the second presentation, in October, recruited students in their first term of study at the EAP School. The first presentation took place in the morning before classes began, and the second took place in the afternoon, after classes had ended. These times were

arranged by the head teacher, and chosen in order to be least intrusive to the operation of the EAP classes.

4.2.3.2 Participants

Ten volunteers in total were recruited, four as the result of the July presentation, and six from the October presentation. Participants were selected based on their willingness to participate. One by one, they contacted me by email until there were ten volunteers, the maximum number of participants that was set for this small-scale study.

Volunteers were EAP students from Angola, Brazil and China. Volunteers in this group were preparing to begin their first, second or third year of undergraduate study. Volunteers were preparing to enter programs in Engineering, Business, Computer Science, Political Science or Medicine. Participants from Angola and Brazil were in Canada on scholarships offered in their own country, and the six students from China were family funded. Participant language proficiencies at the time of the study ranged from 'Intermediate' to 'High Advanced,' that is, from the lowest proficiency level, requiring four semesters of EAP study, to the highest proficiency level, requiring only one EAP term. The average EAP School student requires two or three semesters to complete the High Advanced level and thereby graduate.

There were five male and five female volunteers. Their ages ranged from 18 to 24 years of age: the mean age was 19.7 and the median was 19. All the volunteers completed all six interviews. There was no attrition.

4.3 Data Collection

4.3.1 Approach

Given the interpretive nature of the research questions and the characteristics of the study population, a phenomenological approach appeared to be the best “fit for purpose” for data collection. Phenomena such as lived experience and subjective interpretation are by nature “messy” and filled with complexities and contradictions. In this approach, it is understood that one must view the phenomena repeatedly in various contexts if one is to form a picture of the overall structure (Valle, King and Hailing, 1989; in Halic et. al, 2009, p. 76). The phenomenological approach to data collection and interpretation contributed to the use creation of *categories of experience* that were grounded in the raw data and fit the situation being researched. These categories are readily formed from the data, and should be able to explain the phenomena being studied (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; in Davis, 1995, p. 440).

4.3.2 The Participant Role

In this research, the participant role was that of a subject expert in the experience of intercultural language learning. This role was appropriate for four reasons. First of all, participants know their own experience (Pole and Morrison, 2003, p. 3). Secondly, they have listened to the experiences of trusted peers in the same position, and thirdly they had observed other intercultural learners in multiple contexts. It is this knowledge that the researcher sought to access.

4.3.3 Technique

Interviews are one of the most commonly employed techniques in qualitative studies (Dushku, 2000, p. 763). According to Walker (1985), interviews are an opportunity to gain “an in-depth understanding of research participants’ perspectives or experiences” by asking participants about their behaviours, beliefs and attitudes (Block, 2000, p. 762).

The data collection took place over a series of interviews in order to transform the relationship of the participant and researcher from strangers to empathetic speakers and listeners, in accord with Weber’s (1947) concept of “*verstehen*” in which empathy leads to understanding. *Verstehen* has been recommended as the best research method for understanding across difference (Dilthey, 1977; in Burkheart, 2013, p.59). I do not suggest that this method allowed me to “walk in their shoes” (Burkheart, 2013, p. 57), but once a week I could *visit* their worlds, by listening to their descriptions of people, events, and feelings evoked by their experiences.

The interviews were conceptualized as a conversation, with a two-way flow of “voices” adopted by the participant and the researcher. In a co-constructed interview, “data are seen not as reflections of underlying memory, but as voices adopted by research participants in response to the researcher's prompts and questions (Block, 2000, p. 759). However, participants are limited by what they are able to say, linguistically, and by what they permit themselves to say in the roles they take on for the interviews. Participants conform to discourse convention that Gee (1996) describes as “a socially accepted association among ways of using language” based upon their identities as part of a discourse community. “Voice” is

the expression of identity that “might or might not truly represent what the research participant thinks or would choose to say in another context and on another occasion” (Block, 2000, p. 759). In order to establish other contexts and other occasions, it was deemed worthwhile to employ diachronic interviews.

One way that credibility is built in interpretive qualitative studies is by duration and frequency or engagement with the participants and with the data (Davis, 1995, p. 445). In order to gather sufficient data from which trustworthy conclusions could be drawn, six sequential, semi-structured interviews took place with each of the ten volunteers

This technique of data collection was selected based on the potential benefits of diachronic interviews to both the participant and to the researcher. This technique supported L2 learners in at least three ways. Recurring interviews made it possible for participants to become increasingly confident in their oral interaction skills, to become self-reflective of their own experience, and to become more comfortable with the researcher. As a participant becomes accustomed to the interview process, he or she may more confidently describe his or her experiences and may become willing to risk expressing candid points of view.

The strategy of diachronic interviews allowed the researcher to observe and adapt to the unique ways each participant expressed himself or herself when talking about events, relationships, experiences, opinions and concerns. The data also documented ways in which participants engaged in problem solving as processes that unfolded over time. “Situations are fluid and changing rather than fixed and static; events and behaviour evolve over time” (Cohen et. al, 2011, p 17). Diachronic

interviews allowed the researcher to gain a more layered appreciation of the participants' lives.

4.3.4 Procedure

Volunteer participants contacted me by email using the university's email system, and we arranged a date and time to meet. If they did not already have a copy of the letter of information, I sent one by email prior to the first meeting, so they could read the details of the research plan, the assurance of confidentiality, and details of what they would be agreeing to do.

The first interview with Student #1 commenced on July 7th, 2014 and the final interview with student #10 was completed on December 5th, 2014. All interviews took place at mutually agreed times in the same building as the EAP classes were held. The duration of each of the six interviews was approximately one hour. Interviews were digitally recorded.

At the first meeting, we reviewed the contract information which laid out the roles of the researcher and the participant, and also clarified participant rights in the context of the study. The consent forms were signed. After signing, the forms were secured by the researcher.

4.3.5 Interview plan and guiding questions

An interview plan with guided questions had been developed for each of the six interviews in order to ensure that all topics would be addressed over the course of the interview series and so that data on the relevant demographic and background characteristics of each participant could be collected. The guiding

questions of the interview were a mix of open, closed and directed questions that probed the everyday cross-cultural experience as interpreted by the participants. Each interview focused upon specific themes or topics, from past actions and experiences, present actions and reflections, and future planned actions and expectations. Part of each interview was dedicated to a review of actions they had taken during the previous week and interactions with others, based on an activity log that is described below.

Starting with the second interview, each interview began with an open-ended question about the participant's day, week, or other experience tailored to the individuality of the participant.

The guiding questions, in combination with individualized activity reviews, allowed me to gather comparative data as well as to build a story of the identity of each individual (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 414). Each interview built on the previous, enabling the researcher to more easily overcome limitations of communicative proficiency in listening and speaking that might compromise the depth of the interview data, and permitting the researcher to return to topics to be more certain that she had understood the intended message of the speaker. The interview format was flexible enough to pursue interesting topics as they emerged, and to explore the unexpected (Patton, 1980; in Cohen et al., 2011, p. 413)

The guiding questions of the sixth and final interview left room for themes, issues, and statements from the earlier interviews were revisited to ask for clarification and expansion.

In order to maintain the analytical focus on the participant point of view, I did not observe participants outside of their interviews. In this study, I did not want situated observation of participant intercultural interactions to compromise fidelity to the subjectivities represented through the interviews.

A pilot study that took place prior to the commencement of this research assisted me in improving the research design and in revising the interview questions.

4.3.6 The Interviewer

In this research, data gathering was conducted personally, in circumstances I had constructed. Thus I, as the researcher, am part of the data (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 540). Qualitative interpretive research “has its origins in the philosophy, theory, and methods of anthropology” (Davis, 1995, p. 432). I was keen on employing methods I had learning about while completing an Honours Bachelor of Arts in Cultural Anthropology. In addition, I feel at home with qualitative interview techniques from my experience of conducting interviews for the campus radio and the campus newspaper as an undergraduate, and after graduation I wrote a column for a Canadian journal in which I documented interviews with local artisans about their work. Furthermore, my work as an EFL teacher in a South Korean language school and my career at the Canadian Forces Language School included interviewing foreign military officers and civilians in support of their communication. This work was very satisfying. The personal stories of these students gave me an appreciation of their individuality as well as extensive food for thought about the social and

political environment from which they had come. I was excited by the possibility of continuing to engage with people from abroad in education research.

In this study, the role of the researcher was to establish a conversation with the individual participants. Guided questions were posed sequentially, in order to elicit descriptions of events and narratives of experiences from the participant's points of view. The researcher was to authentically represent herself as an interested adult, existing outside to the participants' daily lives, but as an insider in an evolving conversation that was sustained over the course of the six interviews.

This role was suitable for the purposes of establishing rapport, eliciting candid reports and reflections from participants, and offering an "exchange of value" in which there was reciprocal benefit from the interview experience for both the researcher and each participant (Agar, 1980; in Davis, 1995, p 443). Unlike a questionnaire or a single, structured interview, a conversation is a natural social act. Participants reported that the interview experience gave them an opportunity to practice their English, to have an outlet for their thoughts and feelings, and to get to know a local person. For most participants, these research interviews were the first time they had sustained conversations about topics of personal interest with a Canadian who was not their teacher.

The use of active listening techniques, and a conversational style of interaction sought to establish common ground from which knowledge might be more readily co-constructed. This process may be called "data production" rather than data collection (Glesne, 2006; in Aydinol, 2013, p. 16).

Because I conducted all of the interviews, the characteristics of each participant are strongly impressed upon my memory. However, I cannot assume to know all of the speakers' beliefs and meanings because of our differences in age, background, language, and cultural experiences (Cohen et. al., 2011, p. 423). The best I can do is to truthfully and rigorously document participants' perspectives (Butin, 2010; in Burkheart, 2013, p. 58).

Thus, the interpretative schemata of the researcher became a significant part of the research (Butin, 2010; in Burkhardt, 2013, p. 59). These schemata expanded over time, through regular contact with participants during interviews. Everything I came to know about the cultural lenses of the participants came from my interpretations of their own words. I was sometimes challenged to make sense of "high context" statements that were not self-explanatory (Cicourel, 1964; in Cohen et. al., p. 410). I responded by revisiting these statements at a later date, and probing for great understanding (Kvale, 1996; in Cohen et. al., 2011, p. 424).

4.3.7 Reflective Note-taking and Journaling

During the process of transcribing and coding the interviews, I wrote reflective pieces, long and short, about the data I was looking at, and what it might mean for understanding the phenomena being studied. These pieces are much like "introspective journals that display the investigator's mind processes, philosophical position, and bases of decisions about the inquiry" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; in Davis, p.437), and become data in themselves that may be coded.

4.3.8 Activity Logs

Given the understanding that the actions of individuals “make complete sense only in their social context” (Dugatkin and Hasenjager, 2015, p. 51), the interview strategy had to build up a map of that social context and the meanings participants made of their relationships and free time activities. This was approached through the use of activity logs.

In this research, an activity log was a printed form, resembling a timetable, showing the days of the week and the hours of the day as blank spaces to be filled in. Participants were asked to record their activities over the course of the week, such as what they were doing at a given time, where, with whom, and why, so that they might recall the actions they had taken. The logs served more as a memory prompt than a measurement tool, although the researcher was able to see at a glance the salient features of a participant’s week, depending on the degree of detail participants noted on these forms. Participants received a new form at the end of each interview, to be completed and brought to the next interview.

Not all participants remembered to bring their activity log to their following interview, and there were varying degrees of detail recorded by participants. Participants were not criticized in any way for forgetting their log forms, or for any omissions. The researcher worked with what participants were able to provide. Each interview included a period of time reviewing the previous week, day by day, activity by activity. The review of the week enabled the researcher to probe for information about members of the participants’ social network such as family and friends, and also to probe for experiences of a routine or critical nature. This review

served to round out the emerging picture of the participants' lives, and aided in the development of a multi-dimensional image of the intercultural experience.

The use of the activity logs is consistent with Seidman's (2006) "three-step approach" in interviewing, in which participants are probed for context of an experience, details, and meanings (Aydinol, 2013, p. 16). The data from the review of each week offered a portrait of the general character of participants' day-to-day lives, patterns, routines, and habits.

This study employed *verdic analysis* in which data are treated as a reliable representation of events, in addition to *symptomatic analysis* which examines "the participant's relationship to the topic and the interview context" (Kvale, 1996; in Block, 2000, p. 757). In this study, both accounts of events, and interpretations of these events were sought, in order to be able to look at reported phenomena from different angles

In summary, the tools and instruments used in this study were the guiding questions, the activity logs as prompts, interview transcripts as text, and the researcher as interviewer. In combination, these tools and instruments allowed me to create links between the data and my research objectives, in order to make more transparent the way in which I came to inductive conclusions.

4.3.9 Other Sources

At times I consulted online resources to fill in gaps in my knowledge of the history, the geography, and the educational policies of China, Angola and Brazil in order to better contextualize the data (Davis, 1995, p. 444). For example, it became important to understand the impact of the national university entrance examination

policies in China on the motivations of students to go abroad for their higher education.

4.4 Data Management and Analysis

The data sources in this study were primarily interview transcripts and reflective writing. The process of interviewing, transcribing and writing reflective memos took up the better part of a year. Interviews commenced in July 2014 and were completed in December 2014. Interviews were fully transcribed, some by the researcher and most by a professional transcriptionist. The final transcript arrived in June 2015. Despite the cost in time and money, it was important to have transcripts that could be easily revisited, multiple times, to enable different levels of coding, and reflective note-taking.

The objective of this technique was to elicit “thick description” (Geertz, 1973; in Davis, 1995, p. 434). Thick description documents points of view, and takes into account “all relevant and theoretically salient micro and macro contextual influences” (Watson-Gegeo, 1992), including the actors' interpretations and other social and/or cultural information” (Erickson, 1986) to provide a foundation for interpretation (Davis, 1995, p. 434).

4.4.1 Coding

The first level of coding was open coding which allowed the data itself to suggest “patterns, themes, categories and regularities,” followed by axial coding which combined similar data into categories of experience (Cohen et. al., 2011, p 537).

The second level of coding sought data related to themes of identity,

continuing to work the data by “connecting themes in a network or pattern”, into a “pattern model” that describes and may explain the phenomena (Reason, 1981; in Davis, p. 440).

The third level of coding sought data relevant to the established categories of the theory of International Education as Self-formation (Marginson & Sawir, 2011).

4.4.2 Analysis: Constant Comparison and the Development of Thematic Categories

The purpose of interpretive inductive analysis is to identify and account for both frequently and infrequently occurring patterns in the data (Davis, 1995, p. 446). In the process of coding the earlier interviews, natural categories readily emerged from the empirical data. As new transcripts became available, categories were refined using data from participants’ later interviews (Cohen et. al., 2011, pp. 557-558).

Every effort was made to write and analyse “early and frequently” (Huberman, 1984) to facilitate “progressive focusing” (Parlett and Hamilton, 1976) funnelling data “from the wide to the narrow” (Cohen et. al., 2011, p. 539). Early coding and progressive categorization were necessary to manage the huge amount of data generated over five months and sixty interviews. Early coding also aided in the “selection of key issues for further investigation” in subsequent interviews (Cohen et. al., 2011, p. 539).

Butin (2010) argues that one can represent an intersubjective reality by documenting diverse perspectives (Burkheart, 2013, p. 65). Each new transcript added to the richness of the data, and to the potential reliability of the interpretations that could be drawn from them. Data was examined within the

diachronic context of the individual, and across participant contexts in order to generate reflections upon similarities and differences in student experiences, values and choices

The findings that emerged from the inductive categories became the foundation for answering the first two research questions.

4.4.3 Theory Testing

The third research question asks about the relevance of Marginson and Sawir's (2011) theory of International Education as Self-formation to the data in the interviews. The purpose of this question was to consider an "emic" interpretation of data, that is, one which strives to present the participant's point of view, in relation to an emerging theory with the intent of providing a coherent picture (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995; in Aydinol, 2013, p. 15).

In order to consider the "emic" perspective in the data in relation to IESF theory, transcript data was coded using salient themes from IESF theory. Then, I examined the principles of self-formation theory to see whether they could explain the findings from the data in this research.

This work was initially cumbersome, because I had to look at the data in an entirely new way. During the phenomenological portion of the research, and during the initial stages of coding and categorizing the empirical data, connections between participant experience and the way experience is framed by Marginson and Sawir (2011) had not been immediately apparent. However, in re-examining the data it became clear that the categories that had emerged during the first round of analysis could be understood as factors that enable and constrain self-directed agency. A

case was made that the participant perceptions of their experiences as cross-border language students could be explained by the central tenets of self-formation theory.

4.5 Presentation of the Data

4.5.1 Profiles

In the study, data is presented in two segments. First, profiles of the ten participants are presented as holistically as possible, given the scope of this study. Profiles include descriptions of the key personal characteristics, features of identity, key relationships, and short and long-term goals. The purpose of these profiles is to assist the reader in connecting the individual experiences of participants to overarching research themes, and to assist readers to construct meaning from these examples (Eisner, 1998; in Aydinol, 2013, p.20). Evidence to support findings and theory generation takes the form of thick description (Davis, 1995, p. 446).

4.5.2 Emergence

The second segment of the data presents the “key issues emerging across individuals” (Cohen et. al., 2011, p. 539). Themes that emerged are supported by illustrative quotes to highlight the voices of participants, and to maintain the presence of the individuals in the reporting of the data. Illustrative quotes are also used to present points of views on research topics as “facts” supporting theory in formation. In this way I worked intensively with the data to “move from description to explanation and theory generation” (Cohen et. al., p. 539).

4.5.3 Verification

Verification through member checking is a highly recommended practice in qualitative research. Member checking is done by “referring data and

interpretations back to data sources for correction/verification/challenge”, a process that leads to greater insight into the subjectivity of the participant (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; in Davis, 1995, p. 437).

In most cases of member checking, participants are offered transcripts of their interviews to read over and confirm. A participant may also be given a draft copy of the interpretation of their data for confirmation of meaning. In this research, member checking was approached differently because of the nature of the participants, the setting, and the time frame of the study. I estimated that the common method of member checking would have placed an unwelcome burden on the time and energy of participants, who were already carrying a heavy reading burden from their EAP coursework. I did not deem it fair to ask participants to read an average of seventy-five typed pages of transcript and give me feedback.

Instead, throughout the interviews, I took time to reflect back to the participants what I had thought they had meant in a given statement. Paraphrasing my understanding and enquiring if that understanding was correct was an important part of verification. The interview design allowed me to revisit topics that had been left open ended in any previous interview, and probe for a more precise or nuanced understanding of the intended meanings of the speakers and for elaboration on topics that appeared to be important, but unexpressed.

Another factor that complicated member checking is that not all the transcripts were available during the contact period with participants. It was some six months after the last interview in December 2014 that the final transcripts were made available to me.

And perhaps, most importantly, asking students to verify transcripts might have placed a different kind of burden upon these participants who “may feel embarrassed by, or nervous about, what they had said” (Cohen et. al., 2011, p. 541) especially considering that most participants admitted to being very self-conscious about their English. I saw no benefit to the well being of participants to be presented with verbatim records of their “performance” in English.

4.5.4 Reliability, Trustworthiness and Credibility

In this study, trustworthiness and reliability were sought by structural corroboration (Eisner, 1998; in Aydinol, 2013, p. 19) and by forms of triangulation, a method that requires the use of a variety of sources of information in support of conclusions (Cohen, 2011, p. 195). These sources are examined in this section.

First of all, corroboration was sought by drawing data from multiple participants on a sequence of occasions and discussing the same issues in guided interviews, providing rich and holistic perspectives. Reliability of this data is supported by time triangulation, in which data on individual participants was gathered over time to observe change and process, and much data was gathered synchronically, that is, at the same time (Cohen, 2011, p. 196), allowing similarities and differences to become salient.

Furthermore, the sample included students of different ages, genders, majors, and family backgrounds, providing sufficient diversity to “capture the heterogeneity in the population” (Maxwell, 2005; in Burkheart, 2013, p. 65) and sufficient heterogeneity with national groups, with the exception of Brazil, to consider the perspectives and concerns held in common by students of similar

backgrounds. Although the ten volunteers were roughly representative of the largest groups at *The EAP School* by countries of origin and by academic major, the purpose of this research was not to generalize, but instead to understand the particular experiences of individuals (Maxwell, 2005, in Burkheart, 2013, p. 65).

Credibility of the conclusions presented in the study are supported by comparing data and findings with key studies and publications on intercultural experience in higher education, some of which are included in the review of the literature in Chapter Three.

Confirmation of the credibility of the data was offered by EFL international students who attended my presentations on intercultural experience in Higher Education at several symposia. On a number of occasions, EFL international students sought me out to tell me that “it was good to know that someone really understands,” demonstrating that my data and conclusions authentically resonated with their own experiences. This confirms the “basic validity criterion” for interpretive, qualitative research as having “immediate and local meanings of action” (Erickson, 1986; in Davis, 1995, p. 435). These third person confirmations support my confidence in the fidelity of my interpretation of the data to the intentions and meanings of the research participants.

These forms of triangulation and corroboration assisted me in examining the double hermeneutic processes (Giddens, 1976; in Cohen et. al., 2011, p. 540) of this study. The research questions in this study were written with the understanding of the importance of this process to the credibility of the findings, and how personal bias influences the prioritization of certain types of data. A double hermeneutic

happens when “the researcher interprets the data from participants who have already interpreted their world” (Cohen et. al., 2011, p. 540). The strategies employed in the data collection and analysis process, such as *verstehen*, sought to employ the double hermeneutic in a manner that contributed to the discovery of the most important knowledge about the EAP lived experience, and the implications of these experiences for international education.

4.5.5 Risks to Validity

The risk to validity of the oral-interaction method of member checking in this study is that participants, when probed to confirm or correct the interviewers understanding of their meaning, may simply agree with the interviewer out of language fatigue, constructs of politeness, or limitations in the linguistic ability to add to the explanation, description, or account (Burkheart, 2013, p. 86).

4.5.6 Threats to Reliability

The following threats to reliability are inherent in any cross-cultural study in which language, culture and power differences influence the kind of knowledge that may be produced. Although steps were taken to mitigate these threats, these factors may still have, to some degree, affected the quality of the data and, as a consequence, the reliability of findings.

1. The participant may be intimidated by speaking with a stranger
2. The participant may be overwhelmed by having to speak a lot of English.
3. The participant may not have reflected enough on some topics introduced by the researcher to offer a carefully considered response.

4. The participant may not have practiced talking about experience in English and cannot fully represent his or her experience in words.
5. The participant may have insufficient investment in the research relationship and therefore be less compelled to overcome the first four factors or to expend the effort required to be understood.
6. The researcher may not be acquainted with the high-context speech modes and meanings in the texts of participants from less familiar cultural backgrounds.
7. The researcher may interpret data “at face value,” rather than engage in critical thinking about the influence of interview context on co-constructed texts (Freeman, 1996; in Block, 2000, p. 757).

4.6 Limitations of the Study

4.6.1 Convenience Sampling

Because the sampling depended on volunteers, I was not able to employ maximum variation sampling (Cohen et. al., 2011, p. 157) as a strategy. Sampling was limited to participants intrinsically motivated to volunteer to meet with a stranger for the purposes of being interviewed. These volunteers do not necessarily represent the general population of Bridge-EAP undergraduate students.

4.6.2 Recruitment time frame

The data is limited by the timing of the commencement of the interviews. Participants from the summer term of 2014 had had begun their EAP program in 2013 at the intermediate level. Students who had arrived at the advanced level, requiring only two terms of study, had graduated by the time recruitment could

begin. As a result, there is no data at all from students who had begun at the advanced level in 2013.

The second group of participants, those recruited in the autumn of 2014 had been in Canada for less than two months when interviews began. They represent experiences that take place in the early phase of arrival. Because the data collection window was less than three months, there is no data from their second term of study. If this study were to be replicated, I recommend sampling from second term students to fill the gap in information about students at that phase of cross-border EAP experience.

4.6.3 Sample Size

Because of the small sample size, the findings of this inquiry represent the experience of participants located at the site of the study, during the brief months of the study and cannot be extended to the larger population of EAP international students. Findings of this study are also limited to those that can be supported by what participants were able to express and what they permitted themselves to express at the time the interviews took place.

4.6.4 Member-checking

Another limitation of this study is that member checking took place orally rather than by having participants read over the interview transcripts and the researcher's analysis of their data for accuracy of representation (Pan, 2008; in Aydinol, 2013, p. 20). As previously stated, the potential difficulty of asking participants to read over the transcripts was deemed to outweigh the benefits to the research.

4.7 Ethics Procedure

The ethics approval application was submitted in February of 2014. Changes were made in the interview protocol and guiding questions based upon recommendations from the Ethics Board. This revision served to clarify for me more precisely how I would conduct the interviews, and what themes would be the main focus for each interview. This process was very helpful in my preparation. The ethics approval was granted in July 2014. The head teacher of the school arranged for me to present to the entire student body in July 2014.

4.7.1 Protocols

It is important that participants be clearly informed of the purpose of the research, the activities in which they shall be engaged, any workload expected of them, and any risks they may arise from the study. It is important to make efforts to protect participants from foreseeable risks (Erickson, 1986; in Davis, 1995, p. 442). The following methods were used to adhere to these priorities.

4.7.2 Informed Consent

In accordance with the policies of the Ethics Board, each participant received a Letter of Information on the study, which explained the purpose of the study, participant rights, and the ways in which the research would be carried out. Participants were advised that they could cancel or change any interview appointments, leave the study at will, and they had the right to refrain from answering any question they did not wish to answer.

Each participant was given a copy of the Letter of Information and a copy of their signed Consent Form. Participants were free to cancel or reschedule any

interview at any time and were reminded that they could have breaks any time they wanted during the interviews if they felt the need.

