

**It was Neither Confucian nor Confusion: Dynamics of Intercultural Sensitivity among
East-Asian Students at Canadian Universities**

by

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Abstract

International students from Confucian heritage culture countries are often perceived by westerners as having low intercultural communication competence (ICC) (Zhu & Bresnahan, 2018). In popular media and mainstream cultural-psychological research, Confucian culture is often the scapegoat for subjecting East Asian international students (EAISs) to cultural archetypes of reticence, obedience, unassailability, and similar. In the present study, intercultural sensitivity was used to measure the affective domain of ICC, and quantitative analyses were performed to investigate 1) whether international students (EAISs vs non-EAISs) reported different capacities of intercultural sensitivity in cross-cultural interaction. 2) Did EAISs particularly identify with Confucian values as widely perceived? 3) Did EAISs rate stronger social confusion than non-EAISs that may contribute to low ICC? 4) How did social and cultural factors of international students' adjustment impact their intercultural sensitivity? A total of 120 international students enrolled at Canadian universities completed an online questionnaire. The results of the group comparison show that there was no difference in intercultural sensitivity and identification of Confucian cultural attributes between EAISs and non-EAISs. However, non-EAISs unexpectedly reported much higher social confusion than EAISs, as measured by culture shock and language apprehension. Results from hierarchical regressions indicate that variations in in-classroom reticence appeared to be solely accounted for by social confusion—language apprehension in particular. Meanwhile, changes in social confusion and identification of Confucian values jointly explained the changes in general intercultural sensitivity and attitudes toward global citizenship. Overall, the findings suggest that it is futile to assume that attitudes of ICC are the result of cultural differences, when the differences may be minimal or diminished for students studying abroad. The alternative explanation is that cultural values that were thought to be unique to Confucian heritage may not be felt and identified

exclusively by EAISs. Additionally, EAISs in western countries might not feel as much social confusion as commonly thought about East Asian students who had little or no overseas experiences. The findings underscore the caution not to compartmentalize culture but to understand it in terms of similarity. The study advocates further research to reconceptualize ICC among contextualized experiences of EAISs and to examine 'actual' cultural differences rather than uncritically accepting 'general' differences among international students.

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Lists of Abbreviations

ICC	Intercultural Communication Competence
EAIS	East-Asian International Student
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
WTC	Willingness to Communicate
IS	Intercultural Sensitivity
GC	Global Citizenship
GCE	Global Citizenship Education
CS	Culture Shock
I-C	Individualism-Collectivism
PD	Power Distance
UA	Uncertainty Avoidance
M-F	Masculinity-Femininity
LTO	Long-term Orientation
STO	Short-Term Orientation
VC	Vertical Collectivism
GLM	General Linear Model
IV	Independent Variable
DV	Dependent Variable
<i>i.i.d.</i> $N(0, \sigma^2)$	Independent, Identically Distributed, Normality of Errors
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor
SD	Standard Deviation

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Many people assume that tertiary education in developed countries offers resources for students to achieve research opportunities and cultivate professional skills that improve employment competencies (de Wit & Altbach, 2020). At the societal level, with an increasing emphasis on globalization of market economies during the last two decades, there is a greater need for higher education to follow such an agenda as well (Stroud, 2010). A growing global economic network requires a sophisticated level of scientific and technological talent to play in the world's most competitive knowledge terrain. The need for producing such talent has important consequences for the broader domain of internationalization of education, which is a country's important strategic response to globalization, and a vow of silence to the "global knowledge economy" (de Wit & Altbach, 2020).

Among the major trading nations, Canada has the most diverse immigrant population in regard to ethnic background. It is also one of the most popular destinations for international students to fulfill their various social aspirations (Volante et al., 2017). After the Canadian Multiculturalism Act was passed in 1988, Canada has been continually developing a positive reputation across the globe, well-known for its inclusion of many cultures, globally recognized tertiary education, and an "open-door" federal approach toward immigration and integration, including work-and-study options, post-graduation work permits, and a skill-selective immigration policy (i.e., *Express Entry*; Johnstone & Lee, 2017). The above assets are some reasons that prompt international students to choose to study in Canada over other countries.