Emphasising and protecting the rights and freedoms of participants is ethically necessary and has the potential to decrease the power distance between the native-speaking researcher and the cross-border newcomer.

4.7.3 Privacy and Confidentiality

Each participant was given a unique ID number, and transcripts were prepared using that code. Pseudonyms were chosen during the compilation and analysis of individual cases. The legal names of participants do not appear in the transcript documents. A separated list of legal names and unique ID numbers was not needed, because the study had only a small number of participants. Legal names of participants are located only on the Consent Forms, and these forms do not include the participant IDs or assigned pseudonyms.

Consent forms were collected and kept in a locked location. After the forms were signed, students were given a number that was used on log forms and interview transcriptions. Because there were only ten students, the real names of the students were never written down, and the numbers, 1-10 were assigned separately from the coded number on logs and transcripts. In the analysis and write-up of the data, pseudonyms were used, and no information that might directly identify individuals was knowingly included.

4.7.4 Risks to Participants

There were no foreseeable risks to individuals participating in this research. The researcher was not directly connected to The EAP School, so participation in the

research would have no bearing on participants' academic success. All feasible precautions for the protection of privacy and confidentiality were taken, and precautions were taken to avoid distressing interview questions.

Chapter Five: Findings

5.1 The Site

Riverside University is a large research-intensive university located in River City in Southern Ontario, Canada. *The EAP School* opened in 2013 in order to provide language preparation for international students who were planning to attend *Riverside University* or its affiliated colleges. *The EAP School* was located at one end of *Riverside Campus*, close to a handful of residences, a pharmacy, a bookstore, and several take-out services.

At this site, EAP students studied from one to four semesters depending on their language level at intake, i.e., Intermediate, High Intermediate, Advanced or High Advanced. Students were anticipated to require one semester to progress through each level. Once EAP students completed the High Advanced level, they graduated, and could proceed into their academic programs at *Riverside* or an affiliated college.

5.2 Participant Profiles

This section offers an overview of participants' places of origin, education and family background, key personal traits, and their plans and aspirations in order to establish a sense of their individuality as speakers, and also to allow experiences and perceptions to be compared and contrasted in the chapters that follow. All personal names, residences, and academic institutions have been given pseudonyms.

Sample A: Participants who arrived at *The EAP School* in the Fall of 2013

1. *Ryan Chiu* – Age 20 - The Autonomous Prefecture of Mongolia, China.

Ryan was born and raised in an industrial city in the province of Mongolia. He was an only child, in accordance with national policy. His mother was a teacher and his father worked for a bank. In high school *Ryan* had followed the social science and humanities stream, with a special interest in history and political science. After the Gao Kao, he went to a university in Chung Qing, a metropolis in central China. Disappointed with the quality of his education and concerned about his long-term prospects he initiated action towards studying abroad.

At first, *Ryan's* father objected to sending his son abroad, but finally agreed that *Ryan* should “follow his heart.” In order to go abroad, *Ryan* contacted an agency. The agent recommended Riverside University based upon *Ryan's* credentials and aspirations. Riverside University's ranking and the existence of an academic English bridge program were the deciding factors in *Ryan's* choice.

Ryan had little difficulty making Chinese friends. He also made strong efforts to interact cross-culturally with students in *The EAP School* environment, especially those from Japan and Korea. Low language proficiency created challenging situations in *Ryan's* early months in Canada.

At the time of the interviews, *Ryan* was not confident in his oral expression in non-EAP contexts, nor had he made any Canadian friends during his year in Canada. During the first interview, *Ryan* had had difficulty articulating his aspirations for a future career beyond needing to like it. He also emphasized the importance of

having a future in which he could take care of his parents in their old age. In the final interview he shared that he'd like to become a professor.

2. *Leeann Ho* -- Age 19 - Beijing, China.

Leeann was born and raised in Beijing. She was an only child, in accordance with Chinese policy. During high school she transferred from her regular secondary school to an international school that was partnered with the secondary school curriculum in Manitoba, Canada. *Leeann* said that she had been dissatisfied with the traditional Chinese education system. Her parents had encouraged her to “broaden her horizons” in this high school and in her study-abroad experience. She graduated with a double diploma, one from Beijing and one from Manitoba, Canada.

Leeann chose Riverside because of its high ranking, especially in business, and also because she had attended a study-abroad exposition in Beijing, where she was impressed with the representatives from Riverside for being “really nice.” *She* was an avid fencer and joined the fencing team once she entered her first year.

Leeann frequently spoke about feeling intimidated when speaking English especially with native speakers. She did not express her long-term goals, only discussing her plans for the foreseeable future.

3. *Nicola Santos* -- Age 19 - Luanda, Angola

Nicola was born and raised in Luanda. She was the daughter of a policeman and a homemaker who had become a businesswoman. *Nicola* was the youngest of four siblings in a very close family. While she was in secondary school, *Nicola's* father had urged her to study math and physics and she came to enjoy them and to excel. All of her siblings were attending or had attended higher education.

Nicola was seventeen years old when she signed up for the Luandoil Scholarship Examinations. She didn't tell a soul, until after the first exam, for fear they would try to discourage her. After the first exam, her father had warned her to not to get her hopes up because their family did not know anyone at Luandoil. Despite his concerns, *Nicola* succeed and was selected to go to Canada.

Nicola knew very little English when she arrived in Canada. However, *Nicola* regularly attended a Pentecostal church and youth group, which allowed her to get to know some Canadians off-campus.

Nicola was curious about people from different cultures but was inhibited about asking questions in the Canadian context for fear of offending others. She said that she was shy speaking with native speakers, and said that her most pressing goal was to improve her accent to be better understood. Her long-term goals were to graduate, get a good job, buy a big house for her parents, get married, have a family, and earn enough money that her parents would be able to retire before they got old.

4. *Thomas* Eng – Age 19 - Sichuan Province, China

Thomas was born and raised in Cheng Du, the hub of Western China's Industry, Technology and Commerce. Going abroad was his father's idea, because many of his friends were sending their children to study abroad. As a loyal son, *Thomas* agreed.

In 2012, *Thomas* arrived in Toronto to study at The New East Secondary School for his Grade 12 year. He graduated with a double diploma, one from China, and the other from Ontario. He had achieved 6.0 on the IELTS test, and was accepted to Hanover College at Riverside University, on the condition that he

complete the EAP program. He had chosen this college because of its high ranking in business.

Sample B: Participants who arrived at The EAP School in the Fall of 2014

5. *Hugh Chen* – Age 18 - Jiangsu Province, near Shanghai

Hugh was born and raised in Su Zhou, which is part of the greater industrial and commercial district that surrounds Shanghai. His father was a businessman who had started and operated several factories consecutively. *Hugh's* mother was the financial manager of these enterprises, so *Hugh* had been raised by his grandmother. *Hugh* had attended a regular secondary school, but it appeared that he had had substantial English language education prior to arrival.

Hugh presented a friendly, curious and helpful attitude to the researcher and in his narratives. He said: "I believe that we are all international students and we should help each other." He had expressed a number of attitudes of a good intercultural learner (Marginson & Sawir, 2011, p. 138). For example, he said: "The lonely can make you grow up and you should be brave to the strange things."

Hugh's goal was to graduate from the business program at Riverside and follow in his father's footsteps. His dream was to form a company that would be China's "Apple Corporation."

6. *Renata Xu* -- Age 19 - Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province, China

Renata was born and raised in Shijiazhuang, a metropolis near Beijing. She was an only child. Both of her parents had attended university in China, and both worked for the government: her father at a bank and her mother at a post office.

Renata said that she preferred to work for a private company because the government had “too many rules.”

To study abroad had originally been her father’s idea. Some of his friends at work had chosen to send their children to study abroad. *Renata* said that her father thought that young people should “look around” and that to “study abroad is a better choice than stay in my country.” After attending Hobei University for only half a year, she sought out a study-abroad agency.

Renata planned to study Business at Riverside. She said that she didn’t think about the future after university, and was instead focussed on her immediate concerns, such as mastering the EAP material, and becoming more accustomed to using and understanding English in her daily life.

7. *Shayla Bai -- Age 19 - Tianjin near Beijing*

Shayla was born and raised in Shaanxi province. Her father worked as an accountant in the energy sector in Shaanxi, and her mother also worked for a company. Shaanxi is a large province with a high population, which affected the outcomes of the Gao Kao. In order for her to have a better chance of being accepted to a good university, *Shayla’s* parents decided that she should attend secondary school in a smaller province. *Shayla*, her mother, and her younger brother moved to the metropolis of Tianjin, splitting the family for a few years. After *Shayla* took the Gao Kao, she was admitting to Tianjing University for computer science, but was not happy about her experience there. She said:

“I was able to pass the exam by just reading the text book. I didn’t have to go to any classes. I don’t think this university will help me.”

Shayla's parents had differing opinions about *Shayla's* future. Her mother envisioned *Shayla* having a bright future abroad, but her father envisioned his daughter studying accounting, getting a good job close to home and raising a family. After intense discussion including the threat of divorce, *Shayla's* father acquiesced to his wife.

Shayla had planned to study Computer Science, but when given the opportunity to change her major, she considered changing to Business as her parents recommended. After agonizing over her choices, she applied to the Computer Engineering program based upon her own vision of her future: working for Apple Corporation.

8. *Tiago Galhardo* -- 19 - Luanda, Angola

Tiago was born and raised in Luanda. His father had also been born in Luanda, but his mother had been born in one of the provinces. *Tiago* was the middle child of five living siblings. His parents had divorced six years prior, so *Tiago* had been living with his mother, an elder sister, two younger brothers, and two cousins. His elder brother, Alvaro, was in his final year of studying on a federal scholarship. In the absence of their father, Alvaro had taken on a paternal role in the family. Once *Tiago* turned eighteen, Alvaro began to teach him adult responsibilities.

Alvaro exerted a powerful influence on *Tiago's* education. He taught *Tiago* that one never knows if something will be useful in the future, even if it doesn't appear useful now. Having seen that *Tiago* was curious about English, Alvaro actively coached *Tiago's* English learning. *Tiago* said: "He knew that one day it will be helpful for me to study English." *Tiago* would not have known about the Luandoil

scholarship competition if Alvaro had not signed him up and then ordered him to take the first and then the second exam.

Tiago had just begun attending a polytechnical university when he learned that he had won the Luandoil scholarship. He immediately dropped out of school, so that his mother would not have to pay the monthly tuition. He stayed home and looked after the household for eight months, until he departed for Canada. *Tiago* said that the scholarship relieved his mother of the financial burden of his education, because he still had two younger brothers. His mother had said she felt responsible for providing her children with a university education.

After graduating EAP, he would be studying Mechanical Engineering, in preparation for working for the oil company after graduation. He dreamed of starting his own business using government funding available to innovative micro-companies.

9. *Silvino Tavares* -- Age 18 - Luanda, Angola

Silvino was also born and raised in Luanda, the youngest of four siblings. His father was born in the provinces, but his family had moved to Luanda when he was a child. *Silvino's* mother had been born in Luanda. She was a strong advocate of education for her children. *Silvino* said:

“My mother think that education is the thing that we can open the door, is the key of success. Every time she, in my house, maybe don't have money to eat, to buy something, but education is the first thing.”

All of *Silvino's* siblings had attended university, but none had yet finished because of the costs involved. Only one of his elder siblings had a stable job.

Neither of his parents, who had reconciled after a separation, were working at the time of the study.

Silvino had endured a great deal to finish his secondary school, including periods of not having the money to attend which, at times, affected his marks. He had specialized in architecture, at one of the most respected secondary schools in his country.

Silvinio had had some courses in English in high school, but he hadn't liked the subject. At *Riverside*, after finishing EAP he would be studying Production Engineering. His goals were to complete his degree, get a good job and to marry his high school sweetheart, but most of all he wanted a stable life, one in which he would not have to worry all the time about money.

10. *Mariana Ferreira* – Age 25 - Porto Alegre, Brazil

Mariana was born and raised in a rural area in southern Brazil. Her parents were subsistence farmers. She had two older sisters, married, one of whom was working on a doctorate degree. Her younger brother, who was in secondary school, was preparing to apply for admission to the State University on a full scholarship as *Mariana* had done.

Because of her rural background, *Mariana* had had to live away from home during college, after which she was accepted to medical school in Porto Alegre. She was in her third year of medicine when she was accepted to the exchange program. She came to North America the hope of working as a research assistant in a lab to gain research experience not available to her in Brazil.

After completing her exchange year, *Mariana* planned to complete her training as a hospital physician in Brazil, and also dreamed of doing graduate studies abroad in medical research.

Summary

Each of these students had their own set of experiences arriving in Canada, arriving at the University, attending EAP classes, making friends and dealing with living abroad. Nevertheless, they shared many of the same joys, fears, and frustrations. The following section deals with their arrival and early experiences as international or exchange students in Canada.

5.3. Arrival Experiences

Introduction: Airports, Shuttles and Hired Cars

This section is dedicated to participant experiences of arriving at their respective airports, of accessing transportation to *River City*, and their arrival at their destinations on or off campus. For most participants, these very early periods remained firmly embedded in their memories and, in some cases, strongly influenced their perceptions of the new culture, the university and their own self-efficacy. For this reason, I present considerable details around participants' early experiences.

The arrival experiences the four participants in Sample A are presented first, followed by the six participants in Sample B to better showcase the similarities and differences in arrival experiences between different participants and cohorts.

Arrival Experience in Canada – Sample A – Arriving for September 2013					
Participant	Airports	CIC experience	Why?	Shuttle or Hired Car	Why?
Nicola	Detroit International	No difficulties crossing at Windsor	Luandoil rep. translated and provided documents	Chartered School bus	To keep the group safe and together
Leeann	Toronto and <i>Riverside</i> International	Very upsetting	Baggage Inspectors were rude (2)	Hired Car	Safety
Thomas	Toronto International	No difficulties	He had been to Canada before	Robert Q Shuttle	
Ryan	Toronto International	Very upsetting	He could not communicate with the interviewer (1)	Robert Q Shuttle	

Table 5.3.1 Sample A: Arrival August and September 2013

Angolan Group Arrival

According to *Nicola* (19, Angola), the journey from Angola to *Riverside* had been coordinated by the Luandoil office in Houston which was responsible for the conditions of living and the academic programs of *Luandoil* Scholarship students abroad.

Nicola's cadre of 19 scholarship students flew together from Angola to Detroit, Michigan. Upon landing, they were immediately met by *Mr. Soares*, a bilingual representative from their sponsor, *Luandoil*, and by *Mr. Moore (pseud)*. the chief administrator, *The EAP School*, *The Luandoil* representative accompanied the students, and translated on their behalf, while they were going through U. S. customs and immigration procedures, and again when they crossed the border into Canada. *Nicola* who was at the lower end of the language proficiency spectrum reported that for her, this process had been “very easy” for her and for the others in her cadre.

A chartered school bus took the students, *Mr. Soares*, and *Mr. Moore* from the airport, across the border into Canada and then to *Melbourne Hall*, their new residence, which was very close to *The EAP School*. *Nicola* said she really liked the friendly, informal and welcoming presence of *Mr. Moore*, who chatted with the students during the bus trip. When the group arrived at *Melbourne Hall*, students were assisted in gaining access to their rooms and, because it was late, went to bed.

Individual Chinese Student Arrivals

The arrival experiences of the other participants in Sample A, all from China, could not have been more different from *Nicola's*.

Leeann (Age 18)

Leeann arrived in Canada in the middle of the night on August 25th, 2014. She had flown from Beijing to Toronto with *John* (pseud.), a high-school chum, and together they had very frustrating experiences with the baggage inspectors who had told them they had done something wrong on their declaration forms. *Leeann* said that they were forced to submit their forms and their bags for scanning several times. *Leeann* and her friend were first perplexed and then angry with these inspectors, whose South-Asian accented English was difficult for *John* and her to understand. *Leeann* had felt humiliated when the baggage inspectors appeared to be making fun of them, by referring to them as “Chinese people who couldn’t even speak English.”

Leeann said:

“What I experienced there was very different from what I thought [about Canada] before I came here. It kind of, like, shocked me. Because before I came here I thought everybody is very friendly and they welcome, like, all the people

from all the countries. But once I got [here] some of the staff in the airport, sometimes they are rude to people. Especially to Chinese, I think, so I felt not really happy.”

Leeann said that there had been no one at the airport to step in to assist *Leeann* and her friend “because it was the middle of the night.”

In her first interviews, *Leeann* employed an understated style of speaking, which partially concealed the level of hurt and anger she felt. However, each time she talked about these events she spoke more forcefully. In her final interview, she made clear how angry she was, and how this experience had had a lasting effect on her experience of studying abroad.

After John’s flight was called, *Leeann* boarded her flight to *River City* where she was met by the Mandarin-speaking driver arranged by her agent, who answered a number of her questions during the short ride from the airport to her homestay. *Leeann’s* complaint was that this pick-up had cost three hundred dollars.

Ryan (Age20)

When *Ryan* talked about his experience of arriving in Canada he appeared sad and spoke softly and reluctantly about his visa interview with a Canada Customs and Immigration officer. *Ryan* said it took a long time for him to complete this interview because the officer “did not believe I was a student because of my English.” (1) After some time, a “passer-by” noticed *Ryan’s* situation and stopped to translate on *Ryan’s* behalf, and only then did the official stamped *Ryan’s* visa. *Ryan* said that there were no bilingual persons at Canada Customs to help him, nor did he have a letter of introduction from *The EAP School*.

When *Ryan* finally cleared immigration, he located The Robert Q Airport Shuttle that he had reserved for the two-hour trip from Toronto to *River City*. Once he arrived at his homestay in River City, the landlady went over the homestay contract with him and then invited him to have dinner, which he declined. According to *Ryan*, he just went to his room, feeling overwhelmed. He locked the door, went to bed, and wondered if he had made a terrible mistake in coming to Canada.

Thomas (Age 20)

Thomas said this 2013 arrival for attending Riverside EAP was easy because “the second time I come to Canada, I feel everything is familiar, so I relaxed. I flew from Beijing to Toronto and I catch the airbus, the Robert Q. and I got a taxi to the house.”

The year before, as an incoming international grade 12 student, his airport experience had been more difficult because “at that time, my English is not good.” He did not have the vocabulary to understand and answer the visa interview questions so “at that time, communicate to them is very hard.” As a new arrival, he had also taken a car service arranged in China to get from the airport to his residence at Seneca College. He said:

“When I got into residence, I homesick. I just lie on the bed and I cannot stop thinking of my parents and family, just the basic homesick. At that time, I was a little bit regret it. Because I thought that at that time, from today and the future six, seven year, everything I have to deal all by myself. I can’t rely on my parents.”

At that time, *Thomas* was only seventeen years old.

When interpreting the experience of the four students in Sample A, it is important to recall that these participants had been placed in intermediate level classes upon arrival. In contrast, the non-Angolan participants in Sample B were, advanced students upon arrival, and their experiences were not the same as those in Sample A.

5.2.2 Sample B: August and September 2014 Arrival

Arrival Experience in Canada – Sample B – Arriving for September 2014					
Participant	Airports	CIC experience	Why?	Shuttle or Hired Car	Why?
Tiago	Houston and Toronto	No difficulties	Representative from Luandoil translated	Chartered Schoolbus	To keep the group safe and together
Silvino	Houston and Toronto	No difficulties	Representative from Luandoil translated	Chartered Schoolbus	To keep the group safe and together
Mariana	Montreal and <i>Riverside</i>	No difficulties	Inspection was simple* “tranquil”	Taxi	Airport was near the university
Hugh	Toronto	No difficulties		Hired Car	
Shayla	Toronto	No difficulties		Robert Q Shuttle	Friend’s advice
Renata	Toronto	No difficulties	Inspection was simple*	Hired Car	Safety

Table 5.2.2: Sample B arrival

Angolan Group Arrival

In 2014, all scholarship students bound for North America from Angola were flown first to the *Luandoil* headquarters in Houston instead of directly to their universities. Participant *Tiago* and *Silvino* were part of this cadre.

According to *Silvino*, passing through customs and immigration in Houston was easy. He described it this way:

“I cross alone. I gave my passport. She check my visa. Simple. Because our company that come us to the United States is recognized The Immigration in the United States just know the company, just know who we are.”

Houston

Tiago, 19, explained that the purpose for going to Houston was to attend an orientation session about the culture and lifestyle of Canadians. The Angolan students in his cadre had been advised “not to be afraid or shocked, but to be careful.”

Tiago was able to recite from memory much of the information he had received at the information sessions in Houston. He said that they were told:

“You are not alone. You have to support and help each other because you are part of a big family. But here, basically you have to grow up because, personally, you are going to be alone.”

They were also told: “We were leaving as a group. We have to get back as a group.”

After three days in Houston, the Angolan students flew to Toronto with their Luandoil representative. *Tiago* said that he did not speak with the Canadian Customs officer. He said: “I don’t talk with him because I don’t know English. We have a person with us, our sponsor.”

From the Toronto airport, the Angolan group took a school bus to Riverside, and were taken to their residences *Preston Hall* and *Queenston Hall*, which were also located near *The EAP School* in the south end of the campus.

Arriving from Brazil

Mariana, as an exchange student was able to secure accommodations at *Middleton Hall*, an apartment-style residence designated for upper year students. Her

apartment was available on August 29, 2014, so she arranged to arrive in *River City* on that date.

She passed through Customs and Immigration in Montreal. After a very brief interview her work permit and study visa were stamped. She said:

“I was prepared for more. Longer interview, for example, but it was very tranquil, calm.”

From Montreal, *Mariana* flew to *River City* where she took a taxi from the airport to *Middleton Hall*. There was no one to meet her at *Middleton Hall*, so she searched for the residence coordinator responsible for apartment keys. She happened to meet *Alexia* (pseud.), who was also a Brazilian exchange student living in the building. *Alexia* immediately set about to help *Mariana* in a number of ways. First, she found the residence coordinator, who gave *Mariana* her keys. The *Alexia* helped *Mariana* with her luggage. *Mariana* was concerned about food, so *Alexia* took *Mariana* by bus to the supermarket. Once *Mariana* returned to her apartment it was time for her roommate to arrive.

Arrivals from China

In Sample B, there were three participants from China: *Renata*, 19; *Hugh*, 18; and *Shayla*, 19. All arrived in August 2014, to begin classes in September. *Renata* moved into her homestay a week early, but *Shayla* and *Hugh* had to wait for their room until August 31st, the official move-in date for international students

Renata (Age 19, China)

Renata flew alone from Beijing to the Toronto airport. Like *Mariana*, she was surprised that her CIC interview was uncomplicated, because she had expected more difficulties. She said:

“My classmate or my friends told me they will ask me so many questions, but they didn’t. I don’t know why!”

Renata’s agent had arranged for a Mandarin-speaking driver to pick her up at the airport in Toronto, but after *Renata* had collected her luggage and waited thirty minutes, no one came, and she was very anxious. She said

“It was very early morning in China and I just don’t know what should I do else, so I call my agent in China and let her to communicate with the person who will catch me.” She added: “I maybe bothered her when sleeping. I didn’t want to do this, but I think I had no choice.”

After calling her agent, she did not have to wait long for her driver who drove her directly to her homestay two hours away in River City. She also complained that the service had cost three hundred dollars and said: “It was very expensive, but it’s safe.”

From China to Campus: Hugh, 18; and Shayla, 19 (China)

Hugh and *Shayla* arrived in *River City* a few days before their move-in date, and each stayed in hotels while they were waiting. *Hugh* had flown from Nanching, near Shanghai to Toronto. In his interview, *Hugh* happily described the details of his arrival at the airport. Like *Renata*, *Hugh’s* agent had arranged for a driver to take him from Toronto to River City, and unlike *Renata*, he experienced no complications. He spoke of his ride to *River City* from Toronto as if it had been a great adventure. Unlike most

of the other participants from China, he seemed open to talking to strangers and described different ways in which he had offered to help them, for example, lending his cell phone to a student who was panicking because his own phone wasn't working, and he needed to call his mother.

Shayla had taken the initiative, while in China, to seek out other students who would be attending *The EAP School at Riverside*, making use of Chinese social media platforms "QQ" and "WeChat." Among these contacts, she had found a travelling companion, *Helen* (pseud.) from Guongdong. The two students met up at the airport in Hong Kong and flew from there to Toronto.

Rather than hiring a driver, *Helen* and *Shayla* took the Robert Q airport shuttle to their hotel in River City, and on the 31st took a taxi to campus and found their respective residences.

Transit Choices

It is worth noting that the participants from China had a choice between a car service arranged by the agent in China, or the airport shuttle, The Robert Q, to get from the airport to their destinations. *Renata* and *Leeann*, as women travelling alone, had used the "very safe, but expensive" car service. *Hugh*, traveling for his first time in Canada also took the car service from Toronto to *River City*, just as *Thomas* had used the car service when he arrived in Canada for the first time.

Thomas said that he had taken the Robert Q to *River City* because he was used to getting around in Canada. *Shayla* chose the Robert Q for herself and *Helen* on the advice of her mother's friend, and *Ryan* took the Robert Q. because he was used to travelling alone in China.

Mariana did not need a Mandarin-speaking driver or the shuttle, because her flight had landed in *River City*, and a taxi was convenient.

Summary

All three Sample A students from China had experienced unpleasant circumstances at Canada Customs and Immigration when they arrived in Canada for the first time because of communication difficulties. In contrast, none of the students from China in Sample B reported any difficulty at all with CIC inspections. The data in the study is too limited to account for the degree to which language proficiency or CIC practices can account for the differences.

Of the students making use of the car service, only *Renata* had a negative experience when she could not locate her driver, but participants who used the car service benefitted from being able to communicate with the driver in Mandarin. None of the participants who had taken Robert Q Shuttle service reported any difficulties.

None of the students from Angola had described any difficulties at border crossings or with their transportation arrangements. At every point in their journey they had the benefit of the camaraderie of their peers and the benefit of in-person support from their sponsoring and receiving bodies.

5.4 First Encounters with the New Environment

5.4.1 The first week in *River City* and at *Riverside University*

All participants had salient memories of their first week at Riverside, regardless of whether they had been there a few weeks or for nearly a year. These early experiences are important because this study is interested in the way in which the participants received both support and opportunities for cultural learning from the formal structures of the university and also from informal networks during their time as EAP students. Early campus experiences offer insight into the study-abroad experience at times when students are both eager and vulnerable.

The primary differences between the on-campus arrival experiences of students from each country represented are as follows:

- a) All students from Angola, had roommates waiting for them when they arrived.
- b) The two residence-dwelling students from China arrived at their residence halls on their move-in date of August 31st, where they were welcomed and assisted by peer volunteers.
- c) There were no volunteers waiting to help *Mariana*. She was helped only by happenstance and the kindness of a peer.

Sample A:

Angola: *Nicola*, 19

The 2013 Angolan cadre had little time to learn about their new environment upon arrival than had their intercultural peers. The morning after arriving they had testing, and in the afternoon went with *Mr. Soares* to establish bank accounts. They started their classes the following morning, and *Mr. Soares* departed.

At her residence, *Nicola's* floor leaders gave her information about residence life and offered their help with any issues on the floor. *Nicola* wanted to go to a mall to buy a phone, and *Catlin* (pseud.) her floor rep went with her, showing her how to navigate in her new environment.

China: *Ryan*, 20; *Thomas*, 20; and *Leeann*, 19.

Ryan

In *Ryan's* account of his first week in Canada the main theme was difficulty getting around town. In fact, *Ryan* needed to get to *The EAP School* to register and take his tests the very morning after he arrived from China. He asked his landlady how to get to the university, but he didn't understand the map she used to give directions. Additionally, he said he didn't know anything about taking a bus in Canada, neither how to make the bus stop, nor what to say to the driver. Being intimidated and alone, he took a taxi to campus, but couldn't find *The EAP School*. It wasn't on the campus map, and neither students passing by nor taxi drivers had heard of it.

One person took him to the International and Exchange Students Centre (IESC), where he was able to locate *The EAP School* building on a map. By chance, while at the IESC, he filled registration form that he enrolled him in the Peer Guide Program. In this program, upper year undergraduate individual volunteers met with a group of international students a number of times in order to show them around the city.

Arriving at *The EAP School*, *Ryan* took his placement tests. The following Tuesday he had his first EAP class. After class, *Ryan* set off for *The North Mall*, but not yet knowing how to take a bus, he walked the three kilometers from the campus to

the mall asking strangers for directions along the way. He said that he had prepared himself for this kind of communication before he left China.

Thomas

Thomas did not speak much about his first week in *River City*. He was living with peers from his Toronto high school and did not have to confront new experiences alone. Having lived in Toronto for a year, he knew how to deal with routine matters of taking busses, shopping, and asking for help.

Leeann

When *Leeann* arrived at her homestay, her new roommates -- undergraduate students from the Chinese community in Toronto -- had not yet arrived, and she spent some time with her new homestay hosts, *Mr. and Mrs. Boehm*.

Sample B:

Angolan Group: *Tiago*, 19 and *Silvio*, 18

Once The 2014 cadre of Angolan Students arrived at their Riverside residences late on Friday September 19, their schedule was very much the same as that of the 2013 cadre, with testing the next morning, banking in the afternoon, and classes starting the next day.

In his residence, *Tiago* had been impressed with the welcome he had received when he first arrived. He said that many of the people on the floor greeted him right away, and they all said the same thing: "Are you *Tiago*? Why did you take so long?" *Tiago* explained the delays related to the Angolan students' visas.

Tiago said, "The things that I like the most, they always say – I don't know if they are trying to be polite: 'Anything you need, you can count on me. Anything you

need, I will be here for you'." *Tiago* said that he had never heard people say this in Angola. About his new floormates and friends he speculated:

"I believe because it's because it's part of their nature. I believe they grew up listening or observing this behaviour. Their parents tell them that to be friendly, be gentle. Our parents told us too: if you want to be helped, you have to give help too. Something like that."

Silvino's first week in Canada was much like *Tiago's* although he had to depend on students from the previous year's group for communication at the bank and at the mall where he needed to buy a cell phone and he especially needed to buy clothes for the Canadian climate. He said: "the clothes that I wear in my country are very different, because my country is very hot."

Silvino's cross-cultural interactions were hindered by his language proficiency. On the first day of class he was very frustrated because he didn't understand anything his teacher said. But his most salient language-related difficulty during in his first week was at the cafeteria. He said: "I don't know the name of the foods. Like, mayonnaise, carrots, I didn't know the names."

From Brazil: *Mariana*, 24

As the only participant from Brazil, *Mariana's* accounts provide a window on her personal experience and those of her peers, clarifying some of the differences between the study-abroad experiences of an exchange students from those participants who were preparing for four or five years of study in Canada. As illustrated above, upon arrival at her residence and she was entirely dependent on the help offered by *Alexia*. Arriving on a Friday *Gina* and *Mariana* spent three days

without access to the residence Internet because the office was closed for the weekend.

Once Monday arrived, *Gina* and *Mariana* attended the International Student Orientation at the International and Exchange Students Centre (IESC). *Mariana* said that the IESC was very helpful during her first week on campus, as were her Brazilian peers who had already been in Canada for a while. *Mariana* said, "When I arrived here, I feel relief because there was people to talk with in my first language."

Although *Mariana* was placed in a High Advanced class at *The EAP School*, she said that, "The first two weeks here were very difficult because of English." She and *Gina* had gone to one of the large electronics stores to buy a computer. *Mariana* said that she had difficulty understanding and being understood by the store staff. *Mariana* because she was "not understanding English very well yet." She said, "It was very difficult to understand words." She said she had asked the clerk to repeat his answers to her questions several times.

After she had been at Riverside for a week, *Mariana* took her EAP placement test on the 5th of September, a Friday. After the test, she went with the other new EAP students on an orientation tour of the campus. On the following Tuesday, she attended her first EAP class.

Participants from China

Each of the three participants in sample B who came from China, *Renata*, *Hugh* and *Shayla* had arrived in *River City* early.

Renata

Renata's arrived at her homestay one week before school began in order "to take a look around" before starting classes. She spent her first week in River City with Annette from Denmark, who occupied the other student bedroom at her homestay. Annette showed *Renata* her how to use the bus system to get to and around the university and introduced her to the local neighbourhood. On September 1st, Annette moved from the homestay to an apartment she would share with an international student from France.

Hugh and Shayla

For international students on campus, August 31st was move-in day. On that day, *Hugh* and *Shayla* took taxis from their respective hotels to their respective residence halls, where they were met by student volunteers who helped them get their room keys and helped them take their luggage to their rooms. *Hugh* was to live in *Franklin Hall*, and *Shayla* had a room at *Delair Hall*.

Hugh

Upon arrival at *Riverside*, *Hugh* was impressed with these volunteers, all wearing T-shirts in the university's colours, and said that he hoped that the following year he could be a volunteer and help others in the same way.

Move-in day for Canadian students was one week later, so he did not meet his Canadian roommates until the following week. However, on his first day at *Franklin Hall*, he met some other international students outside on the grass playing a game. Although they were all Chinese, they played the game in English and *Hugh* was happy to participate. He spent the first week with students from China until his Canadian roommates arrived and his English classes began.

Renata and Shayla

After September 1st *Shayla* and *Renata* contacted one another and with the Chinese Students Club. One of their members, *Frank*, helped new arrivals to learn to use the bus system and helped them set up accounts at a bank in The North Mall, where *Shayla* and *Renata* also did a lot of their initial shopping.

Summary

The initial sections of this chapter have provided an overview of the differences in arrival circumstances and experiences. Participants included escorted scholarship students, individuals travelling alone, and individuals travelling with a partner. This overview shows the inherent benefits and problems of various modes of transportation, of initial living conditions, and of differences in opportunities to become familiar with the new location prior to beginning classes.

Most of the participants had some kind of connection with peers during this early period. *Mariana* had her conational roommate and others in her building. *Shayla* and *Renata* had their group of friends met on QQ and WeChat, and *Thomas* had his housemates. *Leeann* had her homestay hosts and then two other roommates. The three Angolan students had made friendly acquaintances while travelling and had built on those ties after arrival. *Hugh* made conational friends at his residence. Only *Ryan* was alone until the day he walked into The EAP School.

5.5 The EAP School and the EAP Classroom Experience

5.5.1 *The EAP School in the data*

As shown in the literature, the objectives of 21st century EAP programs are concerned with the development of linguistic competencies and with the acquisition

of academic skills important in western hemisphere tertiary education. It is for this reason that the data presented in this chapter includes experiences with both communicating across cultures and participating in the Anglo-Western academic culture.

At the EAP School, participants spent twenty hours a week in close proximity to their classmates and their teacher. As a result, intercultural learning involves not only the culture of their English-speaking instructors, but also learning from interaction with peers from other culture and language groups.

Most participants remarked that their teachers had said that it was important to practice English with a variety of people in order to listen to a variety of accents, although most participants pointed to accent differences as the primary obstacle to intercultural communication in the classroom. The second reported obstacle was not knowing enough about the cultures of their cross-cultural classroom peers to feel confident in developing closer ties.

5.5.2 Western Academic Culture

In 21st century academic culture, the emphasis is on student-centred active learning, which requires students to contribute to discussions, to ask and answer questions, and to do research and to prepare content-centred presentations for the benefit of their classmates. In the literature presented in Chapter Two, it is shown that developing these competencies is difficult for many international students. Participant narratives pointed out how and why these skills are particularly challenging for some students.

5.5.3 Student Experience: Beginning EAP Classes

When participants described their first week of classes, certain experiences were universal. Regardless of level of proficiency, all participants had difficulty understanding their instructor during that first week. Additionally, it was noted that all students seated themselves with students from the same country, except when assigned to mixed pairs or groups. And finally, all participants, regardless of level of proficiency had found it difficult to speak up in class, even when simply introducing themselves. For some, being tongue-tied was temporary. For others, difficulty speaking up lasted for a much longer period of time.

Mariana (24, Brazil) reminisced about her own difficulties during her first days of class. She said:

“I was afraid of to not understand what the professor was saying. And, we did a presentation of classmates and I was very ashamed. I couldn’t speak very well.”

Mariana said that most of her classmates also struggled with these introductions. *Mariana* sat with her Brazilian classmates so they could try to understand the professor and “to watch we need to do.” After that first week, *Mariana* said she was more comfortable because “I know better the professor, how was her method.”

Most of the participants reported taking advantage of help from peers of the same culture. *Tiago*, (19, Angola) said that it took him three days to adjust to understanding his teacher. Even at the end of the first term of EAP, *Tiago* said he still needed listening help from his peers and continued to sit with them in class. He said, “I want to sit next to someone who talk the same language as me so I can ask.”

5.5.4 Cohort Formation

Class groups, called cohorts, were formed in early September based on intake scores, and with an effort to balance the numbers of students of different nationalities in each cohort. In both 2013 and 2014, students from Angola arrived two weeks after classes had begun, and the cohorts had to be re-formed to integrate the late-arriving students. For *Shayla* and *Renata*, some in-cohort friendships that began in the first days were lost during their cohort reformation. In September, their cohort had included two students from Korea: *Jangsoon Kim* and *Yumi Kim* (pseuds.). *Renata* and *Shayla* had just gotten to know *Yumi* when the cohorts were adjusted and *Yumi* was no longer in their class. After that, they never spoke with her.

Most cohorts had a large number of students from China, a smaller number of students from Angola, and very few, if any, students from countries other than China and Angola. The exceptions to this pattern were at the highest and lowest ends of the proficiency spectrum.

For example, the cultural mix of *Mariana's* 2014 High Advanced cohort was quite different from those of the other participants. Her cohort had several students from Brazil, three from Angola, one from Serbia and three female students from China. This dynamic was to become important in *Mariana's* intercultural experience within the classroom. Another exception was *Silvino's* Intermediate-level cohort (Sample B) in which there were only eight students: five from Angola, one from Libya, one from Syria, and one from China.

The other four participants in Sample B were placed in Advanced-level cohorts. *Tiago* described his cohort: "We are four Angolans, one Japanese, one

Korean, three Libyans and the rest are Chinese. Like, seven are Chinese.” *Hugh’s* cohort was a little different. He said: “There are fifteen students in my classroom: Five Angolans, one Korean, others are Chinese.” There is evidence that *Shayla* and *Renata* were part of this cohort from *Hugh’s* reference to having worked in class as *Renata’s* partner.

The cohorts formed in Fall 2013 were made up primarily of Chinese and Angolan students. For the Summer 2014 term, students began arriving from Brazil, South Korea and Japan, but not enough to balance the numbers of students from China. During that summer term, *Leeann* said of her Advanced-level cohort “Now we have Angola students and Brazilian students and also most of us are Chinese.”

5.5.5 Participant observations of cultural learning in the Classroom:

The researcher asked the participants to tell her about the people in their class, in order to open the conversation about social and cultural learning experiences inside the classroom.

Mariana

Mariana (24, Brazil) was a keen observer of the conduct of others and offered reflections on what she was observing during her term as an EAP student.

When she noticed that some of her Brazilian classmates were frequently absent from class she said: “I don’t know why. I don’t understand.” She had asked them: “What is happening? Why you are not coming to classes?” Two had told her that they were not learning much in class and were not motivated to go. In contrast, *Mariana* said that all the other students from Brazil in *The EAP School* had said that they were learning a lot from the EAP program.

Mariana described how students were matched with different partners each time for completing classroom tasks. Among her favourite partners she listed “one Brazilian girl,” “the Angolan guys,” and “the Serbian guy.” She did not express a preference for working with her classmates from China. *Mariana* reported that the students from China always stayed in their own group unless their instructor directly said: “Sit here, form this group.” *Mariana* had worked with these students as partners including her research and presentation project with *Wei Xu*. *Mariana* observed that these classmates were good partners, openly communicating on the task at hand. *Mariana* noted, however, that these classmates said very little not directly related to school tasks. She stated:

“The Chinese girls, they are very shy and I don’t know many issues to talk with them. I ask so much about their culture, for example, careers and other things but they also restrict when we are asking something. Then they don’t speak more about that issue.”

She summarized her experiences in communicating with her peers from China by saying that they had “a restricted, regulation of behavior that is different [from] us.”

Mariana noted that *Wei Xu* was “very focused” and “... also nervous about the presentation.” During their entire presentation, *Wei* stayed behind the podium. *Mariana* said that although *Wei* “presented very well, speak very well,” she “was shy to go out from that place. And because of this, she’ll lose mark.”

It was not only marks that were lost during *Mariana’s* collaboration with *Wei Xu*, because they did not get to know one another on a personal level. *Wei* would not discuss anything unrelated to their task. *Mariana* also noted that her classmates from

China did not display how they were feeling on a given day. *Mariana* said, “It’s not so visible. The girls that study with me, they are very quiet usually, and it’s not possible to realize if they are sad or happy.”

Mariana’s description is consistent with what other participants had said about conversation norms in East Asian culture. For example, *Leeann* had said that one should not offer an opinion that seemed defiant. Thus, it was not normal to engage in debate. *Thomas* had said it is difficult for students from China to even say hello to one another if they are not friends, and thus is hard to initiate and sustain conversation. *Ryan* had said that in China, one is considered to have had a poor upbringing if one talks about oneself too much. Thus, answers to personal questions are given as succinctly as possible. *Renata* had said her teachers in China had praised her for being good at group harmony, thus reinforcing a cooperative rather than challenging way of engaging with others. These factors may be at the heart of the Chinese students’ ways of communicating that was described by *Mariana* as “restricted” and “regulated.”

In contrast with her Chinese classmates, *Mariana* said that she was able to guess how her Angolan peers were feeling on any given day from their conduct. She said, “If they are very happy, they talk more and loud. And if they are not very well, they stay quiet. It’s very visible, this difference.” However, if *Mariana* asked any of them “How are you feeling today? Is something happening with you?” they would not tell her what was bothering them.

Mariana always referred to her Angolan classmates as “the Angolan guys” which indicates that they may have been a group of male students. *Mariana’s*

observation of these classmates is compatible with what *Tiago* had once said about not liking to talk about his problems with anyone, preferring to solve them on his own. At risk of too much speculation, the “Angolan guys” in *Mariana’s* class may have also wished to keep their problems to themselves.

In contrast to her experience with Angolan students, *Mariana* said that the Brazilian students would talk about the problems behind their occasional bad moods. *Mariana* said: “some classmates are upset because of missing home or they are very tired because of so much work to do. Homework.” It is fair to speculate that most of her classmates were also troubled by their workload and their homesickness. For example, *Nicola* from Angola and *Leeann* from China both reported being homesick during their early months abroad. However, *Mariana* found that neither her Angolan nor her Chinese classmates were willing to talk on a personal level. Upon reflection, she said that she thought that her Brazilian peers shared their feelings amongst themselves because they knew they could help one another.

5.5.5.1 The Student from Former Yugoslavia

One of *Mariana’s* other classmates was *Ivan Stepanic* (pseud.), an undergraduate from Southeastern Europe. According to *Mariana*, three characteristics made Ivan appear to be quite different from her other classmates:

- a) an unwillingness to slow down his speech to accommodate others,
- b) a tendency to strongly assert himself in a group, and
- c) a tendency to appear competitive about grades.

Mariana could not determine if Ivan's characteristics were typical of his home culture or whether they were personal because he was the only student from his country in her class.

Mariana reported that from the beginning of the course, Ivan spoke rapidly and in detail, and refused to repeat or slow down, even when asked. What she really didn't like was when Ivan would take control of how a group approached a task, and refused to accommodate the input of others in the group. She said, "I like to work in a group where everybody can communicate. I don't like when people say: 'Oh, do this. I will do this.' I think we don't develop that work very well when we do like this manner." *Marina* said that group members from China never challenged Ivan, and just accepted his directives.

Mariana said that Ivan often asked her about her marks for comparison with his own, and she had heard him tell others that he was very good at English and if they wanted to be as good as he was, they should work hard. *Mariana* found these behaviours less annoying than engaging in complex topics with closed-minded people, who held strong opinions were not open to other points of view. She cited one example that had really bothered her:

"Some classmates are completely against homosexual and they think that some people choose to be homosexual, because they are not smart. And I try to explain, but I can't persuade, and show all the factors involved in this."

Mariana was frustrated to encounter people among her classmates, who "don't know that there are another side of a situation or don't know the context of

something.” Of her closed-minded classmates, she said: “Maybe they need to live more, to read more about it.”

Shayla and Renata’s Observations

Renata and *Shayla* had become very best friends after the cohort shuffle. *Yumi’s* brother, *Jangsoon*, had remained in their cohort, but when *Shayla* or *Renata* had tried to have conversations with *Jangsoon*, he responded in very few words, avoiding elaboration or reciprocal questions. *Shayla* and *Renata* decided that he was very shy.

A number of factors could have influenced *Jangsoon’s* reticence about making small talk. Korean culture is similar to that found in China where social life is frequently divided along lines of gender. *Renata* said she thought that girls could be friends because they share interests, but boys’ interests were different. *Jangsoon’s* silence may have been amplified by his gender, or by the absence of another same-language peer to help him participate in intercultural conversations. *Jangsoon* may have also shared *Tiago’s* sentiment that interaction “was always more complicated with women.”

Hugh’s observations

Like *Leeann*, *Hugh* expressed the value of having a study partner who was not shy, which reiterates that shyness is a common concern in the EAP classroom landscape. He expressed admiration for his classmates from Angola who “are very good at English speaking.” *Hugh* spoke often of the importance of speaking English, and spoke critically of EAP students who spoke Mandarin with one another. He

admired of his Chinese residence mates who always spoke English together in the cafeteria.

5.5.5.2 The Participation Mark

Most participants indicated that they had enduring inhibitions about speaking English in front of others. Half the participants in this study remarked on the pressure on them to speak in class, and tied this pressure to their participation mark. *Leeann* summarized what many of the students felt when she said:

“We have participant mark. Usually the Chinese students got a lower mark. This is one of the problems that we have in the class.”

Leeann offered her opinions on why Chinese students have this problem. She said: “I think we seldom to dominate the conversation. We talk little, but we hear other people’s opinion.” She also said: “I think foreign language speaker, when we speak that language, we might feel embarrassed. So, that is one of the problem that can block the way we improve.”

Leeann explained Chinese students just weren’t used to speaking up in class. She also said that in Chinese culture, students are careful not to draw attention to themselves., *Leeann* believed that she was more self-conscious in her EAP class than she had been in her high school classes in China where she said: “We know each other and we don’t really judge our peers. We can speak English without any pressure.” In Canada, *Leeann*, who said she had no close friends at the school, feared being judged if she made a mistake, and framed her feelings in terms of being embarrassed.

Ryan also expressed concern about being judged as he approached the end of his EAP study and was thinking about his next term as a regular undergraduate. He

said that people at *The EAP School* were not as judgemental of his English as he anticipated that his new professors and classmates would be.

Ryan had explained that in his culture, people who are talkative risk humiliating their family for not having been raised correctly. In order to overcome his own cultural habits, *Ryan* sought to follow the example of his Angolan peers to develop a more outgoing intercultural identity. However, he stated that when among other Chinese persons, he would never conduct himself that way.

Shayla, who had attended a year of university in China before coming to Canada, confirmed that students from China have little to no experience with the things the EAP students were expected to do for their participation mark. She said that in China, their teachers and professors just talk while students write down the information. They never asked or answered questions, never read aloud, and never gave a presentation in front of a group. She asserted that she and her circle of friends were very self-conscious about having to do these things in front of their classes, and that their difficulties with performing the above tasks resulted in low participation marks. *Leeann's* reported that even in their third term of EAP, the students from China received lower participation marks. Moreover, after graduating from his year of EAP learning, *Ryan* said that he didn't think he would ever be able to keep up with native speaking students in his future courses.

Shayla thought that it was only the Chinese students who had difficulties speaking up in class, but this was not always the case. Although Angolan students were described as more talkative, *Tiago* described himself as someone who didn't like to talk, in or out of class. He said that he knew that in his classroom it was necessary

to talk regardless of the circumstance, and said that most of the students in his class were also shy. *Tiago* said that when preparing to speak, he would overanalyse what he was preparing to say, thinking first about whether his idea was worthwhile, and then thinking about how to say it in English. He said that by the time he was ready to make his point, the classroom discussion had moved on, and the moment was lost.

Thomas (20, China) continued to feel inhibited about communicating with his peers after graduating EAP and beginning his first term of courses. He said that he went to faculty social events, but never spoke to anyone. However, an opportunity arose, by chance, for *Thomas* to make a friend, *Tomi*, in his economics class. *Thomas* found that he could speak English with *Tomi* and not feel intimidated. *Tomi* was Korean-born but had come to Canada as a young child. *Tomi* made efforts to understand *Thomas* and involve him in the classroom by discussing the lectures with him and introducing him to other students in the class. *Thomas* said that the German students always said hello when he greeted them, and the Canadian students too, but never the Chinese. *Thomas* had given up saying hello to them because he had concluded that Chinese people were not friendly and would not answer. *Thomas's* observations sustain the discourse that many students from China do not easily speak to strangers.

One might say that in the EAP context, the participation mark serves as a symbol of the struggle for international students to adapt themselves to the expectations of their new environment which runs against their class and cultural inclinations. Participants grappled not only with enriching their language proficiency, but also with the expectation of active participation.

5.5.5.3 Angolan Students in the Classroom.

Participants generally described students from Angola as very active in the classroom, sometimes on task and sometimes not. Both *Nicola* and *Tiago* said that their fellow Angolan classmates often talked out of turn, speaking Portuguese in class. Usually it was a joke in the moment, and while *Tiago* knew it was not correct classroom conduct, he said: “they can’t help it. It’s just in them.”

Ryan (20, China) smiled when he described how his Angolan classmates had told him that he was becoming Angolan when he was modelling his more extraverted identity in the classroom.

5.5.5.4 Brazilian Students in the Classroom

As the only participant in this study from Brazil, most of the data about students from Brazil came from *Mariana’s* observations and reflections. Of herself, she said she was an applied student. This was an important feature of her identity, and among her friends, they were all as applied as she was, and they were also open-minded.

In her EAP class however, she noted that not all her EAP peers from Brazil were as applied as she was. She said, “They do all their homework and the essays but I think they could work more, for example, to have a good mark.” *Mariana* reasoned that fully funded exchange students should apply themselves in all their classes. She said: “We have a commitment with this public money.” Thus, *Mariana* was perplexed by the absence and apathy of some of her conationals in her EAP class, who needed to pass their EAP courses in order to begin their exchange programs at the university.

5.5.5.5 Chinese Students in the Classroom

Clustering

Hugh's first comments about students in his class at The EAP School addressed the phenomenon described as "clustering" (Ward & Kennedy, 1993). Of his schoolmates from China he said:

"They always, not only in my class, but in other classrooms, they like to get together. They are sometimes shy to talk to foreigners, not only the Canadian people, but the students from other countries in their class."

Tiago indicated that clustering also happened when all the students of the school were together in a group. He specified that Chinese students stayed together and were very shy about speaking to others, especially the girls.

Mariana also linked clustering to shyness. She said that the Chinese girls in her class always stayed together, and no matter how much *Mariana* tried to make conversation with them, none reciprocated her efforts.

Leeann also spoke about clustering at the school. She said:

"We want to make [friends with] new students from other countries, but it's just a natural thing that automatically happens when we sit in the class. We sit in groups, Chinese groups."