Accordingly, the enrollment for international students in tertiary education in Canada has been increasing for years. Statistics Canada (2020) shows that over the past decade (2009-2019), international student enrollment in postsecondary programs has expanded from

101,304 to 318,153, with international students representing 16.2% of the total student population, a remarkable growth that was only interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic since 2020. As of 2017, approximately 40% of Canada's international students come from East Asian countries such as China, South Korea, Vietnam, Japan, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, all of which come from Confucian heritage cultures that deeply value family cohesion, filial obligation, solidarity, and obedience from the western frame of reference (CBIE, 2018; Pyke, 2000).

Statement of the Problem

Moving overseas for the first time to an alien environment could be an anxiety-provoking experience for an international student as they often experience downward mobility from the membership of dominant groups to the racialized minority status, and perceived barriers in transitioning to different social structures (Fritz et al., 2008; Newsome & Cooper, 2016). A large body of studies has examined the adjustment dynamics of international student groups across different cultures in North America (Chirkov et al., 2007; Chirkov et al., 2008; Fritz et al., 2008; Redmond & Bunyi, 1993; Sam, 2001; Ward et al., 2001; Yang et al., 2006). The results point to a clear trend, with western students (Australians, Europeans, and Americans) that migrate reporting higher life satisfaction and fewer challenges adjusting to life in the U.S. and Canada than non-western (Asian and African) students.

Given the large proportion of East Asian international students (EAIS) from Confucian heritage culture enrolled in Canadian universities, this study focuses on the adjustment factors of EAIS and the influence of those factors on their integration into Canadian universities. My rationale for choosing universities over other educational settings like elementary and middle schools is indicated by two reasons:

1) The impact of enculturation/socialization is significantly more prominent on mature students than on younger students (Yoo, 2014).

2) In Canada, practices of international student recruitment in universities are directly associated with citizenship and immigration regulation, attracting skillful students as ideal immigrants who aspire to achieve permanent residency (Al-Haque, 2019; Scott et al., 2015).

As the student body of Canadian universities becomes more diverse in the era of internationalization of education, the development of *Intercultural Communication Competence* (ICC) is often considered one of the most important goals for Canadian universities. ICC refers to the “active possession by individuals of qualities which contribute to effective intercultural communication” (Ilie, 2019, p. 265). While most Canadian universities are comprised of a multicultural student population, EAIS often experience barriers to intercultural interaction at school and speaking in class (Zhu & Bresnahan, 2018). Popular discourse is often prone to fundamental attribution error, which suggests that East Asians are less capable of intercultural communication as they are “culturally conditioned to be silent and passive... [because of] the Confucian culture” (Shao & Gao, 2016, p. 115; Zhu & Bresnahan, 2018). Such discourse is erroneous and generalized based on “the impressions of a small number of teachers or professors registered in small scale surveys, many of which were conducted outside Asian countries” (Cheng, 2000, p. 445). Such discourse goes hand in hand with East Asian stereotypes such as “model minority” (extremely wanted) and “unassimilated others” (extremely unwanted) which implies the very notion of western lives based on bipolar values of liberation and assimilation (Wu, 2017).

There is a mismatch between the western and eastern standards in terms of perceptions of values and behaviour that dictate communication competence. The Eurocentric frame of reference generally equates characteristics like confidence and self-disclosure with communication competence, whereas the Asiatic communication styles, including non-

confrontational and non-verbal communication, are often taken out of context and described as passivity and reticence, respectively (Lu & Hsu, 2008; Xiao & Chen, 2009). However, the western criteria of communication competence are representative of only westerners in the sense that they do not recognize different communicative styles. An influential article by Cheng (2000), entitled *Asian students' reticence revisited*, shifted the focus of future research from a Eurocentric perspective to social- and culture-specific causes of EAIS's so-called communication incompetence.