5.5.5.6 Working with Partners

Participants were asked about their experience of working with partners from different cultures. Students were not permitted to select their own project partners. Rather, the teacher made groups of two or three at random, while attempting to divide up the same-culture students into different groups as much as possible. In

most classes, there were more Chinese students than other students so sometimes two students from China had to work in a pair.

Thomas did not like having to work in pairs with certain classmates from China. He said that some people thought only about their own marks, or were lazy and let the other students do more work for the same, shared mark. *Thomas* said that when he was forced to work with someone he thought was selfish, he said that he would be friendly only for the duration of that assignment.

Thomas and *Ryan* both said that there were important differences in character and behaviour between themselves and persons from various other parts of China. For the researcher, it was hard to understand exactly how the participants constructed these regional divisions. *Thomas* and *Ryan* said that the people from their provinces, Sechuan and Mongolia, were “okay” but not people from “the South” or from Beijing. *Thomas*, who had had negative experiences with other students from China at his high school, and who had been abroad the longest, said that he would trust a foreigner before he would trust someone from certain parts of China. Perhaps not surprisingly, *Hugh* said that his parents had told him that he could make a friend with someone from Shanghai region but not anywhere else. This information indicates that there are complexities in interpersonal relationships that students bring from China that are not visible to instructors, professors and non-Chinese peers.

Hugh indicated that not all Chinese students were shy. He said, “One of my friends, is *Renata*. She’s very outgoing and she’s Chinese and she’s good at talking to foreigners.” Surprisingly, this is the same *Renata* who believed she was a weak speaker and did not yet feel comfortable engaging with the English-speaking world

without someone with her from China to help her communicate. Nevertheless, *Hugh* had been speaking of *Renata* as he saw her in the classroom. *Renata* had talked about the participation mark as a motivator for making strong effort in the classroom.

Tiago's favourite partner for classroom tasks was *Farrah* (pseud.), a graduate student from Libya who had been placed in his Advanced English cohort. He said: "She is very good at grammar," and "she's always open to a debate." *Tiago* said he liked debates because they made him work hard. *Tiago* also appreciated *Farrah's* openness to learning about his background. He said that she was "really curious...she ask a lot of questions about our country, our culture."

Tiago was also pleased about his opportunities to pair with *Tomo* from Japan during class exercises. According to *Tiago*, not only was *Tomo* friendly but was also, "Very good at grammar, and very good at taking notes and finding the main points of the lecture." For *Tiago*, it appears that not only the character of a task-partner was important, but also the language and learning skills that they brought to the task.

Silvino said he liked working on tasks with his classmate from Syria, *Aliya* (pseud.). He said: "She understand me. Is very fun. I feel good with her." *Silvino* said that she was a willing conversation partner not only when they were partnered for a task, and that. He said:

"It's very interesting because her culture is very different like [from] my culture. Every time, I try to learn something about her culture."

Silvino said that in Angola there were people from *Aliya's* culture, by which he meant the Arabic-speaking Muslim culture of The Middle East and North Africa (MENA), but

there was no interaction between Angolan and Arabic cultures at the level of the general public. He said:

“In my country, person of her culture is very closed. In my country person of her culture study in their [own] school. But here, no. They with us. I can learn more about her culture.”

Thomas, (20, China) had made a positive connection with *Basilio*, a peer from Angola. *Basilio*'s first term of EAP study, Summer 2014, coincided with *Thomas*'s third. In *Basilio*'s second term, Fall 2014, *he* happened to be in the same cohort as participant *Hugh*. *Hugh* said:

“I like to talk [with] the Angolan student, *Basilio*. Yeah, he isn't shy. He's outgoing and we can share our ideas about the topic the teacher give us. And his speaking is good. Sometimes I'm hard to, not really good to express my words, and he can know my feelings and he can help me to express it.”

Renata had collaborated on a presentation with *Arella*, a classmate from Angola. The topic of their presentation had to be Modern Health. *Renata* said that she and *Arella* had very different ideas about what topic they should work on, and were not able to come to an agreement. They needed guidance from the teacher who selected their topic for them. Once they had their topic, *Renata* said they worked well together but had difficulty throughout the process understanding each other's oral English, specifically their accents. *Renata* said communicating and understanding each other's ideas had taken a lot of time.

Leeann indicated that by her third term, intercultural group work was no longer difficult. “I think that when we have a group project we get along with each

other pretty well.” Because of the large proportion of Chinese Students in *Leeann’s* class meant that she was usually partnered with Chinese students. Nevertheless, she made clear that her partner preference depended on the activity. She said:

“If the activity is about speaking, I might like to choose a partner who is like to talk, or who has more better speaking ability. The people who comes in my mind that has like more talkative, they are not Chinese, usually are Brazilian or Angolan students.”

Although *Leeann’s* classroom preferences for speaking exercises were cross-cultural, her intercultural engagement was limited to formal assignments and did not extend beyond the classroom, until the arrival of Korean students in *Leeann’s* third term of study.

5.6 Housing, intercultural, and interpersonal experience

The experiences of the participants in this study represent a range of living arrangements available to international students in study-abroad. As noted above, the types of housing that appear in the data are Homestays, Rental Houses, Rented Apartments and Campus Residence Halls. In this section, the way in which living arrangements influence opportunities for intercultural experience will be shown. The data is reported first according to type of accommodation, then by country of origin, and finally by year of arrival. The off-campus data will be presented first, followed by data from participants who lived on campus.

5.6.1 Homestays

Those participants who began their study-abroad experience in a homestay had done so at the recommendation of their study-abroad agents in China. Reasons for choosing a homestay had included inexperience with cooking (*Leeann, 19; Renata 20*), or uncertainty about other accommodation options (*Ryan, 20*).

Leeann

Leeann's homestay was located in the north end of *River City*, close to a direct bus line. Her homestay parents, *Mr. and Mrs. Boehm* (pseud.) were a retired Mormon couple whose four children were now married and gone, leaving an “empty nest”. They chose to rent their spare bedrooms to female students. For *Leeann*, the convenience of having breakfast and dinner prepared for her, and the security of living with a quiet couple in an attractive neighbourhood suited her well.

Leeann arrived at her homestay in late August of 2013. Her two roommates arrived from Toronto at the beginning of September 2013. These roommates were

female students of Chinese background whose family lived in Toronto. At the time of the first interview with *Leeann*, she had lived at her homestay for the previous eleven months.

During that first interview, *Leeann* said that her homestay was “perfect,” but during subsequent interviews she admitted that she had had two problems at home. The first problem involved one of her roommates, *Angie* who frequently had noisy conversations with her boyfriend on her cell phone in the next room while *Leeann* was trying to study. Although *Leeann*’s concentration was disturbed, she never spoke to *Angie* about the noise. The second problem *Leeann* described was a matter of cockroaches in the refrigerator designated for the personal use of students at the homestay. *Leeann* had been unwilling to tell her host parents about the problem and sought to resolve the it by avoidance: she just stopped using that refrigerator.

The *Leeann*’s response to these two problems provides an example of difference between *Leeann*’s culture and the culture of the researcher. From a Canadian perspective, reporting a problem to one’s “hosts” or talking to a roommate about noisy phone calls might be only mildly inhibiting; but for *Leeann* the inhibition was insurmountable, and she simply endured.

During the summer term her housemates were away and *Leeann* did not have to deal with noise, but *Leeann* said it was a bit lonely without them. When school reconvened in September 2014, *Leeann* said that she no longer had a problem with *Angie*’s phone calls, because *Angie* and her boyfriend had broken up.

Leeann did not find she had a lot in common with her roommates because they were preoccupied with the challenges of finding a decent boyfriend. None of the

participants from China were interested in dating. Thomas, for example, had responded to a question about dating with “Girlfriend! I’m too young! I’m only 20.”

Ryan

After arriving in Canada, *Ryan* spent his first term at a homestay. *Ryan* said little about the homestay except to say that he moved out as quickly as possible. At first he was reluctant to say anything negative about his hosts. It was only during the final interview that he quietly admitted that he “didn’t like his land-lady.” When speaking about his homestay, *Ryan’s* body language expressed an obvious measure of discomfort and disappointment. While a better understanding of *Ryan’s* experience might have been beneficial to the study, the researcher chose to respect *Ryan’s* discomfort and not pursue this topic with him.

Renata

Renata’s homestay host, *Ms. Janine Smith* (pseud.) was single, retired, and also had an “empty nest” with spare bedrooms that she sometimes rented to students. As noted above, during *Renata’s* first week at the homestay, she spent time with *Annette*, another international student. After *Annette* moved out at the beginning of September, *Renata* felt very isolated.

This was not for lack of friends. *Renata* had made pre-arrival contact with other girls from China who would be attending Riverside EAP, and she met up with them when they all arrived at the school. Most of her friends lived on campus, and *Renata* felt frustrated being so far from her new schoolmates and from campus activities, also about having to get up at six in the morning in order to arrive at *The EAP School* for eight o’clock. Additionally *Renata* felt obligated to leave campus in

order to be home for the evening meal because these evening meals had already been paid for in her homestay fees. However, needing to go home for supper interfered with her ability to engage in evening activities on campus

Renata expressed that being alone was good for studying, but it was lonely and boring. Although Ms. Smith was congenial, *Renata* thought it was hard to find things to talk about because they had limited common ground. In fact, it was Janine's adult children and her grandchildren who engaged *Renata* in conversation, asking her about her family her city, and her life in China. *Renata* was delighted that the grandchildren spoke with her freely and shared their Hallowe'en candy with her.

Fortunately for *Renata*, she remained engaged in Chinese social media platforms, which enabled her to "meet" *Dani*, a young woman from China who was preparing to study EAP at a different school in *River City*. *Dani* had asked *Renate* for advice about accommodations, and *Renata* arranged with *Ms. Smith* that *Dani* would move into the other bedroom in the homestay. After *Dani* arrived, *Renata* was no longer lonely. She was particularly delighted that *Dani's* experiences with higher education in China were just like her own.

Dani became part of *Renata's* established circle of friends. *Dani's* presence enabled *Renata* to go out more confidently in her free time because, having *Dani* as a companion, she could get home safely when she stayed out after dark.

Nevertheless, *Renata* remained dissatisfied with living so far from campus. She applied for and was accepted to a campus college residence for her second term of study. By the time her application was approved, *Renata* she was beginning to feel some closeness with Janine, as a result of having asked Janine to teach her how to

cook. Nevertheless, *Renata* found that proximity to peers and to campus trumped the benefits of living in a Canadian household.

5.6.1.1 Issues Raised in the Homestay Data

5.6.1.2 Roommates

Leeann's narrative indicated that she was not prepared to negotiate solutions to the problems of daily life with her peers or her hosts. In the data that follows, it is will be shown that *Renata* and *Ryan* had the same aversion to confrontation.

5.6.1.3 Study Schedules

Leeann's roommates were undergraduate students whose timetables were quite different from her own. Her roommates had fewer class hours, and less homework, giving them free time in the evenings that *Leeann* did not have. In *Renata's* case, she said that it was unfair that she had to get up so early each morning. *Renata* lamented: "When I'm leaving for school, Dani is still in bed!"

5.6.1.4 Loneliness

Although all participants had periods of loneliness, this experience was particularly pronounced among the participants in homestays when there were no peers living in the same home. During the summer, *Leeann* had felt "a little lonely" because she had no peers at home. This factor, in combination with her low investment in friendships at Riverside left her feeling somewhat isolated. After *Annette* moved out, *Renata* had been lonely until *Dani* arrived. It is reasonable to conclude that participants in this study were mostly peer-focused in seeking meaningful interpersonal interaction.

Ryan experienced isolation not only in the absence of peers but also in his awkward relationship with his host family.

5.6.1.5 Rules of Conversation

Willingness for self-disclosure is fundamental to forming ties in the informal domain. (Turner et al., 2007, p. 369). Age and cultural differences may have been an invisible barrier to communication between participants and their homestay hosts. For example, *Janine* may have asked *Renata* personal questions, but may have received only brief answers, and may have interpreted such a reaction as an unwillingness to talk about herself. In turn, *Renata* may have been waiting for Ms. Smith to ask more questions, which might have countered *Renata's* culture-formed caution about over-sharing.

Another cultural difference that Canadian hosts might not be aware of is the different function of mealtimes in Canada and in China. In Canada, family mealtimes are social, whereas in China mealtimes are generally not a time for conversation. These factors may have led to “crossed wires” in the communication between *Renata* and her “host mother,” and neither of them may have been aware of these differences in cultural norms.

In *Leeann's* case, during the school year, the *Boehms* and the students ate together at the dining room table and talked together about the day's events. In the summer, *Leeann* and her host parents dined in front of the television, watching and discussing the news while they ate. Given how *Leeann* was cautious about not offering opinions that might sound defiant, it stands to reason that she was also cautious about what she said to her host parents, given the difference not only in

culture but also in age of her homestay hosts. *Ryan's* homestay hosts were Ukrainian, and so there may have been additional differences in the rules of interaction invisible to the people involved.

5.6.1.6 The Homestay Experience: Successful or not?

One may say that *Leeann's* homestay was mostly successful. When she returned from her short summer stay in China, she had some new goals that included learning to cook her preferred foods, and eventually leaving the homestay and renting an apartment with another Chinese student.

Upon *Leeann's* return, there was also evidence that her host family had come to feel more like a family. In September, *Leeann* had agonized over the problem she faced in her desire to belong to the varsity fencing team whose practice hours were Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 7-11 pm. These hours conflicted with the values *Leeann* had been taught by her mother, which was that she should be home in bed by eleven o'clock, in order to have good health. *Leeann* had discussed her problem about the fencing practice schedule with her parents, with the researcher, with her fencing friends in China and Toronto, and with her homestay parents. On the first evening of practice, *Mr. Boehm* offered to pick *Leeann* up at eleven o'clock from her practice site. Subsequently, he drove her home from every practice, for which *Leeann* was very grateful. His willingness to make this effort may have been the result of their sustained relationship. Many homestay relationships are brief, as students move on to other accommodation, but *Leeann* had returned to the *Boehm* house for a second year.

Renata's homestay was partially successful. One failure to communicate took place during *Renata's* second month in Canada, when *Ms. Smith* went to California for two weeks. *Renata's* homestay contract included the provision of breakfast and supper each day. *Renata* expressed shock and dismay, tinged with anger, when she reported that *Ms. Smith* had left her twenty dollars in case she needed to buy food during that two-week period. Not being able to cook at all, she knew that twenty dollars was not enough. However, while *Janine* was away, *Renata's* friends took her to the Chinese supermarket near campus where they bought familiar foods to cook in *Renata's* homestay kitchen. It was then that *Renata* became determined that she must learn how to cook.

Ryan's homestay was not at all successful, and he took the initiative to move elsewhere for his second term at Riverside.

5.6.2 Rented Houses

While mitigating the housing shortage for university students, communities have been radically changed by the presence of student-only houses. Speculators renovate single-family homes into overcrowded houses that are not kept with the same care as family homes. In many cases whole neighbourhoods have transformed into semi-slums with very few homes remaining untouched by the student-housing phenomenon. *Thomas* (20, China) and *Ryan* (20-China) had direct experience with living in this kind of arrangement.

Living on *Delaware Lane* caused *Ryan* to revise his assumptions about life in Canada. When he was in China he had thought that everyone in Canada had a nice house to live in, but after arriving he discovered that the reality was different.

Thomas

When he first arrived in River City, *Thomas* had shared a rented house with some other students from his Chinese high school who were also moving to *River City* to attend *Riverside*. They found a student house over Internet and students signed a lease together. This house was on *Delaware Lane* (pseud.) not far from Campus. At the Delaware house, one of the students moved out after her first term. The timing of her departure coincided with participant *Ryan's* search for a new place to live.

Ryan

When *Ryan* responded to an advertisement for a room in the house on *Delaware Lane*, he was surprised to discover that two other EAP School students were living there. *Ryan* and *Thomas*, who had not met during their first term of EAP, soon became fast friends. They said that their friendship was the result of common interests and attitudes, but there was also a matter of trust. *Thomas* said that he had been too naïve and trusting while living in Toronto. He said that some people had only pretended to be his friend and “had some purpose for him.” After they took advantage of him, the friendships ended. *Thomas* said he was disappointed in himself when people took advantage of him. For *Ryan*, meeting *Thomas* was the best part of having lived on Delaware Lane, and *Thomas* said that it was very rare to find a friend like *Ryan*. However, except for the proximity to campus, *Ryan* had disliked living in that house

Thomas and *Ryan* both discovered that living with a group of other Chinese students was not easy. *Ryan* said that his housemates were often noisy, disturbing

his studying, and that the kitchen was often left messy. *Thomas* talked about the tension in the home environment caused by one roommate, named *Connor* who always demanded to know where *Thomas* was going whenever he left the house. And *Connor* would get upset when *Thomas* made plans with other friends without consulting him. For *Ryan*, *Connor* was also a source of tension. At the end of their lease both *Ryan* and *Thomas* gave up on the shared house idea and moved out.

Summary: Rental Houses

In this study, only two of the ten participants had had the experience of living in a rented house, so one can only draw the most general observations from the data. The follow factors stand out:

Thomas and *Ryan*:

1. Had lived only with other Chinese nationals;
2. Had had very limited intercultural contact in their discretionary time;
3. Had no clear procedures for interpersonal conflict resolution with house mates on Delaware Lane, and
4. Had found the public transit system did not meet their expectations.

When comparing and contrasting these experiences with those of the other participants in this study, it becomes difficult to recommend shared house arrangements for EAP students in their first year of study-abroad

5.6.3 Off-Campus Apartments

Both *Ryan* and *Thomas* chose to lease apartments in a luxury high-rise complex, located on *Briarwood Boulevard*, not far from campus as the crow flies.

Their lease-mates were Chinese cross-border students with whom they had experienced no disharmony.

Ryan

At the time his interviews began, in July 2014, *Ryan* had been living on *Briarwood Boulevard* for just over two months. *Ryan's* suitemate *Ron (pseud.)*, was a quiet, serious student who came from *Ryan's* hometown. When *Ron* and *Ryan* met on their very first day at *The EAP School*, they felt an immediate connection. *Ryan* said: "In China we call it destiny. Two people meet and it's not planned but maybe the god wants us to meet."

Ryan said that he was very satisfied with this arrangement. Having common ground with *Ron* made living together harmonious. *Ryan* said: "we do almost everything together. Cooking, shopping, like, cleaning up our apartment and, yeah, everything." However, *Ron* had no interest in engaging with Canadian culture or using the English language at home, so *Ryan* depended on *Thomas* for engaging with life outside the apartment.

Ryan's misgivings about living at *Briarwood* were primarily regarding distance from campus and the infrequency of buses between the campus and his apartment. He had also some regret about *Ron's* unwillingness to practice English at home.

Thomas

Like *Ryan*, *Thomas* also moved to *Briarwood Boulevard*, where he lived in a different building. His apartment mate was *Liam*, an international student, also from China, who had lived at the Delaware house. *Thomas* said that his relationship with *Liam* was harmonious but not particularly close.

For *Thomas*, the location of *Briarwood Boulevard* was much more problematic than it was for *Ryan*. *Thomas* was enrolled in Business an affiliate college located on the opposite side of *Riverside* campus. Getting to and from the college by bus was much more complicated and time consuming than getting to *The EAP School*. It may be for this reason that *Thomas's* parents bought a car for him once he had graduated from *The EAP School* and was about to begin his courses at his faculty.

Summary

Ryan and *Thomas* were both very happy to leave behind the interpersonal disharmony they had experienced at the Delaware house. Neither student was able to resolve the conflicts brought about by sharing a house with other students. *Ryan* and *Thomas* attributed the conflicts in their house to regional differences in temperament as outlined above.

5.6.4 On-Campus Housing and Residence Life

The data from this study shows that the experiences of students living on campus, especially in residence was different from living off-campus in almost every possible way. In this section, the experiences of the three participants from Angola will be described first. After that *Mariana's* (Brazil, 24) experience of upper-year apartment life on campus will be described, and then there will be a description of campus life for *Hugh* and *Shayla*, both from China.

5.6.4.1 Angolan Scholarship Students

Students from Angola arrived at *Riverside* under a contract with *Luandoil* that offered them particular circumstances. For example, the contract ensured that their

scholarship students would be housed on campus for the entire duration of their study. According to *Nicola*, students the 2013 cadre would live in Melbourne Hall for their entire five years at Riverside.

Participants *Tiago* and *Silvino* of the 2014 cadre had to apply for third-term accommodation in a group, since they could not remain in *Preston* or *Queenston Halls*. They were fortunate enough to be accepted to share a three-bedroom suite in *Melbourne Hall*, remaining near their EAP School and near the *DeLair College* where they would study after finishing their EAP studies.

Nicola: Angolan Cadre 2013

According to *Nicola*, some parts of residence life were easier than others. She had many positive things to say about other students in her residence, who she said had helped her a lot, especially when her English was very limited. She also said that the floor leaders had been especially attentive to her needs, for example when *Caitlin (pseud)*, accompanied *Nicola* to the *North Mall*, showing her how to take the bus.

Nicola said that students in Melbourne Hall engaged in activities that helped students get to know one another, and that she and her non-Angolan peers often went to dinner together as a floor, reinforcing bonds of amity among students living in close proximity.

Nicola spent her first two terms sharing a double room with *Aemi Park (pseud.)* a Canadian student. The most difficult aspect of her residence life was learning how to co-exist with her roommate. *Aemi* regularly entertained her friends in their room, while *Nicola* was doing her homework, and even when *Nicola* was preparing to go to sleep. *Nicola* and *Aemi's* room had a single overhead light, which

Aemi left on well after *Nicola* went to bed and the light made it difficult for her to fall asleep. *Nicola's* EAP classes began first thing in the morning, four days a week, and like *Leannn*, she had several hours of homework most evenings. *Aemi's* schedule was not the same, allowing her to stay up later.

Nicola's attempts to communicate with *Aemi* about her needs resulted in tension between them. *Nicola* recalled crying on the telephone with her mother, saying "my roommate doesn't like me." It was not until *Nicola's* third month in residence that the floor leader became aware of the problem and arranged a meeting with *Aemi* and *Nicola* for conflict resolution. With *Caitlin's* support, *Nicola* could tell *Aemi* what she needed to say. *Aemi* was also able to feel understood. As a result of this meeting, a suitable compromise was found, and these roommates became very good friends.

There were added benefits to this friendship. When *Aemi's* parents, *Mr. and Mrs. Park* (pseud), came from Toronto to visit *Aemi* at school, they invited *Nicola* to go to dinner with them. When *Mrs. Park* telephoned her daughter, she also asked to speak with *Nicola*. *Aemi's* parents had emigrated to Canada from South Korea, and they understood what it was like to be far from home and family.

Residence life enabled *Nicola* to expand her contact with English speakers while maintaining a strong sense of belonging to her Angolan cohort. At the time of the interviews, in July and August of 2014, *Nicola* said that she was close to all her cadre, but had become especially close to *Daniela*, another scholarship student from Angola. Just as *Nicola* always been close with her sister, *Nicola* easily incorporated *Daniela* into her emotional life. Living in residence had made it easier for them to

extend their friendship beyond school. *Nicola* said that she and *Daniela* spent most of their hours together and that they encouraged one another when they were feeling particularly homesick. In the summer term, they became suitemates, which enhanced their already deep and close friendship.

Tiago and Silvino: Angolan Cadre 2014

In 2014, the 24 newly arrived students from Angola were housed in rooms in either *Preston Hall* or *Queenston Hall*, both modern buildings close to The EAP School, and not far from *Melbourne Hall*. *Silvino* was assigned to *Queenston* and *Tiago* to *Preston*. *Preston Hall* was the newest residence on campus specifically dedicated to first year students. According to participants, *Preston Hall* cafeteria offered a wider variety of food choices than all the other residence cafeterias. This cafeteria was also outfitted with a lounge and billiard tables and became a popular spot for the Angolan group to gather in the evenings after dinner.

Tiago and *Silvino* appreciated that *Preston Hall* cafeteria stayed open much later than the other cafeterias because they often felt hungry later in the evening, and could use their meal plan to purchase their food. The location of their residence halls, as well as the flexibility of the campus meal plan also gave them the additional option of taking meals at the 7-11 variety store or at Subway.

Tiago

Over the course of his interviews, *Tiago* seemed to be satisfied with living in *Preston Hall*. When the interviews commenced in early October 2014, *Tiago* had been in Canada for just under three weeks. He easily recalled the noisy and friendly greeting he received from his hall-mates when he arrived. However, he observed

that once he was no longer new, his floor mates paid little attention to him. In passing they would say “hi, how are you” without waiting for an answer. *Tiago* said that he found this confusing because in his country, if someone asked: “how are you?” they waited for the answer, but in Canada they did not. This was one of the main behaviours of his Canadian peers that puzzled him. At one point, he concluded that people in Angola were more sincere than Canadians. However, his floor mates did not exclude him when they were planning to go out together to one of the local eateries, and *Tiago* joined in with them if the timing of the invitation did not conflict with his homework schedule.

Tiago participated in the social life of his residence, but not in the drinking culture. He said: “When I go to a party I make sure I take my own drink.” *Tiago* said that his Canadian friends didn’t care whether he drank or not. *Tiago* said that he did not drink in Angola, and that he was not about to change this just because he was living in Canada.

In Preston Hall, *Tiago* shared a double room with *Peter Mehta* (pseud), a first-year student who had grown up in Mississauga, near Toronto. At first, during the early interviews, *Tiago* spoke of the positive aspects of living with Peter. For example, he had met *Peter’s* parents when they visited *Riverside*, and soon afterward *Peter’s* parents had invited him to Mississauga for the Thanksgiving weekend. *Mr. and Mrs. Mehta* had emigrated to Canada from India, and *Tiago* said that they remembered what it was like to be newcomers to Canada.