Many studies on individuals' capacity to successfully adjust to a foreign culture have focused on the affective dimension of ICC, including the willingness to communicate (Chen & Starosta, 1996; McDowell, 2000). In the university classroom context, willingness to communicate is a more complex and dynamic phenomenon that involves international students' heritage cultural context and their social experiences in the host country (Cheng, 2000; Shao & Gao, 2016; Lu & Hsu, 2008; Ruble & Zhang, 2013; Wen & Clément, 2003; Zhou et al., 2005). Since students tend to use their first language (L1) in their heritage culture and second language (L2) in their host country, this study specifies the heritage context as L1 context and L2 context as the context of the host country. In a general university condition, studies on the affective domain of ICC have ultimately led to the development of the concept of *intercultural sensitivity*, namely, having an open-mind attitude, positive and non-stereotypical perception of self and others, and satisfactory emotional response during intercultural encounters (Chen & Starosta, 1996; Chen & Portalla, 2009; Ilie, 2019; Sercu, 2004; Wang & Zhou, 2016).

In the Confucian heritage culture (L1 culture for most EAIS), social norms are important agents of control that are highly respected and not violated, deviation from norms can lead to peer criticism, loss of face, shame, and other consequences (Roland, 2020). Confucian teaching methods also hold that the cultivation of peace and harmony is the

objective of education and the ultimate goal for self-actualization (Hertler, 2015; Ryu, 2010). Therefore, listening skill is often regarded as a necessary condition of superior linguistic skills to avoid clumsy discourses that destroy harmonious relationships, and silence is the medium for active listening (Lu & Hsu, 2008). A few studies argue that many EAIS choose a silent strategy in class when they perceive the dialogue as incompatible with certain elements of the context (e.g., time limit, class size, course difficulty) that may cause inconvenience to others (Jackson, 2001; Liu, 2017; Shao & Gao, 2016; Zhou et al., 2005). When EAIS move to a foreign (L2) context such as a Canadian university, their WTC may be inhibited by social stress, causing them to socialize or make friends only with those sharing the same culture, and feel unsafe to speak in class (Zheng, 2010; Zhou et al., 2005).

Racism is also a real issue in Canadian universities. In terms of the affective dimension, racism takes the form of microaggression, which occurs when a person holds biased attitudes toward racial differences with limited conscious awareness of them (Sue et al., 2007). Examples of microaggressions include the devaluing of cultural values, homogeneity of perspectives, ostracization, attribution of traits, and colour-blindness to racism (e.g., “I don’t see race”) (Sue et al., 2007). The act of microaggression is experienced differently by EAIS and all other racialized international students with distinct phenotypical traits, values, and languages (Yeo et al., 2019). For EAIS, the specific microaggression targets these students’ reputations for having limited communication skills, a trait that is uncommon among other racialized international students (Yeo et al., 2009). Thus, EAIS have distinct social experiences in adjusting to Canadian university life compared to other international students. In Canada, many people hold the seemingly positive “model minority” stereotype for EAIS as hardworking, resilient, disciplined, and excellent in STEM, traits that embody the deeper implication wherein racialized minorities can overcome systemic discrimination and lingering trauma simply through self-competence, are cunningly used as

racist rhetoric to oppress other people of colour (Padgett et al., 2020; Ruble & Zhang, 2013). Negative stereotypes about EAIS in Canadian universities often describe their inability to communicate interculturally—alone, silent, shy, passive, aloof, overly polite, perpetual foreigners, and lacking common sense (Cheng, 2000; Liu & Jackson, 2008; Padgett et al., 2020; Zhu & Bresnahan, 2018). Those characteristics are wound into a spiral. Such generalizations dangerously distort and romanticize EAIS's experiences and behavioural predisposition in western classrooms.