In Mississauga, *Tiago* experienced a typical Canadian suburb. When the weather was good, he spent time outside playing basketball with *Peter* and his two

younger brothers. When the weather grew cold, they went to the local community centre to play. Being able to get off campus and into a family environment provided many intercultural learning opportunities for *Tiago* that he would not have had living off-campus.

Peter's life in Mississauga did not resemble his life at university. *Tiago* explained that *Peter* was "really messy" and did not like to clean, and he frequently had lively drinking parties in the room they shared. As a first-year undergraduate, *Peter's* class timetable and workload was different from *Tiago's* intensive EAP program.

Tiago, whose language proficiency was stronger upon arrival than the other participants from Angola, had tried, without effect, to talk to *Peter* about the day-to-day messiness and about the frequent parties, *Tiago* complained to one of the floor leaders, who arranged a meeting. Out of this meeting, an agreement was forged regarding noise and mess. *Peter* agreed to leave the room and socialize with his buddies elsewhere from Sunday to Thursday, allowing *Tiago* to get the sleep he needed. On Friday and Saturday nights *Peter* could do as he pleased.

The meeting did little to change the issue of housekeeping in that *Peter* continued to be messy. *Tiago* described the situation in this way:

"When he's really messy he does clean. But after two days, like, the messiness starts. It's like a virus: there is no cure. There is medicine that regress, but it doesn't cure the disease. It's like a tree. If you cut the top, if there is root, it's gonna grow again."

It is possible to say that sharing a room with Peter was a mixed blessing. Through *Peter's* family, *Tiago* was able to participate in some weekend activities off campus. *Tiago* had observed how silent and empty Peter's Mississauga street was in comparison with any street in Luanda, and *Tiago* had the opportunity to observe, at close hand, the party culture that was a major component of the university experience at *Riverside*.

When asked what the best experience he had had in Canada, and the most difficult, *Tiago* took a deep breath and began a story of a cross-cultural encounter with residence culture and with a particular peer-to-peer interaction. *Tiago* recounted his experience as follows:

“There is this time, in my room, my suitemate throw a party. During the party they were drinking, screaming.... First I was playing computer games and then it seems like I was being anti-social 'cause I was there with my headphones playing computer games. And then I closing my computer and get out, closing my door.

“After a time, there were people passing out, and so on. And there were a girl who say: ‘your room is a mess, do you want to chill out?’ And I say ‘okay that’s fine.’ And so, we went out to her room, and when we got there we were making out. But since she was drunk, and I not, I kinda wasn’t feeling comfortable. If at least I would be drunk too, I could say we were both drunk, but I was completely sober and conscious. So, I say, okay, I gotta go.

“I’ve seen this scene in movies and I had a proof that it actually happens. And the incredible thing is, one day I was at UCC with my mentor.

And she was there in front of me, but she didn't say hi. I won't say ignore me, but she looked at my face, we looked each other, but she seemed not to remember me at all."

Tiago told the researcher that he would have been happy to get to know her, but not when she was drunk.

Tiago told his circle of friends about what had happened. He said that "they're making fun of me for being nice guy." His friends had said: "Oh, come on man, you are such a gay people. You had an amazing chance and you let it go."

Tiago thought he had acted correctly and had defended himself. He told them "You know, like, first we gonna be here, like, for six years, and we're gonna get to that point where we have a Canadian girlfriend and so on.... and talk to women and so on."

When his friends continued to tease him, he said "Come on, I'm not like this... I wasn't feeling comfortable." *Tiago* explained to the researcher that he had been thinking "I wouldn't like if someone will do this to my sister. I have nieces, cousins, I wouldn't like if someone will do this to my cousin."

Silvino

In Preston Hall, *Silvino* lived with three other Canadians in quad-style suite. The floorplan of a quad has four bedrooms, connected by a common area with a small kitchen alcove. Each student has his or her own room, and shares a bathroom with just one other student.

Silvino got along with his immediate roommate *Leonard*. About *Leonard*, he said: "I think he's the Chinese descent, but he's Canadian. He's very cool. He respect my space and I respect his space. We live in the.... yes... peace."

Silvino added: "In the beginning I don't understand anything he say to me, but now is different. We speak sometimes just 'Goodnight, good morning, how's it going. It's good?' Just. I understand some things but no all. He speak very quickly."

Silvino said that he was very frustrated overall with talking with Canadian peers. He said he was very happy at school because he could speak and understand, but as soon as he got back to his residence he didn't understand anything.

Silvino said that when he arrived at his floor, the floor leader had said that if *Silvino* needed anything he would help him. During the second interview, *Silvino* said:

"I think I will ask for him to do something, because my suite mate every time listen to music. He make so much noise. I don't like. I think that Friday he don't have a class. And some holiday, he don't have a class. But I have a class." *Silvino* said he had tried to talk with him about the music but had difficulty communicating in English.

Silvino also talked about the party culture. He said that he was invited to a party by *Tyson*, one of his suitemates and met some students from other parts of campus. He did not enjoy himself. He said: "I meet his friends, but some people here are drunk. I don't like this. It is very difficulty for me to stay with him sometimes, because when I go to the party, I don't like this." After that experience *Silvino* had found it to be "very complicated to talk [with *Tyson*] for a time, because we like different things."

He said "I don't drink in my country, I will don't drink here. I am the same person. I will not change. Some things I will change, my mentality, my habits, but this is not." He added: "It is very difficult to make a friend if you don't drink."

Silvino had formed some early opinions based upon the behaviors he had seen in residence. He said:

“Part of the people that study here live in the one world that does not exist. I think the people that grow up without any problems -- I see young people drinking, smoking -- don’t know how important are the things.”

He continued:

“I’m here to study and know that study is very important. Sometime I think that trouble can teach the people how is the important things. I think that I know the other side of life. If the people know the other side of life, the people maybe will have more responsibility. I think that some people here just know one side of life. Real life is very difficult.”

Silvino’s critique echoes the theme of responsibility that is found in the narratives of most of the participants in this study.

Living in *Queenston Hall* allowed *Silvino* proximity to other Angolan students. He had begun to establish a regular circle of friends, with whom he spent most of his free time.

Summary: Angolan Scholars in Residence

Each of the three Angolan participants in this study had unique experiences while sharing space with one or more Canadian students and while living among Canadian students in their residence halls. These experiences were rich in intercultural contact and ranged from wonderful to difficult, but provided opportunities for friendship. For *Silvino* and *Nicola*, communication was especially difficult upon arrival. For *Tiago*, language was less of an obstacle than the differences

in lifestyle. All narratives demonstrated the specific benefits of living in the halls that had been chosen for them: proximity to school and services, proximity to one another, and proximity to their peers.

5.6.4.2 Upper Year Apartments on Campus

Mariana

When *Mariana* learned that she had been chosen to study at Riverside University she “thought it was better to live in the residence” than to have to deal with a rental contract. She had arranged to share a two-bedroom apartment with *Gina*, also from Brazil, in *Middlesex Hall*. *Mariana* said that her hall was “very nice,” and housed at least ten other exchange students from Brazil. *Gina* was also in the language program, and the two students walked to school together.

Not all exchange students from Brazil chose to live on campus. As the only volunteer in this study from Brazil, it was possible to learn just a little about the living conditions of other EAP students from Brazil from her narratives.

What was most interesting in the data from *Mariana* was an example of how living quarters can influence the formation of a student. *Mariana* said she had been very introverted throughout her early education and while she was in the college that prepared her for medical school. She said: “I was so shy, and I didn’t like to talk so much with people. I was very dedicated and quiet, and I was one of best students of my college. Of course, this changed. I’m not so shy now and I don’t have many difficulties to talk with people that I don’t know yet.”

It was when she went to Porto Alegre to attend a medical university on scholarship that she began to change. In Porto Alegre, *Mariana’s* residence was

home to twenty-four students who shared cooking facilities, laundry and a coffee room. *Mariana* said that when she wanted to study, she closed the door and no one disturbed her. However, if she was relaxing or working less intensely, she left her door open and students passing by could drop in and spontaneously say hello. The coffee room was a popular spot where people could mingle when they wanted to get out of their rooms. This was missing in *Mariana's* experience during her EAP learning period.

Mariana had not participated in any of the formal/informal residence activities that were advertised on the residence website, and knew only the other Brazilian students who lived there.

The coffee shop on campus was no substitute for a coffee room. *Mariana* had been to Tim Horton's on campus, but she had gone alone, and had merely taken her coffee back to her room. This outlet was part of a food court and had neither the ambiance of a sit-in coffee shop, nor the personal warmth of a drop-in coffee room, and was it not open in the evenings. The food services frequented by other EAP students in the evenings were located at the other end of campus from her hall. The only services near her residence that were open late were the library and the campus bar, where the Brazilian group gathered at least once a week, if not more often.

Thus, *Mariana's* social contact outside of school consisted of the Brazilian students in her building, and those students who threw parties off-campus. While *Mariana* said she preferred shared activities that were not centred on drinking, she had not yet discovered any among her co-national peers.

Aside from privacy, *Mariana's* apartment allowed her to cook for herself, and for *Gina* who was not an experienced cook. During meals, they talked about “funny facts during the week.” Here is evidence that humour is important in forming bonds of friendship.

Mariana thought that having a same-culture friendship was useful because both parties are going through the same experience and they could share the burden of anxiety and uncertainty in the cross-border experience. Their apartment was beneficial in terms of offering privacy and independence, but it didn't give *Mariana* the same kind of social access she had enjoyed at her residence in Porto Alegre.

5.6.4.3 On Campus Residential Experiences: *Hugh* and *Shayla*

Hugh and *Shayla's* on-campus housing arrangements had significant differences. *Hugh's* residence, *Franklin Hall* was a quad-style residence, like *Silvino's*. At *Delair Hall*, *Shayla* had her own room and shared a bathroom with one other student.

Shayla

According to *Shayla's* agent, there had been no spaces available in residence at Riverside when she was making her application, and she rejected his suggestion of living at a homestay. It was only because *Shayla's* mother had a friend who had studied in Canada that she learned that she could apply to residences at the affiliated colleges on campus. With this friend's assistance, *Shayla* was able to get accommodation at *Delair Hall*, an all women's residence connected to *Delair College*.

Shayla described her life at *Delair Hall* in both positive and negative terms. Despite not really liking the food, she took her meals at the *Delair Hall Cafeteria*. She always took breakfast and dinner alone and took lunch with *Renata*. Neither she nor *Renata* felt at all comfortable with saying hello to the people around them in the cafeteria. When asked if she had ever said hello to anyone sitting next to her in that cafeteria, *Renata* shook her head vigorously, eyes widening in an expression of shock. The other girls in *Renata* and *Shayla's* trust circle ate at their own cafeterias.

Shayla said that she spoke very rarely with the other young women on her floor, even though she attended all the floor meetings. *Shayla* knew the floor leader “a little bit”, but seldom saw her. *Shayla* attributed the absence of contact with her floormates to keeping a different study schedule because they were in a different program.

From the start, *Shayla* had felt left out of social and orientation activities. She said that during orientation and homecoming weeks, activities were organized by faculty, and she did not belong to any of them. While other international students attending *Delair* had a week of activities to get to know one another before the domestic students arrived, *Shayla* never spoke of having been included in these pre-term activities. As an EAP student, she “fell through the cracks” in terms of formal support.

Shayla was disappointed when introduced herself to the student, *Hallie* with whom she shared a bathroom. *Hallie* acknowledged the introduction but said very little else to her or anyone else on the floor. *Shayla* regretted that *Hallie* was not friendly. If *Shayla's* housing arrangements had been more like *Nicola's* or *Hugh's*, she

would have had exposure to more Canadians, and may have had a very different experience.

Hugh

Hugh's housing in *Franklin Hall* afforded him plenty of opportunity to engage with Canadian students. He seemed pleased about living in a quad because it suited his curious and social nature. This arrangement offered him the chance to get to know three Canadian quad-mates, and make friends with others on his floor. He chose to take meals with others who spoke English. *Hugh's* personality and conditioning were such that he was willing talking with someone he didn't know, much to the benefit of his intercultural experience.

Hugh's quad-mates were *Mario*, *Gavin*, and *Chris*. *Hugh* said that he often sat with them at dinnertime, and there was often a party in their room. *Hugh* got to know some of his roommates' friends, and sometimes went places with them. *Hugh* spoke of one occasion when he was sitting and reading in the common room of his quad. A student *Hugh* did not know yet came by looking for *Gavin*. *Hugh* was curious as to why *Gavin's* friend was wearing a suit, and upon learning that he was going to a party at the Faculty of Business, asked if he could come along. The friend said yes, as long as *Hugh* wore a suit. *Hugh* described what happened next:

“And we go to the party. I join and ... I don't know what's the name of the party but everybody dress up in ties, shirts... of the business. Because two of my friends – roommates *Gavin*, *Mario*, and *Jeff* in *Melbourne Hall* -- they are Business, and me too. So, we join the party.

Living in a quad with students from a different culture was not without

difficulties. *Hugh* found it difficult to study or sleep on weeknights when people gathered in their common room to have a party. Their unit was popular with the other students because *Gavin* played the guitar. In this way, *Hugh* struggled with the same type of conflict experienced by *Leeann* in her homestay, and by *Nicola*, *Silvino* and *Tiago* in their residence rooms. Furthermore, *Chris* was not happy when he found *Hugh's* underwear hung up to dry in their common bathroom. *Chris* told *Hugh* to use the washer and the dryer for these things, something not normally done in Chinese culture.

Hugh and his quad-mates resorted to the conflict resolution support that was part of the agreement signed by every student living in residence. A meeting was held, in the presence of a floor leader or “Don” in which each person could speak about their concerns, and compromises could be forged. *Hugh's* roommates agreed that from Monday to Thursday, guitar-parties would be taken to some other part of the hall out of respect for *Hugh's* 8 am. classes, and *Hugh* had to overcome a lifetime of conditioning and wash all of his clothes in the manner acceptable to his roommates.

5.7 Beyond Campus

All three participants from Angola had attended church in their early period in Canada. A pastor from an Evangelical Church had learned of Angolan students at Riverside, and arranged to drive a handful of students, including *Nicola*, to Wednesday youth group and Sunday Services. *Silvino* found a Pentecostal Church online and went three times per week, alone. *Silvino* said that the people at church were kind. He also said that he could understand the adult speakers better than his Canadian age-mates at church. Both *Nicola* and *Silvino* lamented that there were very

few young people at church.

On Thanksgiving, Hugh had been invited by his Angolan classmates to attend church with them. He went with enthusiasm, and described the sermon during an interview, and spoke about the warm feeling he had from the Canadian and Angolan members of the Church.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to explore the perceptions participants had of their experiences in an intercultural academic environment in Canada while attending and EAP program. Anecdotes illustrate the ways in which intercultural learning was enhanced or impeded. In the following chapter, the key dimensions of the lived-experience of these participants will be presented thematically in order to illustrate the factors most salient to their intercultural learning.

Chapter Six: Thematic Analysis

6.1. Inductive Analysis and Presentation of Categories Grounded in the Data

Introduction

This chapter presents emergent themes and patterns regarding opportunities for and constraints upon intercultural learning in the personal, social, and academic lives of the participants. With every effort to give fair representation of the findings, the grouping of emergent themes formed five basic categories.

Emergent Categories: Factors which Influence Intercultural Learning Opportunities	
Pragmatics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the ability to communicate effectively in the various contexts that arose in the lives of the participants;
Living Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the circumstances in which participants were housed: on or off campus, with or without access to intercultural peers in the home environment;
Values and Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the values and drives held by participants as reflected in their decisions and time investment;
Others and Othering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the degree to which participants placed themselves and others into essential categories that helped or hindered intercultural interaction;
Intercultural and Language Anxieties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the degree to which communication and cross-cultural tie-formation were inhibited by language anxieties or cross-cultural uncertainties.

Table 6.1 Emergent Categories

In this chapter, each of these categories will be clarified and placed in context. These categories overlap one another as, for example, participants' individual schemas of

essential categories such as gender and age, including those formed by language barriers, influenced the types of persons participants were most and least likely to engage.

6.1.1. Pragmatics

All participants, regardless of level of intake proficiency, reported having ambiguous or perplexing situations involving communication norms and the use of local expressions of English. These experiences fall into the category of language pragmatics.

Pragmatics	<p>Challenges:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How to initiate and sustain conversations (What do I say next?) with classmates, other students, teachers and strangers 2. Why do Canadians strangers smile on the street but not on the bus? 3. Why do Canadians say “how are you?” but not wait for the answer? 4. Understanding implicit meanings: What is the correct response for “Have a nice day”? 5. Don’t they want to talk to me?
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Table 6.1.1 Pragmatics

In the field of linguistics, pragmatics is concerned with the relationship between language expressions, their users, and the environment in which they are used. Yun (2015) described pragmatics as “the study of language use in interactions and its appropriateness according to the given context” (p. 7). Informal speech, such as that used by college-age students in Canada, differs from speech taught in schools abroad, leaving newly arrived participants baffled by what people say to them and by how they should respond. In the communicative method of language teaching, these pieces of local formal and informal speech are called “functions.”

Functions of speech are specifically taught when instructors use the communicative method, with the objective of supporting learners' development of *communicative competence* (Kim, 1998; in Olaniran, B., (1996)).

Keckés (2014) states that knowledge of “1) intention, 2) norms and cultural models and 3) role of context” are fundamental to successful communication (i).

This data indicates that opportunities to acquire this knowledge were hit and miss for the participants of this study, as evidenced by *Mariana* and *Silvino's* uncertainties about greetings and partings, especially non-literal speech acts.

Mariana said:

“Some expressions I used to hear, I didn't have idea how to answer people. In the first days, people said to me, “Have a good day,” and I didn't know what to answer. It was strange.”

Unless a learner has been specifically taught the meaning of non-literal speech acts, he or she will be confused. Greetings and farewells are made up of many non-literal speech acts. Most of the time “hi, how are you?” is not a question, but a marker of opening communication, except when it isn't. *Silvino* said that in Angola such a question requires an answer, and is an invitation for conversation. *Silvino* noted students rushing past and saying this type of greeting, and not stopping to hear the answer, behaviour that led him to believe his Canadian peers were insincere.

“Have a nice day” serves the communicative function of politely closing an exchange, without taking an interest in whether that day will indeed be nice. Not having been taught this expression *Mariana* did not know what to say even though Portuguese and Spanish have some similar expressions. In this example, *pragmatic*

transfer of knowledge from a first to a second language did not take place. This is example supports Kecskes's (2014) assertion that "mutual understanding of intercultural pragmatics" is essential for effective cross-cultural interaction. EAP courses do not focus on basic pragmatics, and local Canadian pragmatics cannot be learned in the home county, leaving barriers to communication caused by gaps in local knowledge of communication norms in specific situations.

The field of pragmatics also includes the way eye contact, hand positions, and the way a person sits or stands convey meaning in different cultures, and a listener from a different culture may wrongly interpret the intention of another speaker based upon his or her body language. All the Angolan participants interpreted eye contact and a smile as an invitation to speak, and were each puzzled when someone smiled at them and then just walked away.

However, EAP education does not, by nature, focus on pragmatic factors beyond the academic setting. As Dooley (2010) pointed out, intensive EAP courses have very dense programs already, leaving little, if any, time for non-academic teaching content. The participants in this study would have benefitted from specific instruction about cross-cultural peer behaviours and language use outside the classroom. Those participants who had had the most after-school English language education in their home country, *Hugh*, *Tiago* and *Mariana*, showed the greatest capacity to take advantage of the informal intercultural contexts they encountered or sought out.

Nothing, however, prepared *Thomas* for his interactions with American border guards. When he was asked "what is your business in Buffalo?" he had

responded “No business,” to which the inspector said “What’s the matter with you? Are you drunk?” *Thomas’s* only way to make sense of these encounters was to blame himself for being too passive. It is more probable that this inspector thought *Thomas* was merely rude.

Politeness

The data shows that rules of politeness cannot be taken for granted across cultures. Participants in this study had to worry about not only native speaker norms, but also the norms of their EAP school peers, with rules of politeness being among the primary concerns. Both Leeann (China) and Nicola (Angola) said they wished they had a better understanding of how to not offend others. They wondered what were acceptable topics for conversation, acceptable opinions to hold, and acceptable ways of putting across an idea to their intercultural peers. The data confirms that the EAP classroom provided ample experience with acceptable modes of academic exchange, but not necessarily those of informal domain. Nicola said:

“When I am with Canadians I feel more like, afraid to kind of to express my ideas and my feelings. Because maybe they gonna judge me: that’s not the way Canadian people think or say the things. I feel kind of afraid to do something because yeah maybe I’m afraid that they are going to judge me.

Strategies and Opportunities

Observation and mimicry appeared to be the most frequently used strategy employed by participants for learning how people communicate. Those living in residence had the most role models to choose from. Lacking Canadian roles models

except for his teachers, *Ryan* (20, China) described how he used mimicry in order to fit in with his Angolan classmates in a way that allowed him to go beyond the classroom with them. *Thomas*, also off-campus, was very lucky to having Tomi as a sympathetic local peer to help him acquire local knowledge and fit in with his classmates. Tomi himself was experienced in straddling the cultural divide between East and West was an ideal friend for an Asian international student.

Rules of Reciprocity

One of the communicative norms that stood out as mis-matched between cultures was the role of reciprocity in sustaining conversations. *Mariana* described her efforts to engage in conversation with the Chinese female students, but her efforts were rejected. *Shayla* had the same experience with Jangsoon, soon giving up on him. In the data, we saw significant discourses in Chinese communication norms such as “we like to listen, but we don’t like to talk very much.” This culturally seated reservation about self-disclosure not only affected Chinese students’ marks, but also their ability to form ties of friendship across cultures. In contrast, both *Silvino* and *Tiago* had positive experiences with their grad students from Libya and Syria respectively, because of reciprocal interest in talking to one another.

The importance of reciprocal interest between peers was made increasingly clear throughout the analysis of the data and features large in the conclusions. Language learners need to be very motivated to communicate if they are to overcome the linguistic and cultural obstacles they encounter.

6.1.2 Living Conditions

Housing

Living Conditions	Residence, rental, or homestay? Residence <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Roommates: conflicts & opportunities for inclusion- Canadian lifestyle, e.g. noise & alcohol Rental & Homestay <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Limited language opportunities- Walking alone at night- Irregular public transportation- The Canadian winter
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Table 6.1.2 Living Conditions

The topic of living conditions was presented at length in the previous chapter. Analysis of the data in this study indicates that without a doubt, housing plays a prominent role in enabling or constraining intercultural learning. Participants benefitted when they had opportunities to connect, during their personal time, with peers of their home culture and those of the host culture.

On Campus

Participants who were living in residence, especially those in a shared room or in a quad-style suite had the most intercultural interaction. The Luandoil Scholarship students found both benefits and challenges during their first eight months in Canada when they lived in close proximity to their Canadian roommate or their suitemates. Each of these participants had needed help from their floor leaders to resolve conflicts with their roommates about noise.

The roommates all liked to entertain their friends in their rooms, and in the case of the male students *Tiago* and *Silvino*, being around drunken peers created

awkward situations. *Hugh* also was put off by the party-culture he saw around him. It is worth noting that participants who did not live in such intimate proximity to the party lifestyle did not have to contend with its complications.

The jewel of experience living with strangers is that conflict is inevitable. Residence leaders are prepared for it, and expect it. It is much to their credit that the participants in this study were able to learn how to negotiate compromises, which is a valuable skill for people living abroad, young or old. Conflict resolution in each case succeeded in addressing the problems without destroying the relationships. *Nicola* expressed it this way:

“In the beginning it was so annoying why I have to be with people with different nationality. But now I really understand why. She taught me a lot of things, new things, not just Canadian, but also from her culture. And also I become very close to [her] family. Sometime when they came we talked a lot, we share different things, and that was really good.”

This experience of conflict resolution could be described as an important bridge between living as a son or daughter in a family, and living among peers, developing responsibility, and becoming an adult. These four participants who participated in mediated conflict resolution were those who had had the most exposure to intercultural peers, and as a result, to intercultural learning.

The students in residence, except *Shayla* and *Mariana*, received invitations to residence events formal and informal. *Shayla* attended the residence events held by her friend *Helen*. *Shayla's* life embodied the needed for common ground in the formation of friendships. Although she had comfort and privacy, and she didn't feel

part of the floor. *Delair Hall* had not been prepared for the needs of students in the EAP program, a situation that should be rectified for future students. For *Mariana* and *Shayla*, the experience of living in residence provided neither the same opportunities nor outcomes. The differences in opportunities can be directly tied to the differences in the architecture of their living spaces.

Off Campus

From the three participants with homestay experiences, it appears that most homestays are not a good fit for language-learning undergraduates studying abroad for the first time, especially those from China. Each reported some degree of strain when their living conditions did not meet their expectations. In the best of circumstances, the homestay provides an enriched environment for using English. However, in this study, the three participants living in their homestays found their relationships with their hosts limited by differences in age and interests. All experienced loneliness in the absence of peers, and none felt they could bring up concerns with their homestay hosts. *Leeann*, however, had no reservations about telling the researcher about her frustrating experiences at the homestay, which indicates *Leeann's* perception of her relationship with the researcher was quite different from that she had with her hosts. The context of the interviews gave her more liberty to speak frankly

The data showed that multi-student houses offered very little in terms of intercultural experiences and a lot of unresolved interpersonal stress that these participants had never been taught how to deal with. Not all students in this house respected their housemates. Problems included roommate noise and mess, and

some forms of bullying, without recourse to means of conflict resolution. According to *Ryan*, this was not the only Mandarin-speaking house to fail. Cultural habits of conflict avoidance, submission, and deference to authority most likely made this type of housing unsustainable.