Behind the mosaic of passive and reticent personalities, more research is needed to understand whether EAIS struggle with intercultural communication as common stereotypes suggest, and the various adjustment factors that determine their ICC at Canadian universities. It is common in cross-cultural research to use cultural differences and L2 proficiency to dictate such incompetence and use reticence and passivity as evidence to justify it, rather than to recognize that EAIS's abilities and viewpoints are constantly reinforced driven by socialization experiences. Since attitude to ICC is often associated with the affective domain of ICC or intercultural sensitivity, this study will examine how differences in adjusting to Canadian universities shape the intercultural sensitivity of EAIS and other international students (non-EAIS) that contributes to mutual respect for cultural diversity in intercultural interaction/learning. Non-EAIS is a large group that includes international students who are not from Confucian heritage culture, more generally, not from East Asian countries. In this study, I use "social" and "cultural" as two adjustment factors to describe the differences between EAIS and non-EAIS in coping with social confusions in intercultural interaction, and Confucian cultural dispositions that may potentially regulate the adjustment gap.

Purposes of the Study

The first purpose of this study aims to compare differences in ICC between EAIS and non-EAIS. In-classroom intercultural sensitivity (WTC during the lecture) and out-of-class

sensitivity are constructed as two sublevels of the affective domain of ICC. Simply put, this study takes place in both in-class and out-class settings as I attempt to capture a better understanding of international students' attitudes regarding intercultural interaction in universities. Besides, a third domain named global citizenship is added to capture how students react to social justice issues, diversity, and the glaring impact of globalization.

Next, the study will examine the influence of social and cultural factors on students' intercultural sensitivity. As this study attempts to understand EAIS's intercultural sensitivity during their context shift from the local (L1) to the intercultural (L2) level, failing to consider the social factors of transition to a new culture in intercultural communication studies can easily lead to an overstatement of cultural differences. This undermines the epistemological goal of establishing a less stereotypical cross-cultural approach. This study will compare the impact of social factors adjusting to Canadian universities on EAIS and non-EAIS. If social factors do differ (i.e., social barriers are experienced differently) between EAIS and non-EAIS, it may moderate the strength of cultural factors in affecting intercultural sensitivity.

Finally, the study seeks to determine whether social factors are related to cultural factors. This step can effectively identify hidden relationships between different factors, so future research can address potential explanations for these relationships.

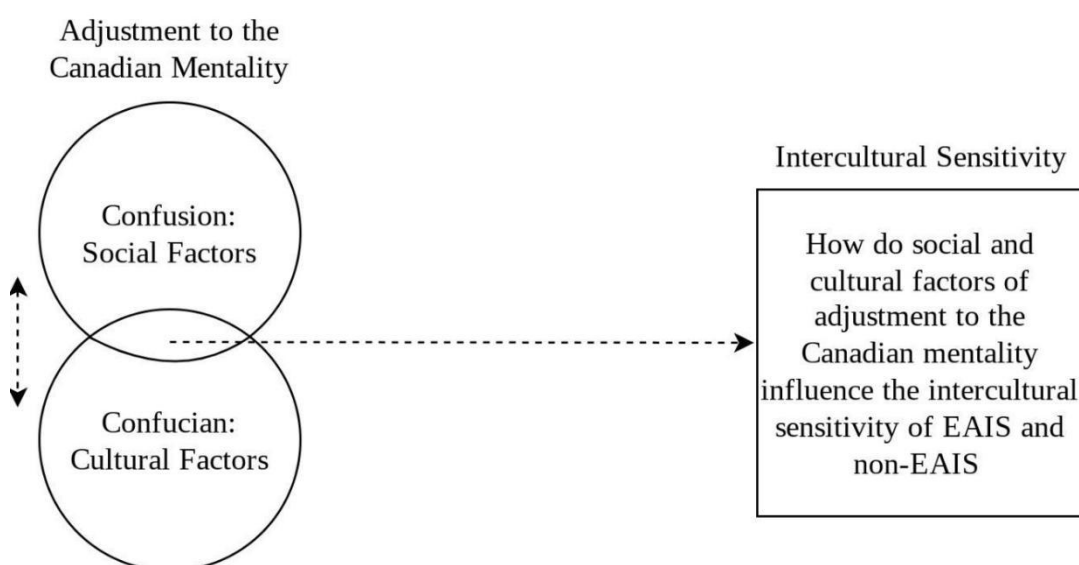
- Research Question 1: What differences in intercultural sensitivity can be observed between EAIS and non-EAIS in Canadian universities?
- Research Question 2: What are the impacts of social and cultural factors on the intercultural sensitivity of international students?
- Research Question 3: What is the interplay among social and cultural factors?