The apartment dwellers off-campus had household harmony, but making Canadian friends was a matter of luck. For all off-campus dwelling participants indicated that shortcomings in their city and intercity transportation systems were a limiting factor in meeting their social and personal needs. These conditions are not ideal for young people away from home for the first time, and who benefit strong bonds with like-minded peers in order to overcome the obstacles inherent in undergraduate study-abroad.

The distance from campus and long transit waits discouraged participants from taking advantage of campus community resources in the evenings and on weekends, especially in the Canadian winters with short hours of daylight and sometimes bitter cold.

Summary

The above section describes in a general way, the way in which a participant's housing choices affected his or her opportunities for intercultural experience. The most salient factors are shown in the contrast between living among culturally different Others and living among same-culture peers. The data shows that living in a homestay environment does not guarantee intercultural learning or intercultural ties. The data shows that living in a same-culture arrangement while attending EAP classes generally supports the formation same-

culture ties. Proximity to Canadian students is an essential -- but not necessarily sufficient as a condition for intercultural learning in the informal domain.

6.1.3 Values and Priorities

This category is the messiest of the categories because there are a number of discourses that appear in the data that contrast or overlap in different ways. This category and the one that follows speaks to participant identities, of what makes them who they are some factors of which are visible. The two main discourses are about independence, and about belonging.

Values and Priorities	Psycho-social Identities: Independence vs. Affiliation Being “the same: - Prior socialization towards independence or to group membership Becoming different: - Discourses of “independence” as a desirable quality - Willingness or ability to trust or to bond across sameness and difference
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Table 6.1.3 Values and Priorities

All five students from China made mention of the value placed on independence and self-sufficiency as a goal of studying abroad. *Ryan* was disappointed in himself for not being as independent as he had expected to be after a year in Canada. *Ryan* had shown a lot of courage in choosing to go abroad and arrive in an unfamiliar city in an unfamiliar land. He had left other housing arrangements to live independently with *Cho*. Perhaps his disappointment was that he did not feel linguistically independent enough to make his way in his degree courses. He was afraid to not fit in.

Discourses of belonging appeared in all of the participant accounts. *Shayla* and *Renata* rapidly latched onto each other and onto a circle of friends who had much in common. It appears that the more these students thought they had in common the better friends they thought they could be. This raises the question: how similar must one be to be similar enough to be a friend? Different persons in this study had different tolerances for difference and inclusion. *Hugh* said hello to everyone and accepted invitations to parties and to church. *Mariana* was open to friendship regardless of gender, culture, or age.

Leeann had wanted to belong to the university, and had believed she would be okay at *Riverside*, and would make new friends. However, she became bogged down in a negative state of mind because of her rude reception at the airport and because she had thought *The EAP School* had treated her unjustly. She said that instead of expanding her comfort zone, it had become smaller, as she fled to Toronto most weekends to be among people she had known in Beijing. If she had lived on campus, she would have had many more opportunities to form study groups, invest in social contact with others on the fencing team, learn skills of negotiation and compromise and learn to overcome her fear of sounding defiant.

One of the values that stood out among the participants was a preference for social activity that was not centred on alcohol. *Mariana* attended the frequent parties and nightclub trips of her Brazilian collective, while wishing for something different. None of other participants went to the campus bar. Instead, they spent time with their friends at the gym, at the cafeteria and at the mall. Both *Tiago* and *Silvino* were adamant about not changing their habit of not drinking alcohol. An

internationalizing campus should have events that recognize that the drinking culture is not universal among university students, and actively promoting substance-free events would also serve the students who have yet to reach the age of majority.

It sounds ironic, but for most participants, their greatest source of independence was in the relationships they formed, being as *Tiago* said “alone, but not alone” and rather than purely dependent or independent, become inter-dependent.

6.1.4 Others and Othering

It has become common to use the noun *Other* to refer to individuals and groups who are perceived as different based on one or more essential physical, social, or cultural characteristics, including age, gender, race, religion. In the area of intercultural studies, it is a synonym for *difference*. As a verb *to other* is used when talking about how subjects position people into categories that emphasise difference, usually, but not always, in a negative way. This word encapsulates the process of discriminating between self and others.

Others and Othering	<p>Others = Observing difference (neutral) Othering = Judging (usually negative)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Underlying discourses of difference - Observing difference vs projecting differences - Reverse othering: criticizing the home culture
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Table 6.1.4

Othering creates categories of “like me” and “not like me” and differs from individual to individual, but also from one in-group to another. The data shows that participants most often talked about otherness as cultural difference, perhaps

as a reflection of the way the research questions were posed, perhaps as a reflection that difference across culture was in the very fabric of the study-abroad experience. The preference for the company of people with similar traits is not surprising, and participants needed to be flexible enough to be aware of difference in others, but still be able to seek and find similarities.

For participants, the drive to spend their discretionary time with same-culture peers and the drive toward intercultural connections were sometimes, but not always, at odds. For example, during break-times, most relaxed into their home language, but two in particular, *Ryan* and *Hugh* made an effort to get to know their Korean and Japanese (same-gender) peers.

Ryan and *Nicola* were among the participants who talked about how not knowing the culture of their classmates served as an obstacle to conversation. *Ryan* used mimicry as a way to accept and be accepted. We also hear him voice his expectation that international students would be visibly different and to have less than full fluency in English, like him. When he encountered a classroom of international students who spoke English confidently and presented Euro-typical faces his image of what an international student looks and sounds like was challenged. He had felt one among many at *The EAP School*, but as one alone among these other cross-border students.

Ryan, *Leeann* and *Nicola*, all at the end of their third term in Canada, spoke about feeling intimidated by native speakers of English, placing them in a category of people capable of judging them or ridiculing them, despite never having actually been treated poorly by any native speaker in Canada.

The second major category of Othering was based on age. Participants were peer-focused when seeking out social contacts, and imagined friendships across cultures to be with age-mates. Church-going participants commented on the lack of young people at their churches, and homestay dwellers felt isolated in the absence of same-age peers. Older adults, for these young adults, were in the category of *Other*, because of their difference in age and interests.

A silent but present category of Othering was race. *Tiago*, when talking about an experience in which he had been the only Angolan on an elevator at the library said that he had felt lost and out of place.

The data shows that othering also took place within national cultures. All three male Chinese students talked about implicit barriers to association with people from certain parts of China. *Renata* and *Shayla*, however, had no reservations about befriending female students from those same parts of China. The data also showed gender as a significant category of *othering* that served to impede tie formation within and across cultures.

All participants formed some type of race, age and gender bounded trust-circle, although in the EAP classroom, some participants actively tried to form friendships across these boundaries. *Mariana* made efforts to make friends across language, gender, culture and age differences but was shut out by her counterparts' reluctance to cross the barrier from the impersonal to the personal.

Mariana's speculation that it was easier for her Brazilian peers to speak about personal matters because they could help one another may apply across the spectrum of difference and othering. It may be that participants judged people

who were like them to be more useful to them in their daily lives than people who were *Other*. A perception of being able to give and receive help may be key to tie-formation. Participants expressed the most appreciation for and acceptance of people from whom they had received some kind of help.

For *Shayla* and *Renata*, the more similar two people were, the more able they were to be friends. *Shayla* mentioned on more than one occasion that the girls on her floor were in a different program than she was, and blamed different study schedules for not knowing any of them. At the time of the study, she was close to the EAP girls she knew, and closest to the ones in her own class.

A kind of reverse-othering took place when *Thomas* rejected his same-culture classmates in his first-year courses. He framed their culture-normative reserve as unfriendliness. In contrast, *Leeann's* tie-formation in her main campus courses was with same-culture peers, and she was at risk of never developing intercultural friendships of any consequence.

Some participants were able to overcome difference with openness and curiosity. EAP students like *Farrah*, from *Tiago's* class, and participant *Mariana*, who take an interest in the cultures of their classroom peers, encourage their peers to talk about themselves forming ties while practicing English. However, for most of these participants, during the time of the data collection, openness and curiosity were not enough. Ten months after her arrival in Canada, *Nicola* said:

“I think I have to change my mind to start hanging out more, going out to meet new people. And also, because I’m a little bit shy and sometimes I don’t feel comfortable to don’t be with people who aren’t my old friends.

I really want to get more Canadian friends and more other culture friends.”

Hugh arrived in Canada open to and curious about cultural *Others* and embraced opportunities to engage with it. He said:

“On Thanksgiving ... I visited *Basilio* and *Lauro*... also my classmate, and they are going to Church, and I go with them. And me, Chinese, and four Angolan students, we go to the church. It was a great meal party, and Canadian people and Angola friend, but just me, one Chinese.”

In this account, *Hugh* acknowledged the *differences* among the people at the church, but expressed being among these *Others* as novel, and delightful.

Hugh had observed that for some students, *Othering* was an obstruction to engagement. He said:

“One of my friends, he has been here for... 12 months and he still in ELC. He told me he’s hard to make friends with foreigners because he think the spirit and some background of them is different. It’s he, he think it’s hard to make friends with foreigners.”

The data shows that ignorance of *Others* feeds stereotypes which can be hurtful. For example, more than one of the Angolan students were perturbed by Canadian students’ lack of knowledge about their homeland. *Nicola* said that people in Canada thought that Angolans lived only in the jungle, and that they didn’t have any degree of development. *Tiago* commented that come Canadians think that Africa is just one country, and is famous only for its wild animals. *Nicola* admitted that misconceptions about her country made her feel “bad.”

Leeann also believed that people had misconceptions about China. She had seen an economics textbook where it was written that Chinese people don't care about the environment in their quest for developing the economy, an idea that made her feel angry.

6.1.5 Language and Communication Anxieties

Language Anxieties	<p>Fear of communicating for fear of making a mistake, and;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Being judged. - Being laughed at. <p>Fear results in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feeling tongue-tied - Needing preparation time (and losing opportunities to engage) <p><i>Redefining shy</i> in self and others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shyness - a feature of personality - Inhibition – a feature of circumstances
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Table 6.1.5

In Chapter Five the data showed that all participants experienced times of communication anxiety. For some it was the fear of speaking to Native Speakers of English, who might judge them or laugh at them, although no participant reported having experienced such a reaction to them.

Among the participants from China, anxieties took various forms including fear of speaking to a stranger, fear of standing in front of their class, and fear of going out without another Chinese person to help them with communication.

Leeann said:

“For most Chinese students, it’s the first time to present in front of a lot of people. Back home we only have the traditional class, so we don’t have a

chance to express ourselves opinions. So, it's really hard for Chinese students to learn about this.”

For *Tiago*, anxiety took the form of overthinking. He said:

“I realise we have to speak English, but my biggest problem is I keep thinking is that correct? is that true? about the content. I am too critical. I waste too much time thinking. “

6.1.6 Language Strain

As can be expected, the degree of language strain is influenced by the language proficiency participants had upon arrival, and by the degree of confidence in their oral skills. On average, participants arriving at the lowest end of the spectrum felt the most frustration when communicating with Canadians, and students at the highest end felt the least, once past the first weeks of adaptation. Among the students in the EAP program, intercultural ties were inhibited not only by cultural uncertainty, but also by mutual intelligibility. *Shayla* said that she and her presentation partner had difficulty understanding one another because of their accents. In her final interview she had gone so far as to say that her primary goal for her near future was to change her accent.

6.2 International Education as Self-Formation Theory (IESF) and the findings of this research

6.2.1 Revisiting Self-Formation Theory, Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Theory and intercultural learning.

As noted in Chapter 3, International Education as Self-Formation (Marginson & Sawir, 2011) is “a cultural theory of mobile students as human agents,” which seeks to account for what happens to the identities of cross-border students when they study abroad (p. 137). This theory focusses on what is happening inside the mind of the student, and “is about the growth of an individual’s capabilities and sociability” (p. 145), and that “the cross-cultural in the outside community as well as inside the classroom shapes the student” (p. 147) usually resulting in a change in identity (p. 148).

In this study, there are two samples, those participants who began their EAP education in September of 2013, and those who began in 2014. It is possible to see self-formation at work in the participants completing their year long period of EAP learning over time in comparison with those in Sample B, who had only recently begun their study-abroad experience. Nevertheless, the data includes personal characteristics that matter in determining the direction that self-formation has taken, thus far, in these participants.

It is also possible to pick out in the data factors that illustrate Language Learning Identity Theory’s (Norton, 2000) proposition that language learner identity is “multiple, a site of struggle, and subject to change” (p. 5). The data also allows us to view how *power relations* in and out of class affect participants’ abilities

to “access the target language community” (Norton, 2000, p. 73). Language Learning Identity Theory is most concerned about learner integration into larger, English-speaking social environments and how that influences their processes of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) (p. 73).

The data shows that integration into an English-speaking milieu at home, at school, and in the community is critically important for the development of language confidence and personal agency in these participants. It is evident in the data that intercultural experience inevitably results in intercultural learning, but not necessarily the type of intercultural learning considered ideal for acquiring cosmopolitan values or intercultural competence. International Education as Self-formation does not necessarily lead to the type of formation deemed desirable by educators and administrators and educational philosophers.

The characteristics deemed as desirable by Marginson and Sawir were not achieved by all of the participants in Sawir’s empirical study that served as the foundation of the two books consulted among the resources in this study (Marginson et. al., 2010; Marginson & Sawir, 2011). In their findings, as well as the findings in this study, some students are more equipped with the openness and curiosity that support intercultural learning than others. In the findings of this study, it is clear that openness and curiosity are necessary but not sufficient for achieving self-directed agency and intercultural competence in study-abroad.

For some, frustrating experiences may lead to a withdrawal into their own cultural comfort zone. Some of those frustrating experiences are connected to uncertainties about intercultural small talk. For others, frustrating experiences are

the result of living conditions that are not conducive to making friends across cultures. With regard to living conditions, a topic that has received a lot of attention in the findings of this study, it appears that a lack of information about housing options, limits the capacity of newcomers to exercise their free will in this area. I argue that a lack of access to campus housing for many international students places limitations on their learning and agency, because housing off-campus cannot reliably supply options for self-formation and intercultural learning of the type that results in an expansion of intercultural competencies.

The information in Table 6.2.1 is consistent with the Thematic Analysis in the opening section of this chapter. At the end of one year, these participants still had inhibitions about speaking English with native speakers. Three of these participants lived off-campus in environments that did not give them access to a larger English-speaking social milieu, but *Thomas* gave evidence that it is possible to make a Canadian friend after leaving EAP and entering the English-speaking milieu of his faculty. *Leeann* demonstrated that this does not always happen.

Participant	Limiting Factors	Enabling Factors	End Result
Ryan - 12 months in Canada	Off-campus housing	Openness to Angolan, Japanese and Korean peers Determination to succeed.	Feelings of disappointment about self-efficacy especially around interaction with native speakers
Thomas - 24 months in Canada	Off-campus housing	Willingness to greet and interact with non- Chinese classmates in his degree classes Determination to succeed.	Silence at Faculty events Optimism about belonging in his first-year classes.
Leeann -12 months in Canada	Homestay Distress about her cohort placement Communication anxiety with native speakers	Encouragement from home and home-based friends in Canada Commitment to the fencing team Determination to succeed.	Feelings of disappointment about not having Canadian friends in her faculty courses Inhibition about talking to others on the fencing team (native speakers) Strong bond with Toronto-dwelling people from her life in Beijing.
Nicola - 11 months in Canada	Anxiety around social and communication norms in native speakers	Friendship with Canadian roommate Church attendance Kinzomba club Floor rep. attention Determination to succeed.	Feelings of appreciation for Canadian EAP school staff Commitment to improving oral competencies, especially pronunciation/accent

Table 6.2.2a Primary factors in access to intercultural experience and learning in Sample A

Nicola said she had received a lot of help from her peers in residence and had help connecting with her roommate on a deeper level. Nevertheless, there were many aspects of Canadian communication norms that she did not yet know.

Participant	Limiting Factors	Enabling Factors	End Result
Mariana - 3 months in Canada	Free-time is spent with co-national peers Not yet in faculty program Classmates' reticence for non-task communication	Sincere interest in the people around her at The EAP School Willingness to attend Global Café. Strong language skills	Satisfaction with skills learned in EAP classes Keen anticipation for her upcoming faculty experience Disappointment with the drinking-centred culture of her peers.
Tiago - 3 months in Canada	Feeling "out of place" in the absence of co- nationals or floor- mates	Active inclusion in residence life Weekends spent with room-mate's family Interest in Manga	Learned to cope with the party culture of his residence, and different social norms of behaviour
Silvino - 3 months in Canada	Low level of oral proficiency in English Discomfort with party-culture of residence peers	Sincere interest in classmates Church attendance Harmonious relationship with roommate	Negative regard for Canadian peer behaviour Positive regard for intercultural classmates
Hugh - 3 months in Canada		Courage to greet and chat with strangers Courage to include himself in the activities of cross-cultural peers Interest in Manga	Attended a variety of campus and community social occasions Disdain for the party- culture on campus Positive intercultural attitude
Renata - 3 months in Canada	Strong aversion to greeting strangers (including refusal to go to Global Café. Homestay	Expression of agency in her choice to move onto campus.	Enduring lack of confidence in her oral English abilities No friends out-side her close circle of friends
Shayla - 3 months in Canada	Limited contact with floormates Difficulty with accents of Angolan peers Fear of going alone to Global Café	Expression of agency in deciding to change her program from Computer Science to Computer Engineering	Impatience with the amount of time needed to graduate EAP No friends outside her close circle of friends

Table 6.2.2b. Primary factors in access to intercultural experience and learning in Sample B.

Table 6.2.2 shows that the female participants from Sample B had not yet made any Canadian friends, socializing mainly with their same-culture peer groups. Not surprisingly, these participants had limited meaningful interaction with Canadians at their homestay or in their residence, probably because they lived in relative isolation from Canadian peers. The three male participants in Sample B had Canadian friends to the degree that their language skills and their social inclinations permitted. All three had a negative regard for the party-culture that dominated residence social life. The female students, living in all-female environments, encountered very little of this residence party-culture, except for *Mariana*, who encountered this culture only when at bars or parties with her Brazilian peers.

IESF theory holds that it normal that there will be problems with communication, with feelings of isolation, with attitudes of local people and with interaction with peers, and these problems place “limits on the capacity for experience and exploration” (p. 139) for EFL speakers. All of the participants reported feeling homesick to one degree or another, but only *Leeann* said that her homesickness was an overwhelming part of her first year abroad. *Nicola* said that when she or her best friend Daniela felt very homesick, they had each other for comfort. *Nicola* was accustomed to being part of a large family, and she said that she still hadn’t gotten used to sleeping alone, and sometimes slept with Daniela for that comforting feeling she had always had.

As discussed above, some of attitudes of local people created tensions. This chapter has already identified tensions related to pragmatics and alcohol, and also

tensions related to stereotyping of international students' countries of origin. It will be necessary for students at an internationalizing university to become more informed about the developing world in order to avoid comments made in ignorance. Encountering misconceptions about one's culture fits the IESF proposition that cross-border students will be exposed to unknown people, places and events over which they have limited control.

Marginson and Sawir (2011) emphasised that perseverance despite the "struggles, doubts, and tensions" inherent in study-abroad (p.138) is a quality found in the participants in Sawir's empirical study, and also in the participants of this study. Despite problem landlords, problem roommates, and problems with English, they endure and adapt. This adaptation is what Marginson and Sawir call self-formation, because the way in which each student adapts is unique to their own set of personal traits and resources. The data is consistent with Wenger's (1998) proposition that cross-border students construct knowledge by

- (1) forming friendships and networks;
- (2) establishing priorities in becoming "part of" or remaining apart from;
- (3) recognizing gaps in target knowledge and in taking charge of filling in those gaps;
- (4) managing uncertainty; and
- (5) assuming international student identities. (Ryan, 2006, p. 11).

The findings of this study and the thematic analysis above show that each participant expressed their self-determining agency by engaging in each of these processes to one degree or another. It was shown that each of them belonged to a

network of same-culture peers, selecting their networks based upon personal values. They used several strategies to manage uncertainty and fill in knowledge gaps. Some, like *Ryan*, were comfortable with their international student identities as EAP students, and others, like *Leeann*, were eager to become part of the main campus student body.

6.2.3 Primary principles of International Education as Self Formation as cultural theory

Within the cultural theory of IESF (Marginson and Sawir, 2011) there are five primary principles through which students develop agency. These are:

- a) students have chosen to go abroad
- b) student objectives are to acquire “educated and personal attributes”
- c) conditions abroad are by nature challenging and students have difficulty achieving their goals;
- d) students have limited control over the conditions of their lives abroad.
- e) some more actively seek to engage new experiences and others just “let it happen (pp. 137-138).

I would like to briefly discuss these principles in light of the findings of this study

6.2.3.1 Principles #1 and #2: Choices, Objectives, and Imaginaries in Study-Abroad

Participants from China

The findings of this study depart from IESF principle #1, in that, at the time of the study, not all of the participants in this study had truly wanted to go abroad. For *Thomas*, 20, from China, going abroad was all about being a dutiful son to his father

a businessman in one of the largest hubs of economic growth in China. *Thomas* always framed his statements in terms of “it is good for me” when speaking of getting to know people from other cultures, of learning how to develop business relationships, and of studying business.” There was no evidence in *Thomas’s* discourses that he had ever considered refusing to go abroad, or refusing to go back to China even though he appeared to be very unhappy in his first year abroad in Toronto, and not very happy during his EAP year at *Riverside*.

The findings reify the discourse that in China it is a good thing to send one’s children abroad to study. Like *Thomas, Hugh, Renata, Leeann, and Shayla* came to Canada for their higher education because one or both of their parents thought that they should. *Shayla’s* mother had colleagues who had studied in Canada, and she hoped that her daughter would remain in North America after graduating, saying that China did not have a lot to offer her daughter, and she would have a better life in North America. *Shayla* and *Renata* had blamed the Gao Kao Chinese National Exam for the necessity to go abroad in order to get a good education and have a good future.

Leeann and *Hugh’s* parents had prepared them to go abroad while they were in secondary school. *Leeann* attended an international school, and *Hugh* had received a lot of after-school English lessons.

Of all the participants from China, it was only *Ryan* from Mongolia who actively sought to go abroad, despite the objections of his own father. *Ryan* had cosmopolitan dreams, and actively resisted having powers beyond his control -- especially the Gao Kao -- decide his future for him. *Ryan* had two goals for his

future: to earn enough to take good care of his parents when they were old, and to find a profession that he liked doing. Although *Ryan* was the only participant to speak of being responsible by Chinese law to finance the retirement of his parents, other participants and their families may have been engaged in this nearly silent discourse in their decisions to send children abroad.

Ryan had said that he was very lucky that his father had allowed him to go abroad and that most parents would not do this for their children. His perception differs from the other participants from China, whose idea to study abroad came from their parents. It is a virtue in China to always obey the wishes of one's parents, and for all but *Ryan*, this virtue resulted in cross-border tertiary studies. *Ryan* had had to stand for himself.

Participants from Angola and Brazil

The non-Chinese participants in this study came to Canada on hard-won government or industry scholarships, and their narratives fit the IESF notion that students *actively choose* the study-abroad experience. The imaginaries of the three participants from Angola involved relieving their parents from the financial pressures of paying for their education and also supporting their parents in better condition in their elder years. These narratives position the active choice to study abroad not as a selfish act, but one that benefits the collective they belong to: family first. The *Luandoil* program sought to develop capacities in Angolan citizens that were previously fulfilled by foreign engineers, and was envisioned as part of the overall development of the country. Both *Nicola* and *Tiago* talked about the pressure to succeed and the fear of failure. *Nicola* said that her Facebook friends all

said that they were rooting for her to succeed and also to help them develop their country.

For *Mariana* from Brazil, Canadian study and work experience supported her professional dreams of engaging in research in sophisticated laboratories not found in Brazil, and taking that knowledge home to serve the people living in her country. She spoke of the importance of improving conditions in Brazil especially for disadvantaged people. The motivation to study abroad was intrinsic, rather than extrinsic, because no one else had put pressure on her to go. The exchange program newly instituted in Brazil was there to support those in STEM programs who sought to benefit the collective, that is to say, their nation.

6.2.3.2 Principles #3 & #4: Challenges, difficulties and imposed conditions

The findings of this study concur with the principle that “conditions abroad are by nature challenging,” so that the participant struggles do not reflect any inherent weakness on the part of cross-border students. Furthermore, self-formation is tied to the idea that having a problem, and working to resolve that problem is transformative in that it builds both character and agency. Even during the brief period of data collection, it could be observed that participants struggled with circumstances beyond their control, and that efforts to resolve these struggles, such as those with roommates, enhanced their future agency.

All participants described the various types of problems they encountered and the ways in which they were or were not able to resolve those problems. Inductive analysis found that most participants living in residence resolved interpersonal conflicts through mediation, and that access to this unbiased

mediation was more empowering to participants than the “endure or flee” pattern described by *Ryan, Thomas, Leeann* and *Renata* who were living off-campus.

Nevertheless, each of these latter students learned to exercise their self-directed agency in taking decisions and acting on them in ways they would not have been able to do in their home country.

The challenges inherent in the participant landscape, especially when they impeded participant goals, were upsetting. *Leeann* had been upset when she was placed in a cohort that she believed was well below her language level, and became more distressed each time her requests for change were denied. *Shayla* also became frustrated with the duration of her EAP program.

As EAP learners, participants in this study were in a transitional phase, being no longer in the home country and not yet admitted to their intended faculties at *Riverside*. For the participants from Angola, the transitional period was extended to include not only the purely EAP phase of their preparation, but also one or more semesters of *Delair College* courses on engineering-specific topics. *Nicola* and *Silvino*, for example, would have sixteen months of pre-entry education before being admitted to their faculty. Along with *Tiago*, they wondered if they were ever going to achieve the end-goal of graduation from the university. The fear of failure was exacerbated by the well-meaning encouragement of family and friends. For these students, each interpersonal challenge, each experience of embarrassment or uncertainty seemed to be amplified by the background echo of knowing they faced a long and rigorous foreign education.