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Much of the literature on EAIS's school reticence in intercultural environments is based on the preconception or prejudice that they are incompetent in intercultural communication (Cheng, 2000; Shao & Gao, 2016). Thus, there is an urgent need for this literature review to debunk this myth by expanding its scope to a wider domain of literature that incorporates how EAIS are socialized with Confucian traditions and the barriers they face in adjusting to foreign environments. This review will be arranged into two themes: intercultural sensitivity and adjustment to the Canadian mentality (see Figure 1). Before I discuss these themes, I will briefly outline the globalization context underlying tertiary education and the meaning-making of the Canadian identity.

Figure 1

Situating the Literature



The Globalization Context

During the last two decades, globalization has stimulated rapid changes in educational policies favouring a neoliberal model which serve four purposes: 1) privileging the free market rationality which aims for greater economic freedom and competitiveness 2) shifting the focus of education from state level to global market 3) limiting the federal spending on

educational services and de-regulating economic activities 4) disseminating a capitalist ideology that focuses on individualistic values while portraying other ideological systems as primitive (Igarashi & Saito, 2014; Thompson, 2019; Younis & Hatim, 2021). In 1995, the World Trade Organization (WTO) was established with a specific mandate to make international “trade of education services”, and as such, the idea that education as both a public good and a human right was diminished (Verger, 2013). This strategy allows major trading nations, such as the U.S., EU, UK, Canada, Japan, and Australia to link their interests to the agenda of international organizations, thus setting up the global educational standards and pressuring other nations to agree with the specific policy models, which in part makes the international collaboration much easier for approaching global issues and risks (Beck & Ritter, 1992; Verger, 2013).

In Canada and the U.S., the goal for tertiary education originally aimed to promote their national ideologies through universities’ direct financial reliance on federal-state funding; but with globalization, this relationship has been disrupted, because many tertiary education institutions today receive a sharp decline in state funding and are seldom regulated by the federal-state tertiary educational policy framework; in fact, each institution has their own internationalization managerial structure (Crăciun, 2018). Compared to tertiary education in other countries like China—where internationalization agenda strongly and explicitly adheres to promoting the national ideology—Canada and the U.S. commit to a largely decentralized policy framework, so that each institution formulates its developmental plans with little federal-state funding, but still operates reactively within the neoliberal democratic context (Liu & Lin, 2016; Udas & Stagg, 2019).

The Canadian Identity

Volante et al. (2017) describe adjustment to Canadian sociocultural reality as “active participation in the social and cultural lives of their communities and affiliation with

Canadian identity” (p. 332). The notion of Canadian identity is constructed by bridging one’s native ethnic identities and their new identities within the sociopolitical context of Canada. The Canadian Multicultural Act of 1988 highlights the enhancement and protection of multicultural heritage, equitable participation and treatment of all individuals, and commitment to multiculturalism “as a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian heritage and identity” (CMA 3.1.a; 3.1.b; 3.1.c). Critics argue that multiculturalism allows Canada to “sidestep progressive’s dilemma,” a discourse that emphasizes Canadian national identity as humanitarian, democratic, tolerant, and benevolent, and that Canadian identity is therefore more “progressive and superior to other [undemocratic] cultures” (Lee, 2013, p. 5-21). This leads Canadians to fall into a fallacy of imagining themselves living in a just country while turning a blind eye to its shameful colonial and racist histories, and thereby promotes a flawed sense of competence to be an active citizen of the society in removing societal barriers for disadvantaged others (Lee, 2013; Li, 2003). Race played only a minor part in the 1988 Canadian Multicultural Act, while words like culture, heritage, diversity, and equal were more frequently mentioned; the discourse of race is made more rhetorically than pragmatically, and is more associated with eliminating discrimination than with underscoring the main structure that causes discrimination, making multiculturalist policies look like an ad hoc patch to satisfy public demands of social justice. Too often under the multicultural context, stereotypes such as model minority and unassimilated others are heralded by the white majority (or some assimilated minorities) as good and bad moral definitions of East Asians, and one can easily switch between the two extremes according to their views of East Asians’ commitment and participation to multicultural lives (De Souza, 2018).