Mariana, as an exchange student, was in a position different from the others in this study. Knowing that she would be in Canada for only sixteen months, she was hungry to make the most of it. *Mariana* had lived away from her parents for four years prior to going abroad, so she had much more experience in self-sufficiency. For her the greatest obstacles involved making personal ties outside the collective of Brazilian students. She wanted to get to know her peers at *The EAP School*, but they did not reciprocate as she had hoped. For *Mariana*, however, her conditions were to rapidly change in her second term in Canada, when she would be immersed in courses and her work in the research lab, in an environment where no one else was from Brazil.

One of obstacles to intercultural learning during the EAP-preparatory period for these participants is lack of access to Canadian peers at school. The three participants whose interview series carried over into their first term of degree work reveal circumstances and challenges that resonate with the IESF principle of the difficulty of having imposed conditions. *Ryan*, who had no Asian students in his classes, felt isolated by his perceived weaknesses in oral proficiency. *Leeann*, expressed disappointment that there were only international students among her study partners. *Thomas* kept silent at faculty socials, and had difficulty of following what was happening in his classes, until he bonded with Tomi, who was a willing and able inter-cultural mediator in the classroom, and a Canadian friend after class. Every international student would benefit from having someone like Tomi. It is worth pointing out that *Thomas* did not know anyone in his courses at the beginning

of the term. If he already had a study-ally in his classes, he might have missed the opportunity to meet and know Tomi.

6.2.3.3 Principle #5: Initiative as a variable

The analysis confirms that there were varying degrees of initiative taken by participants in order to engage in intercultural learning. In this study, language confidence was the first and largest determinant of whether individual participants expressed their agency by seeking out or responding to intercultural opportunities.

The second factor was social motivation. *Hugh* was the most intrepid of all participants, having been well prepared prior to arrival to treat all new experiences as adventures. *Silvino's* language limitations were particularly frustrating for *Silvino*, who was socially motivated both in and after school. In contrast, some participants, like *Renata*, had advanced level proficiency but were unable to overcome cross-cultural inhibitions within themselves. Once past the EAP period, some inhibited participants may bridge the intercultural gap, but according to the literature cited in Chapter Four, many never do. That is to say, that for inhibited students, there is the risk that transformative intercultural learning may never happen.

6.2.3.4 Summary of the Five Principles

In summary, the five principles of Marginson and Sawir's theory as listed above are supported by the data from the ten EAP-learning participants with two potentially significant caveats. These caveats may be framed in this way:

- a) not all participants have personally chosen to go abroad
- b) most participants did not rush toward transformative intercultural experiences.

The differences between the findings of this study and Sawir's 2006 study in Australia may be due to the essential differences between the two sample populations. Specifically, Sawir's participants were enrolled in degree programs among a variety of peers, while the participants in this study were in intensive bridge EAP programs. Furthermore, the Sawir's participants were, on average, older than the participants in this study, and had been in Australia longer than the participants in this study had been in Canada. Thus, Sawir's population had had more opportunities to express agency in their intercultural experiences abroad. Some of Sawir's participants may have been sent abroad by their parents, but after adjustment, came to embrace the idea that they really wanted the study-abroad experience.

6.2.4 International students as "human agents"

The centralizing discourse of *agency* is at the core of Marginson's construction of the IESF theory. Agency, as both *the capacity to act* and the *opportunities to choose*, comes across as fundamentally linked to the economic philosophy that asserts that fair competition is necessary for both prosperity and happiness. In essence, people are happiest when, in a market-driven economy, they have the ability to choose between products, experiences, and conditions, and a healthy economy cannot exist where there is limited choice.

In my view, this construction of agency exists in diametric opposition to the socialist paradigms of planned economies, planned growth, and predictive production of goods and services based upon predicted needs.

The implications of agency and economics in higher education are beyond the scope of this research. Nevertheless, sustaining the idea of choice as *the good* means that students as consumers must be aware of their options if their agency is to be fully supported. The participants in this study may be divided into two groups: the scholarship students whose program and university were chosen for them, and the students from China who selected their schools, programs, and accommodations based upon information that was available to them while in China. The most *advantaged* participants in this study had more fore-knowledge of study-abroad, and specifically in Canada. *Hugh, Thomas, Shayla* and *Renata* spoke of friends and co-workers of their parents having an influence on where they should study, and *Hugh* and *Shayla* had insider knowledge of how to access campus residence accommodations. In contrast, *Leeann, Renata,* and *Ryan*, from China, had been funnelled towards “homestay” accommodations, which did not contribute very much towards their intercultural learning

Based on the findings of this study, it may be argued that the students who did not choose their own living conditions on campus had the greatest amount of *supported agency*. The three Angolan students had all had significant difficulties to surmount in residence, but the process of resolving conflict was empowering. Their forced integration with Canadian peers was very challenging, but the outcomes were auspicious in terms of self-determining agency. It may be said that the offices that organized the placements of the Brazilian and Angolan participants acted on behalf of their students by applying insider knowledge. It can be seen from the data, that the most isolation from Canadian peers was felt by the three students

from China in the 2013 group, who never had the opportunity to choose to live on campus, and even after a year of living in River City, were not confident in their interactions with their peers and classmates.

6.2.5 Self-Formation Strategies

As noted in the literature review, education psychology generally frames adjustment in study-abroad in terms of “stress and coping.” IESF theory does not minimize the experience of stress in the lives of cross-border students, but describes how students use their strengths to cope with the challenges of study-abroad. These strategies include:

- a) becoming a mixture of two different people (hybridity)
- b) working critically on themselves based upon feedback;
- c) reshaping their goals when things don’t go as planned
- d) acquiring new expectations of themselves (Marginson & Sawir, 2011, pp. 138-139)

Some, but not all, of these strategies are expressed in the participant accounts of their own experience.

Strategy #1: Hybridity

Participant *Ryan* (20, China) employed hybridity as a strategy in his classroom. *Ryan* described how he used mimicry as a strategy for coping with his new school environment, patterning his behaviour upon that of his Angolan classmates, who seemed to have less difficulty conforming to the participation expectations of his EAP teachers. *Ryan* made clear that his EAP-Angolan self did not

carry over into his interactions when among persons from China. Hybridity as an adaptive strategy was not as easily found in the discourses of other participants.

Resistance to Hybridity

In fact, there was resistance to identity changes in the data. One part of this resistance was expressed in the categorical acceptance and rejection of tie-formation with specific types of people. *Thomas* made clear that there were a number of classmates he did not trust, and in addition said that in following the teacher's instructions, he had to pretend to feel friendly towards students with whom he was partnered for the duration of a specific project and no longer. He said that with certain classmates, he could pretend to be a friend during class, but after class he would avoid them. While *Thomas* had lamented that doing business in China required people to form friendships for the sake of making deals, he said that he needed to learn how to cope with this, and that having provisional friendships at *The EAP School* was good practice for his future

Leeann resisted tie-formation with any of her EAP schoolmates, and said that she floated from group to group bonding to none, and assumed that everyone at *The EAP School* did the same. *Nicola's* narratives indicated that *The EAP School* was not a site for friend formation. Although she said that felt "close" to the other students in her Advanced Level Class, she had called the school environment "artificial." As described above, *Mariana* had attempted to form personal bonds with intercultural classmates, but her efforts were rebuffed.

Within their classrooms, *Tiago* and *Silvino* (Angola) found no need to develop hybrid identities in order to form intercultural ties. Both found their closest

classroom allies in female peers from Syria and Libya who were preparing for their graduate school programs. According to the data, these women displayed an open curiosity about the ideas and cultures of their conversation partners, and were open to discussion and debate of any topic. This openness to debate contrasted sharply with the more inhibited communication styles of EAP peers from China. However, ties between the Angolan students and the students from Libya and Syria did not extend beyond the classroom. Gender barriers between men and woman in Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) cultures may have been the root, but other factors, such as age, may have been at play. Gender was clearly a dividing line among some participants from China. *Renata* and *Shayla* resisted possible cross-gender friendships, saying that they thought that boys and girls had different interests.

While *Silvino* and *Taigo* did not see the need to become hybrid at school, they actively resisted hybridity in the informal domain. They each affirmed that they were willing change many things about themselves, but they were not willing to conform to the residence party culture they found among their residence peers.

Both *Thomas* and *Hugh* rejected the behaviours they observed among other students from China. *Hugh* was critical of those who chose not to speak English amongst themselves, and *Thomas* was critical of his classmates who would not return his greeting. *Thomas* was ready to change himself, but only the German and Canadian students were willing to say, at minimum, "Hello."

The inability to initiate a "hello" with a stranger, and the inability to respond to it remained a source of tension for participants from China. The willingness to

say “Hello” was present in *Hugh* and *Thomas*, but less so in the others. *Shayla* and *Renata* were not at all able to shift paradigms toward one that permitted them to greet new people, or explore possible ties with non-Chinese classmates.

Strategy #2 Critical Self-making

The findings show that students were aware of feedback on their informal and formal domain efforts. For example, all students were aware of the participation mark, and some made a strong effort to improve their mark by participating more. As described previously, classroom participation was not a part of the pre-sojourn experience of good Chinese students. For the participants from China and for *Tiago* from Angola, active participation was like swimming upstream.

Working on oneself as a communicator also involved the sticky topic of accent. For some participants, accent was seen as an obstacle in the formation of cross-cultural ties. In a previous interview, *Nicola*, had said that the best experience in her life in Canada was when she looked into the eyes and saw that someone had understood her. From this statement it is clear that *Nicola* struggled with being understood. During her final interview she said that her most pressing goal was to change her accent

Accent correction is a contentious issue in language education at the time of writing. Prior to the data collection the researcher had been told by the chief administrator that the policy of *The EAP School* was to not engage in accent correction. A review of the websites of various universities in the United States found that accent correction is taught elsewhere.

It has been argued that accent is a strong part of identity, and that it is racist to assert the value of one accent over another. However, it may be that some cross-border students wish to have accent flexibility, and to overlook the topic of accent, or at least pronunciation variations might be a disservice to EAP learners.

IESF theory proposes that student work on themselves and choose their own goals. A lack of resources for international students to learn English variants/accents of their own choice is an obstruction of free will.

All participants in this study had arrived with the expectation of making Canadian friends and of becoming effective English speakers, both goals being part of their critical self-making imaginaries. At the time of the interviews, most had not yet achieved these goals.

In her final interview, Leeann had described how she had arrived in Canada with high hopes, only to be put off by her reception at the airport, and by her frustrations at *The EAP School* for placing her in a level below her expectations. She had imagined making friends with Canadian students, and had imagined herself able to thrive in a novel environment. She said that instead of widening her comfort zone to include making friends at *Riverside* she said that her comfort zone had narrowed to people she had known in Beijing before coming to Canada. Although she had fully intended to become more cosmopolitan, after one year in Canada, she was still attached to her pre-arrival identity. At *Riverside* she had imagined herself becoming more at home with talking to her peers on the fencing team. But her reality had not yet kept up with her imaginary.

Strategy #3 and #4: Goal Re-shaping and New Expectations

This small-scale study took place during a very brief period of time at or near the beginning of participants' study-abroad experience. For these participants, the primary goal had been to finish their EAP education and enter their degree studies at *Riverside*. As a result, the goal-reshaping integral to the IESF theory is not well-represented in the data. Further research would be needed to understand how international students reshape their goals once they graduate from EAP education and begin their degree studies. In the data, the only participant who underwent observable goal-reshaping was *Shayla*. In her early interviews she was uncertain about her academic and career aspirations, but by the end of the term she had formed a clear idea of her future self, one that would require leaving *Riverside* and fulfilling her new goals at a different university.

Summary

In Chapter Five, Tiago described the study-abroad experience as being “alone but not alone.” Self-formation theory describes the individual response to being among cultural *Others* in the context of study-abroad. Students abroad choose and refuse their companions and experiences according to opportunity and interest. The data in this study demonstrates that this process is ongoing throughout the EAP period of study, although some participants choose to remain entirely within their cultural comfort zones. As the global trend toward the recruitment of more foreign students from EFL countries, attention will be needed to create more possibilities for integrating EAP participants with the university community, and more support for student agency in acquiring intercultural experience. In the final chapter,

recommendations will be made, based on the findings of this study and upon concepts integral to IESF theory.

Chapter Seven: Conclusions and Recommendations

In this chapter, I review the research questions and respond to them based upon the findings and analysis of the previous two chapters. After that, I discuss what these conclusions mean for the intercultural learning of EAP students in contexts like those of *The EAP School at Riverside*, and then offer recommendations for future EAP education.

7.1 Research Questions and Answers

7.1.1 What are the intercultural experiences of this group?

The findings show that all participants have intercultural experiences in their classrooms. They learn about Canadian culture from their teachers, and they learn about their cross-cultural EAP peers by observing and interacting with them. The participants readily observe differences between themselves and peers from other countries. All participants made mention of their observations about students from China that are consistent with the stereotypes found in the literature about Asian students in Anglo-Western classrooms. Participants from China described the same stereotypical behaviours in themselves and their same-culture peers, and most explained their understanding of how and why students from China appear to be passive learners and appear to *cluster* in cross-border contexts.

The after-school intercultural experiences varied greatly within this small sample. Chapters Five and Six make clear that these differences can be accounted for by their living arrangements. Daily contact with cross-cultural peers offered by integrated residence life raised awareness of how language is used by Canadian peers in common interactions and allowed participants to reflect on aspects of

difference between the home culture and the host culture. Participants living in homestays had, on average, far less interaction with Canadians. Leeann had the most interaction at home. During the academic year she took her evening meals with her host parents and her two Chinese-Canadian housemates in the dining room, discussing events of the day. Participants in homestays and those who attended church noted that relationships with older adults were not as satisfying as relationships with age-mates, and the strongest value was placed on making friends with same-aged peers with similar interests. Participants who rented accommodation off-campus did not live with Canadians and had the least amount of after-school intercultural experience. They depended entirely on their classroom and school experiences for intercultural learning. They were surrounded by non-Canadians who were not entirely confident in their speaking skills and had to work hard to establish cross-cultural friendships.

Some participants spent a significant part of their leisure time at the most popular mall. Regardless of English proficiency levels, early experiences with shopping were complicated by a lack of experience with conversational English. Those who had support from a bilingual friend or mentor were more satisfied with their shopping experience.

Intercultural experience with Canadians and other native speakers was restricted not only by lack of opportunity to establish ties, but also by language anxieties. For some participants, the researcher was the only Canadian they knew on a conversational basis, with the exception of their teachers and *The EAP School* staff. Participants who had been in Canada for a year still felt inhibited from

speaking comfortably with native speakers. Most participants reported that they did not know what to talk about with other international students unless they had some clear common ground. For example, some participants and their EAP peers shared an interest in Japanese Manga.

7.1.2. What role does language play in Intercultural Experience?

The study finds that two factors were most important to this question: ability to converse and willingness to converse. The first factor is about language proficiency, the knowledge of vocabulary, common expressions, and the ability to produce and comprehend spoken English in a range of context. In the EAP context, participants may be divided into two groups: intermediate and advanced level students. The second factor is about filters and inhibitions, that is to say, how interested an individual was in starting conversations in English with cross-cultural peers and non-peer Canadians, and how confident they felt in being able to initiate and sustain dialogue or participate in a classroom discussion. One participant, Tiago, broke this process down in the following steps: first one has to get the other person's attention, and second one has to decide whether what one has to say is really worth saying. In order to accommodate himself to the requirements of the classroom he had to concern himself more with the former, and less with the latter, and find something to say more often, and with less depth. Some participants from China spoke of the importance of their cultural custom not imposing one's opinions on others, nor risk offending others by having an opinion others might find offensive. This custom appears to be a major factor in the perception of the silent Asian student.

	Starting Level in the EAP program	
	Advanced Level	Intermediate Level
Motivated to converse	Hugh* Mariana	Silvino
Mildly inhibited	Tiago*	Nicola* Leeann
Very inhibited	Renata Shayla*	Thomas Ryan

Table 7.1.2 Ability and Willingness to Communicate in English

*Names in Bold indicate participants living in mixed undergraduate residence halls.

When combining willingness to speak with measured proficiency, it is not surprising that Hugh, Mariana and Tiago had the most amount of after-school intercultural social engagement, and that Renata, Shayla, Thomas and Ryan had the least. Hugh and Tiago, living in residence, had daily contact, and engaged in intercultural group activities e.g. trips to eateries or to church. Mariana, although interested in making Canadian friends, lived in a residence apartment, and did not share a room or a suite with a Canadian peer. Her contact with Canadians was primarily with Student Services who assisted in her preparation to apply for a position as a research assistant.

Those students with the most inhibitions about initiating and sustaining intercultural conversation did not acquire intercultural friendships after class during the EAP period. Although there was a common room on Shayla's, she was not able to overcome her inhibitions to make use of it to form any ties, and she did not have a roommate. Her experience shows that proximity to peers is not enough to overcome communication inhibitions: there must be forced proximity,

negotiation, conflict resolution, and the establishment of common ground as experienced by Hugh, Taigo, Nicola and Silvino.

7.1.3 How do the findings of this study relate to the theory of International Education as Self-Formation?

This question was considered at length in the previous chapter. To summarize, overall, participants had varying degrees of self-determining agency, and expressed their agency in a number of ways. Many spent their time in self-forming ways that were not interactive or intercultural.

Ryan, Thomas and Renata expressed their agency in taking actions to depart their unsuitable living conditions at homestays or rental houses where struggles or conflicts could not be resolved. The majority of *intercultural* agency evolved as a result of supported resolution of the struggles and conflicts that are part of living in close proximity with others, and this is why I so strongly recommend the expansion of access to integrated residence accommodation for international students, especially those in the first year or years of their university study-abroad experience.

Both theories that backgrounded this study discussed change over time as part of language learner identity and of self-formation in study-abroad. Because of the short duration of this study, the change over time was most marked in Thomas, who had been in Canada for two years and said that he had become accustomed to living here. His long introductory period of Grade 12 in Toronto and three terms of EAP may be a factor that made possible the cross-cultural friendship born at the beginning of his degree-work, after graduating EAP. While he still experienced

struggles with language and communication, he had a buddy, a cross-cultural peer, who supported his efforts to participate in his coursework and in classroom interactions with more fluent speakers of English.

Reflexivity is also a part of the background theories of this study, and all participants engaged in the reflexivity that enabled them, in some cases, to take action toward becoming closer to their desired selves. The research design promoted reflexivity because responding to researcher questions pressed participants to reflect upon their experiences. Most participants had some ideas about how they wanted to change themselves, but were still at the beginning of their study-abroad experience and were primarily concerned with the tasks of their EAP program

7.2. EAP learner environments

Discretionary time and novel experiences

In order to gather data on relational contexts (e.g. friends, classmates, roommates, teachers, parents) in the lives of the participants, the greater portion of interview questions asked how and with whom participants spent their time. Openness to new intercultural experiences and friendships was reported in Table 6.2.3.3 of the previous chapter. We can draw from this table that openness to novel experiences and persons appears to be more important than communicative proficiency in enabling cross-cultural learning.

The majority of participants were not satisfied with the amount of intercultural experience they had during their first term and first year of studying abroad. The sample is too small to assume that the participants are statistically

representative of typical EAP undergraduates. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to draw from the findings that changes in the environment in which EAP students find themselves can improve their chances of making meaningful contact with peers beyond *The EAP School* study body.

Participants who had access to a variety of social contexts after school reported the most intercultural learning, e.g. on campus, in housing, and at church. It is no surprise that those who did not live on campus, who did not attend church, and who did not receive invitations to parties had the least exposure to intercultural interaction and learning. Being open to participating in non-EAP contexts and then engaging in the relationships that are possible within these contexts is essential to the formation of more robust intercultural identities. As stated previously, proximity to cross-cultural peers is a necessary but not sufficient condition for cross-cultural engagement. Additionally, the data showing that not all participants living on campus made peer friendships in residence prior to or during the period of data collection indicates that the development of cross-cultural ties cannot be guaranteed.

For participants who had significant contact with non-EAP peers, especially Canadian peers, cross-cultural relationship satisfaction is, to a meaningful degree, linked to language confidence. From the lived experience of high-contact participants, it could be suggested that concern for language proficiency should come first, and that intercultural competencies will develop more easily after language proficiency breeds confidence. On the other hand, for those participants who were not in daily contact with Canadian peers through their living

arrangements, language proficiency did not help in the formation of intercultural bonds during the EAP learning period. Only a change in environment and opportunity would make a difference for these participants.

One might argue that there is little need to be concerned about intercultural opportunities for language learners because these opportunities will be available to them after they graduate EAP and proceed into their formal undergraduate programs. EAP participants living in residence make cross-cultural ties if they are motivated to do so, and it may be argued that that aside from providing integrated residence opportunities for EAP track students, nothing more need be done.

Life after EAP

In the findings we saw that once students cross the threshold of admission to their programs, some will allow themselves to invest in informal domain activity with cross-cultural peers. This finding supports the idea of leaving well enough alone in terms of providing additional cross-cultural opportunities for EAP students on campus.

The argument in favour of providing opportunities for EAP students to enrich their intercultural experience draws heavily on the theoretical frameworks considered in this study. For students to self-actualize as intercultural agents, they need a great deal of support during their early period of study-abroad, including the kind of support offered for conflict resolution residence. It is only through the mediation of local peer-experts that the four participants could be heard by their co-habitators, and be given the power to have their views respected. Furthermore, during the conflict-resolutions sessions, participants had the opportunity to hear

and understand their co-habitators, and glean cultural knowledge and intercultural experience in the process.

The findings show that the four participants living off-campus avoided conflict by withdrawing, leading to substantial and sustained isolation. Undergraduate students who withdraw to living in apartments with same-language students risk never moving past the same-culture comfort zone even as they develop language proficiency at school. Such students may be said to be living *parallel lives*, in that they are physically at the university, but socially isolated from any but their same-culture peer group.

One argument for free will suggests that students have the right to contain themselves in their social comfort zones. However, if those same students have never had a supported opportunity for intercultural living, their free will to choose from a variety of living conditions is severely limited, as is their self-determining agency.

Given the above considerations, the primary conclusions of this study support the idea that cross-border students should have more freedom to choose from among a range of supported possibilities, starting with their early arrival experiences, sustained through the EAP learning period, and continued for at least their first year of degree study.

Various interventions for international students have been described in the literature, such as peer-pairing, game nights, and optional trips. Most of these interventions have had some measurable degree of success in increasing intercultural experience or competence. Based on the findings at Riverside I would

like to offer some ideas for creating more accessible intercultural spaces and moments.

7.3 Recommendations

The small sample size means that the findings of this study are specific to the time and place of this study, and the persons involved. All findings require further study to determine how consistent they are with a different sample of undergraduate EAP learners Riverside or at a different Canadian university. Nevertheless, these recommendations are made based on an assumption that the sample represents some, but not all, of a typical body of undergraduate EAP students.

7.3.1 First recommendation: Accommodations

For EAP students, Intercultural experience, like language, is best acquired in a supported environment. Although first year undergraduates are adults, they are still, developmentally, late adolescents, and for such students, having supports that may serve *in loco parentis* or *in communitas* leads to better outcomes for these young adults. At present, some international students are not able to find accommodation on campus because access to residence is competitive for first year students based on grades. Residence space is guaranteed only to first year students with an average above 90% who are coming directly from their secondary school. Hugh had come directly from high school in China, may have applied early and may have had grades that assured him a place in a first-year designated residence. However, he did not have any first-year faculty marks to guarantee him a room on campus for his first academic year

At Riverside, there are also rules that exclude newcomer international students who have not come directly from their secondary schools from securing accommodation on the main campus. Ryan, Renata, and Shayla had studied for one year in China before starting their study-abroad experience, and therefore didn't qualify for 1st year accommodation. Neither were they upper year students like Mariana, who have had access to upper year apartments. As a result, the default recommendation from study-abroad agents in China are homestays. It was only because Shayla knew someone who had attended university in Southern Ontario that she learned about applying to DeLair or one of the other affiliated residences on the campus.

In consideration of the data about housing, I recommend that the university rethink its housing plans and policies. An exploding demand for cross-border international education means a corresponding rise in the need for suitable housing. I recommend that:

1. International and domestic students be integrated on the same floors, and in suites that allow for the maximum number of friend-making opportunities. For example, quad-style housing provides shared space with three other people, and offers more opportunities for forming ties and networks;
2. All students have access to common rooms in which certain interactive activities take place in a structured way e.g. a weekly game night with games suitable for both high-proficiency and medium-proficiency English speakers;
3. Floor leaders and residence dons offer the kind of support found in the data on residence life found in this study;

4. Services and shops are located within walking distance from residence halls so that students have somewhere to go, promoting the type of invitations to eat received by Tiago on his floor;
5. Substance-free residences are expanded, and international students are given high priority in access to these halls;
6. Alcohol-free social events are planned scheduled and promoted in a way that welcomes and involves international students.
7. EAP students who arrive from China after having had one year of Chinese university should be offered on-campus housing that offers the same degree of intercultural living spaces offered to first-year students in order to reduce the overall tendency towards parallel-living of Chinese students in Canada.
8. Upper year students like Mariana would benefit from an intercultural living experience on campus. Isolating upper-year students in their own apartments may suit students who have previous experience with the university and campus. However, newly arriving exchange students such as Mariana, were not given the option of living in the kind of intercultural environment enjoyed by students in hybrid and quad units on campus.

Given the explosion in international student enrollment, it is recommended that the university consider other models of student housing by looking at some of the models existing in other countries. For example, Mariana described her positive experience of her residence in Porto Alegre, where a large group of students were housed in a space that encouraged communication and responsibility as well as

camaraderie. She said that it was in that residence hall that she learned to be less introverted, which for her was an important development. This student house had many of the characteristics listed above. There was a coffee room, where residents could go when they wanted to get away from their studies. Students shared double rooms. A closed door signaled the need for privacy, and an open door welcomed visitors to drop by. The residence hall leaders emphasised the necessity of cooperation and responsibility while living in a shared space.

This type of housing could be constructed by the university, or could become a joint venture, part corporate, part campus. There are areas near *Riverside* that have a certain amount of sub-standard rental housing that has been overpriced because of the proximity to the university. Converting land use from sub-standard housing to student residence houses as described above could be more profitable for private owners, and confer the benefits of a supported interdependent living space.

Marginson and Sawir (2011) envision cross-cultural residences as “an especially favourable environment in which to develop cross-cultural friendships and cooperation” while pointing out that in Australia, residences are not subsidized and cost more than the market value, leaving a gap in student security (p.175). I say that residences, even those subsidized by the university, must not be considered as a fiscal burden if they serve to attract and retain more international students, and offer spaces of community and camaraderie to both domestic and international students. Off-campus locations may be suitable if they are proximate to the type of

services students need, especially those linked to the campus meal plan, and provide the same resources for student support.

This list is not exhaustive, but suggests possible models of undergraduate student housing that might better meet the needs of future international students from their EAP year until graduation.

7.3.2 Second recommendation: Conscious Liaisons between *The EAP School* and the University

Marginson et al. (2010) wrote that universities supported the informal domain of international students by providing clubs. However, in this study, only one participant joined a club even though all participants had interests outside of their studies. *Shayla* and *Renata* had help from the Chinese club for opening bank accounts and their initial shopping needs, they did not get involved with this club. *Nicola's* EAP teacher and several other Angolans formed a club for Kinzomba, one of the national dances of Angola, but it was not widely advertised or well-attended at that time.

One of the problems for the EAP students was the timing of the clubs fair, which took place during the EAP students' first week of classes. The clubs fair might be better to take place a week or two later, when all students are more settled into their new lives, and EAP teachers could schedule a trip to the clubs fair with their cohort. It would be especially good for the EAP students to receive a presentation at their school on the type of clubs that were current on campus, and how to connect with them. One of the participants was interested in photography, and several were interested in Japanese anime. Additionally, the late-arrival of the Angolan cadre

each year meant that these students missed the university orientation, the international student orientation, and The EAP School orientation activities. It is recommended that there be a way for the Angolan cadre, each year, to be well informed of the clubs that exist on campus. I also recommend that the clubs coordinator consider repeated the clubs fair in January for the benefit of all students who missed the first one.

A supported visit to the weekly Global Café activity for small groups of EAP students might encourage involvement in this International and Exchange Student Centre (IESC) activity. If the EAP School has for example, a student body of one hundred students, in ten cohorts, then one cohort or half of one cohort could be escorted to the activity in sequential order from the highest proficiency to the lowest over the course of the first term or two. In this way, EAP students are introduced to at least one of the IESC activities that are open to them.

Arrival Experiences

In the data we saw that the students from Angola were supported each step of the way from Luanda to their residences and banks. Most of the students from China made use of car services to get from the airport to their destinations. However, the IESC could help provide a more seamless service from airport to residence for all incoming international students, and even domestic students. Study-abroad agents should direct students to the *River City* International Airport where, during the week EAP students usually arrive, a shuttle may be contracted to transport newcomers and other Riverside students to central campus, to residence halls, and to an EAP welcome centre. EAP students already on campus, or past

graduates, could be there to welcome each set of newcomers, as long as travellers allow the school or the IESC to know each incoming student's arrival time. This will require a coordinated effort among different departments, but for the purpose of bonding and belonging, having a warm and informative welcome at the airport, possibly in the home language, might be value added to the EAP experience and newcomers from Brazil, Japan, and other countries could also have a coordinated welcome.

Negative experiences of arriving in Canada could be eased by greater coordination with Canada Customs at the *River City* Airport, but that is well beyond the scope of this study, a local telephone number that can help them at Customs and Immigration could be appended to their letter of invitation upon which their visa depends. Even without a dedicated shuttle, there should be a telephone number a student may use if he or she has a problem with an arranged car service.

First week in Canada

The first week in Canada need not be lonely. Students living on campus will have easy access to The EAP School for testing and for orientation activities that could be carried out every few days for new arrivals. *The EAP School* students should have T-shirts and a collective identity as one among many schools and faculties on campus. In that way, they would be able to participate in O-week as members of the campus community

7.3.3 Third recommendation: Intercultural Spaces

At the time of the study, the IESC was not well connected to The EAP School. Participant Nicola had been studying at Riverside EAP for a year and had never

heard of it. The method of communication about IESC events was through email, and newcomer EAP students might not have been able to interpret email from the IESC centre. Students from China are not accustomed to communicating through email, and they said they had to get used to it. Renata and Shayla said they received the IESC emails but none of the activities planned interested them, e.g. a hockey game. Ryan accidentally became enrolled in a Peer Guide Program, one that would have been of benefit to many EAP students, but none were intentionally included at the time of the study. Only Mariana, the exchange student, was integrated into the IESC support network. The other nine were not.

Those nine were future fully enrolled international undergraduates of the university. I recommend that the IESC should more attentively consider and include the EAP students and even staff, when planning its activities.

It is possible that at the time of this study, the EAP Students were not actively supported by the IESC because it was a new part of Riverside, and the students were not yet enrolled in any faculty. Whatever the case may have been at the time of the data collection, it is recommended that the university provide not only inclusive events, but also inclusive spaces, whether through the IESC or managed by some other part of the student support network.

As an internationalizing university, *Riverside* should ensure that residences actively promote culturally inclusive spaces where students can drop in and mingle with others from their residence or host events geared toward non-drinking students such as karaoke and coffee houses, or pick-up team sports. The university itself should plan for more interculturally inclusive spaces that are not bars or

nightclubs because none of the participants in this study were attracted to alcohol-fuelled events. Mariana went along with her peers to bars and parties every week because there were no alternatives. Hugh, Tiago and Silvino were less than impressed with the drinking culture in the residences, and there were no evening coffee shops or cafés on campus. Riverside, students who sought nightlife other than the campus bar went downtown. However, only two of the participants, Ryan and Thomas, availed themselves of the downtown, not to drink, but to dine.

A generation or two has passed since my undergraduate days of coffee houses and arts events, and I am unsure of what shape inclusive intercultural events might take in the 21st century, nor am I informed of ways to fund campus activities that are not propped up by the sale of alcohol. Nevertheless, I recommend that internationalizing universities consider the creation of interculturally attractive and inclusive spaces and student generated events.

7.4 Reflections on EAP and a changing IHE climate

International Higher Education exists within the multiple forces of the globalization of business, industry, culture and consciousness. That is to say that there is an economic side and a social component. Government policies on Higher Education in Canada are framed in terms of revenue generation, and in the development of the human capital that drives innovation. The value of increasing Higher Education enrolment is seen as a way to maintain forward momentum, and also as an industry in which competition between countries is fierce: in the Globalization race, no country wishes to be left behind.

The recruitment race in IHE is driven by the changing global economic and political climates, and the concept of global climate change may be employed as a metaphor for the accelerated growth in cross border education systems, and the accelerated rate of climate change on the planet.

The participants in this study are riding the waves of this global and IHE climate change, within which language is a complication. The pressure on students from the Global South to ride the wave and not be left behind has created a major shift in how universities must do business. In the past, students from sending countries were more likely to have had the language of the receiving country as a mother-tongue or a fluent second language.

The evolution of EAP into to an essential component of any internationalizing university has taken place over an incredibly brief span of time, as brief, perhaps as the shift in arctic temperatures in our climate change metaphor employed above. In this metaphor, counties seek to adapt to local and lasting changes in climate as they arise, and for the IHE climate change, it is the same.

To be specific, in the past, universities held solidly to language proficiency requirements as a gatekeeper to exclude students who could not manage linguistically. Students at lower ends of proficiency were treated as anomalies who needed to change themselves to conform with professor expectations. But in the present climate, there is an appetite for international student participation in Canadian Higher Education, and every student who is not able to meet linguistic standards of admission may be seen as lost potential, especially when there are other countries, such as Australia, who will recruit those very same students.

EAP schools like the one at Riverside have become a compromise between the acceptance and rejection of low-proficiency EFL speakers. The ten participants of this study represent a significant segment of those students who have the means and motivation for IHE in Canada. As long as the cross-border IHE climate continues to heat up, driven by national and private scholarship and by rising family incomes in EFL countries, there will be a new wave of cross-border applicants every academic year.

Receiving countries and institutions had adapted to the students they had previously received, providing at least a minimum, but sometimes ample support in the formal and informal domains. However, the new wave of applicants represents intensified challenges, just as the intensified degree of global climate change brings changes in rain patterns, storm patterns, floods and droughts.

At a symposium in 2017, when I suggested that universities needed to do more to support the current wave of cross-border students, a question was raised: "Haven't we already dealt with this?" The answer is yes, and no. Universities have dealt with the IHE conditions of the past, but the conditions are rapidly changing, and this study finds that in order to meet internationalization objectives, universities must adapt again, and likely again, to the changing nature and needs of students seeking admission.

Based upon the findings of this study, there is reason to argue that Canadian universities need to anticipate future needs and be more pro-active in attracting and supporting future students, rather than struggling to catch up. England and the United States attract large numbers of EFL students because of the way these

countries are positioned in the world, and Australia and Canada compete to attract the rest. Australia is far ahead of Canada in establishing Asian campuses and partnerships to extend their reach and accessibility.

If Marginson (2014) is correct in his assertion that students go abroad not only to have an economic edge, but also to have an intercultural experience, it may not be sufficient to leave well enough alone, and allow students to have hit and miss intercultural successes as they will in the absence of deliberate effort on the part of universities to put intercultural peers together and offer them ways to find the common ground essential for the formation of ties.

It must be said that at the site where this study took place, since the data collection, there appears to have been greater effort made to be more inclusive of The EAP School students in campus life and resources. It is recommended that qualitative studies of EAP student intercultural opportunities continue, both as snapshots of immediate weather pattern and more longitudinal studies mapping the progression of changing intercultural climate.

In a fully internationalized university the process of student preparation, arrival, community, housing, identity and affiliation would be more streamlined than it is today. I argue that reducing the early-period struggles around adapting to the new campus environment would not deprive students of chances to develop agency, but instead allow agency to be developed under conditions of self-actualization rather than on issues of survival.

If IESF theory holds true, intercultural self-actualization requires institutional support for real choices. In this study, it is found that opportunities

for peer-to-peer intercultural engagement range from a great deal to practically none. The study finds that access to intercultural engagement hinges on the degree of university support for it. Ryan, for example, living off-campus and having no pathway to campus activities had no intercultural peer ties at the end of a year of EAP study. In contrast, Hugh, living in a quad with Canadians, in a dorm with other first-year and EAP international students had diverse social opportunities and had a wide range of people in whom he could invest time and create ties.

This study also shows how living on campus is necessary but not sufficient for strong intercultural results. Students bring with them culture-specific patterns of interpersonal engagement that can be barriers to opportunity. The absence of pathways to peer engagement for the creation of common ground for these particular students must be anticipated and acted upon by the university more vigorously than in the past and at the time of this study.

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Appendix I: Letter of Information to Students

Date: April 26, 2014

Project Title: Intercultural experience and identity: An inquiry into the lived curriculum of international students

Principal Investigator: Dr. Paul Tarc, Education, Western University

Researcher: Ms. Joan Plonski. Masters of Education student, Western University

Letter of Information

Dear Student,

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study about the intercultural experiences of international students in their daily lives. I am asking for your participation because I believe your experiences can help me understand international student life.

The purpose of this letter is to give you information about my research so you can decide whether or not you will participate in this study.

I am a Masters student at the Faculty of Education, The University of Western Ontario. The purpose of my study is to learn about the daily life experiences of international students who are learning academic English. The experiences of English Language students is important for understanding how intercultural learning happens while studying abroad.

In this study I will try to understand your relationships with family, friends, schoolmates and with Canadians while studying abroad as they influence your intercultural learning. The study is being done at this school because students here know a lot about learning in a new culture.

Participants in this study may be from any country and must be 18 years old or older. All participants will be English Language Program students who agree to meet with the researcher. In order to participate in this study, participants must be willing to have their interviews recorded

Study Procedures

Study participants will meet with the researcher six times, approximately once per week. The first interview may be as long as 45 minutes, but the other interviews will be no more than 30 minutes. Interview questions will be about your daily life here in London, and about your experiences living and studying here. I will record the interview on an audio device and I will take notes.

You will also be asked each week to keep a simple time sheet of what you do when you are not in class. This time sheet will make it easy to remember and talk about your

week and will help me understand more about your experiences. Writing on your time sheet will take less than two minutes a day.

The entire time commitment is no more than five hours over a two-month period. Interviews will be conducted at the college. There will be from six to ten total participants in this study.

Some students may feel uncomfortable answering some personal questions. If you don't wish to answer a question, you don't have to answer it. Participating in this study should not be more stressful than any other informal interview.

Participating in this study will give you an opportunity to talk about your experiences and to discuss your ideas about the intercultural experiences you have had. The results of this study may not benefit you directly, but it may help our university plan and prepare for future students coming from abroad to study here.

This study may also help teachers improve their teaching by understanding international students needs and interests.

You will not be compensated for your participation in this research. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions and you may withdraw from the study at any time. This study has no effect on your academic status.

Confidentiality

All data collected from you will remain confidential. Only I and my supervising professors have access to your data during the study.. If the results are published, your name will not be used.

*If you choose to withdraw from this study, your data will be removed and destroyed from our database. *While we will do our best to protect your information there is no guarantee that we will be able to do so.

If you have any questions about this research and about your participation you may contact me at _____ or my research supervisor, Dr. Paul Tarc at _____.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may contact The Office of Research Ethics (519) _____ email: _____.

I plan to submit my study results to the Education Department in the form of a thesis. If the results of the study are published, your name will not be used. If you would like to receive a copy of any potential study results, please provide your name and contact number on a piece of paper separate from the Consent Form

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Consent Form

Project Title: Intercultural experience and identity: An inquiry into the lived curriculum of international students.

Study Investigator's Name: Joan Margret Plonski

I have read the Letter of Information, have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree to participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Participant's Name (please print): _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Person Obtaining Informed Consent (please print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix II: Ethics Approval



Research Ethics

**Western University Health Science Research Ethics Board
NMREB Delegated Initial Approval Notice**

Principal Investigator: Dr. Paul Tarc
Department & Institution: Education\Faculty of Education, Western University

NMREB File Number: 105164
Study Title: Intercultural experience and identity: An inquiry into the lived curriculum of international students
Sponsor: Ontario Graduate Scholarship

NMREB Initial Approval Date: June 12, 2014
NMREB Expiry Date: August 31, 2014

Documents Approved and/or Received for Information:

Document Name	Comments	Version Date
Instruments	Form that participants take with them and bring to the following interview. They will use the first page of this form for recording general and specific activity information, and may or may not use the other pages. The research can use the other pages to take notes on or as prompts for questions for the participants.	2014/02/20
Instruments	questionnaire 04 22 version	2014/04/22
Recruitment Items	recruitment pdf clean	2014/05/04
Revised Western University Protocol	Revised application pdf	2014/04/22
Letter of Information & Consent	revised loi and consent	2014/05/25

The Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the above named study, as of the HSREB Initial Approval Date noted above.

NMREB approval for this study remains valid until the NMREB Expiry Date noted above, conditional to timely submission and acceptance of HSREB Continuing Ethics Review.

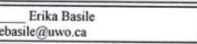
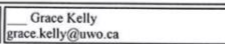


The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario.

Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB.

The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.


Ethics Officer, on behalf of Riley Hinson, NMREB Chair

Ethics Officer to Contact for Further Information

 Erika Basile ebasile@uwo.ca	 Grace Kelly grace.kelly@uwo.ca	 Mina Mekhail mmekhail@uwo.ca	 Vikki Tran vikki.tran@uwo.ca
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This is an official document. Please retain the original in your files.

Western University, Research, Support Services Bldg., Rm. 5150
London, ON, Canada N6A 3K7



Appendix III: Guiding Questions for Interviews

Week One Interview (45 minutes)

Part One: Establishing Context

1. Can you tell me when you arrived in London?
2. Where did you live before coming here?
3. Where did you go to school?
4. Is that where your parents live?
5. Do you talk to your parents often?

Part Two: Talking about friendships in Canada

1. Tell me about the people in your class.
2. Who are usually your partners in classroom learning?
3. Tell me about them, please.
4. Do you sometimes talk with them at break time or lunch time?
5. Who do you usually talk with at break time?
6. Is the cafeteria here at the school similar to the cafeteria in your last school?
7. Is the cafeteria a good place to make new friends?
8. How many ELC students can you say are your friends?
9. Do you have friends on campus who are not ELC students?
10. How did you meet them?
11. What happened?
12. Did you go to any campus events e.g. international student events?

Talking about the Log Tool

Possible script for researcher:

This chart is called a log. A log is a record of an event or activity and a time. This log is very easy to use. On this log, each week you can record your activities. For example, on this log, here is our interview time. It began at this time and will end. You can make a line or a box and write: Interview – Joan – room 1010, and any comment.

Like this.

Let's record today's activities on this log. For example

1. What did you do before our meeting?
 - a. Where was that? With whom?
2. Was it interesting?
3. How often do you do this?
(pause)
4. And before that, maybe you had lunch?
5. No?/Yes? And that was at the cafeteria?
6. Were you with friends?
(pause)
7. And last evening, what did you do?
 - a. Where was that? With whom?
8. And when did you start?
9. And when did you finish?
10. And before that?
11. It's okay if you can't remember now.

Researcher says:

Here is a log chart for this week. Starting with this interview, you can record what you do, where, with whom and anything interesting that you think about new experiences, fun experiences, or difficult experiences. I am interested in how you are experiencing your life in Canada, in London, and here on campus.

Here is an example of a log. It shows one student's week. (Gives sample week-log to the student)

May I have your contact information again? Can we meet next week at this time?

Please contact me if this appointment time is not good, and we will plan another.

Thank you so much for talking with me. I enjoyed meeting with you.

<end>

Week Two Interview (30 minutes)

Part One: Establishing Context and Reconnection

Protocol:

1. Greet student and ask about their day. Listen carefully.

Ask:

2. How was your week? Good, bad or so-so?
3. Did you talk to your family? How often do you talk to them?
4. What do they think about your studies? Do they speak English?
5. About brothers and sisters, how did/do they learn English.
6. What happened on the first days that you were in Canada? Who did you meet? Where did you go?
7. How much time do you have today to talk to me? (try to respect the student's time)
8. Let's look at your activity log.
 - a) I see that you did _____ on _____ day. Maybe you can tell me about that experience.
 - b) I see that you didn't write down _____. That's okay. What were you doing at that time? Who was with you? Is it the same every day, or is it different?

Part Two: Talking about relaxing and friends in Canada

Topic: What did you do to relax this week?

1. Where can you watch TV? What kind of TV programs do you like? What English language TV is interesting?
2. How do you listen to music?
 - a. What kind of music do you like? Do your friends like it too?
 - b. Do you talk about music with your friends?
3. Who are your best friends in Canada? Can you tell me about them?
4. Do you prefer to text or to use email? Can you tell me about how you use texting? What email system do you like to use? Do you use the university email system very much? How easy or difficult is it to email in English?

5. Can you watch movies when you want to? How do you watch them now?
Who watches movies with you? Do you talk about movies with your friends?
6. Do you use SKYPE? If so, how often and with whom?
7. Do you like to go shopping? What are your favourite shopping places in this city? Did you go shopping in other cities? Is it easy to talk to the store clerk? Can you ask questions about the products?
8. What was your best shopping experience?
9. What was your most difficult shopping experience?

Talking about the Log Tool

Possible script for researcher:

Was the log easy or difficult to use this week? Can I change anything to make the log better for you to use? Do you have any questions for me?

Researcher says:

Here is a log chart for this week. Can we meet next week at this time?

Please contact me if this appointment time is not good, and we will plan another.

Thank you so much for talking with me. I enjoyed talking with you.

<end>

Week Three Interview

The Present

1. How was your day?
2. Are you learning a lot these days?
3. Are you speaking English very often?

The Past

4. What was your first week like at this school?
5. What is different now?
6. What are usually your best study subjects (In school before coming here)?

The Future

1. When will you begin your university program?
2. What kind of career ideas do your parents have for you?
3. What kind of jobs do your friends talk about as good jobs?
4. What kind of job or jobs would you like to do for a career?
5. What personal characteristics do you need for this kind of career?
6. What qualifications will you need?
7. What other hopes do you have for the future, personally?
8. How do English fit into your plans?

Your Self

9. How do your friends describe your personality?
10. Are you more like your father or your mother?
11. How would your teacher describe you as a student?

You Friends, Housemates, Classmates and Family

7. Can you please describe the characteristics of the people you live with?
8. Among your group of friends, how are individuals similar and different?
9. Which person in Canada is someone you want to be similar to?
10. Are there students in your class who behave in ways you don't think are right? How so?
11. What is the right way to behave in class?

Talking about the Log Tool. Let's look at your activity log. I see that your did _____ on _____ day. Can you tell me about that experience.?

<end>

Week Four Interview

Part One: Life Experiences

Experiencing Activities

1. We have been meeting for a month. Can you tell me about how you experience these interviews?
2. What do you think about your current English studies? Is there anything you want to do more of in your studies? To do less of?

Experiencing People

3. One part of culture is body language. Is the body language of Canadians easy to understand?
4. What cultural differences do you see among your classmates? How do you communicate with people from different cultures?
5. Please remind me about the people who are your better friends in Canada. How did you develop those friendships? Which languages do you use with your friends?

Experiencing Living Conditions

6. Are you satisfied with where you are living? Do you want to change anything?
7. Some students enjoy time alone and some prefer to be with other people. What do you like?
8. Where do you plan to do your university studies? How will that university be good for you? What do you think the university culture will be like?
9. Did you speak English every day this week or only sometimes?

Part Two: Opinions

10. Do your friends have ideas about where you should study?
11. Where do your parents want you to study?
12. What do you recommend to future students who are coming to Canada? To this city? To this university?

Part Three: Let's talk about this past week.

Taking about the Log <end>

Week Five Interview

Part One: Reconnecting

Thank you so much for meeting with me today. I am sure you are busy these days.

1. We are almost at the end of our interviews. Do you have any questions for me?
2. Do you want to tell me about anything about your experience in Canada, in London or here at the university?
3. How would you describe Canadian culture from your experience? What did you learn about Canadian culture that really helped you?

Taking about the Log

4. Are you busy these days?
5. Do you have anything you want to tell me about last week?

Look at activities and comments from the log and ask pertinent questions.

Can we meet next week at this time?

Please contact me if this appointment time is not good, and we will plan another.

Thank you so much for talking with me. I enjoyed meeting with you.

<end>

Week Six Interview (30 minutes) Greet participant as usual.

1. This is our last interview. Do you have any questions for me?
2. Do you want to tell me about anything more about your experience in Canada, in London or here at the university?
3. At what time of day do you like to do your English homework? Who do you usually study with?
4. What kind of homework do you usually have?
e.g. Listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar.
5. What kind of homework do you think is most important for you?
6. What do your friends think about the homework they have to do?
7. When you are not doing homework, what do you usually do these days?
8. What would you really like to do that you haven't done here yet?
9. Since arriving in Canada, what English skills have been most useful?

10. Since arriving, what communication situations have been most difficult to understand?
11. Are Canadian social situations easy to understand?
12. Who helps you know what to do when you need information or a service?
13. Have you used any of the student services here at the university?
14. How is your life here different from what you imagined before you came?
15. What do people usually tell you about student life in Canada? Does your experience match what people say?
16. Where do you think you will be one year from now?

Taking about the Log Review it and ask pertinent questions.

My last questions are about the future.

17. What do you think your future will be like?
18. Where do you hope to spend your future?
19. Can you recommend anything for this university to do in the future that will be good for students similar to you?

Thank you so much for talking with me in our interviews. Your ideas are very good. I enjoyed meeting with you and you can contact me any time about this research or about our interviews.

<end>

Appendix IV: Time Log for Participants

Instructions: Note your activities on the chart and information such as location, people, experiences

Date	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7:00 am							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							
1:00 pm							
2:00							
3:00							
4:00							
5:00							
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							

Instructions: If you wish, you may check off any activities(Yes/No) that you did during the week and add any notes about cultural experience.

Activity:	Yes/No	With whom?	Total Hours (approx)	Experiences
Shopping				
Doing Email				
Watching video				
Skyping				
Watching TV				
Listening to Music				
Talking to friends				
Talking to classmates (not during class)				
Reading for fun				
Going to the gym				
Other fitness				
Going to a bar/coffee shop				
Eating a meal				
Hygiene				
Cleaning				
English Homework: Reading: Listening: Writing: Grammar: Other:				
Other Activity:				
Other:				
Other:				

Instructions: This page is optional. The researcher may use this page during or after the interview.

Something new? Something interesting?

Activity:

Cultural experiences:

Language Experiences:

Activity:

Cultural experiences:

Language Experiences:

VITA

Name: Joan Margret Plonski

Place of Birth: Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

Year of Birth: 1963

Post Secondary Education and Degrees: McMaster University
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
1981-1987 Hons. B. A.

Brock University
St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada
1989-1990 B. Ed.

Related work Instructor

Experience: Kyungnam Foreign Language Institute
Masan, Kyungnam Province, Republic of Korea
1996-1998

Teacher
Canadian Forces Language School
CFB Borden, Ontario, Canada
1998-2012