Intercultural Sensitivity

Intercultural Communication Competence

Hall's (1959) influential work *The silent language* laid the foundation for studies done on intercultural communication, in which he highlighted the implicit role of culture in producing unconscious and nonverbal communicative behaviours. One dimension of intercultural communication studies is ICC which began to gain relevance in academia in the 1980s, the period when the modern wave of globalization rapidly permeated all parts of the world, when Canada developed its multicultural policy, and when China began its economic reform (Arasaratnam & Doerfel, 2005). In the context of globalization and multiculturalism, ICC scholars in research fields such as vocational training, education, business, and policymaking are aware of the increasing exchanges between cultures and the need for developing ICC in the removal of cultural barriers (Arasaratnam & Doerfel, 2005). ICC comprises of two components: communicative competence and intercultural competence (Douglas & Rosvold, 2018).

Communicative Competence. Communicative competence is closely related to ICC because it associates with “attitudes, values, and motivations concerning language [and] its features and uses... and attitude toward the interrelation of language with the other code of communicative conduct” (Hymes, 1972, p. 278). In other words, communicative competence is not restricted to linguistic/grammatical competence, but is the internalization of implicit sociocultural knowledge and rules of interactive behaviour underlying linguistic expression. Linguistic competence demonstrates the ability and knowledge of sufficient literal utterances that are structured in compliance with the appropriate use of “vocabulary, grammar, syntax, semantics, and phonology” (Byram, 1997; Douglas & Rosvold, 2018, p. 26). This reflects only the cognitive realm of linguistic performance and is thought to be “unaffected by grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors” (Chomsky, 1965, p. 3). In contrast, sociolinguistic competence deals with the socialization process in which sociocultural meanings are produced and learnt

(Douglas & Rosvold, 2018). Fluent monolinguals can exhibit literal mastery of communication in the common language in an ideally monocultural dialogic circumstance independent of social differences, but empirically such a society does not exist in a multicultural era (Coste et al., 2012). Therefore, mastering sociolinguistic competence is a crucial factor in developing linguistic intuition in a realistic social interaction. Krashen (1988) believes that grammatical competence only accounts for a small part of communicative competence, because social knowledge is unconsciously transmitted through the platform of culture rather than through fixed grammatical rules. Multilinguals, who are immersed in a heterogeneous linguistic community, can develop both cross-cultural knowledge and rules of different languages during linguistic acquisition. As a result, they often have more ideally communicative competence than monolinguals (Hymes, 1972). Lyttle et al.'s (2011) study supports Hymes's (1972) argument, which shows that individuals living in a country different than their home countries have greater ICC than mono-cultured individuals.

In addition to linguistic and sociolinguistic competence, Byram (1997) also regards discourse competence as the third factor of communicative competence; according to a simple definition, discourse competence is "the ability to use, discover, and negotiate strategies for the production and interpretation of dialogue texts" (p. 48). To sum up, sociocultural knowledge is linked to linguistic competence via discourse competence, in which the ability to negotiate conventions of social discourse depends on proper language structure and sensitivity of social meanings and connotations of the language (Byram, 1997).

EAS are examples of multilinguals, but they often encounter structural barriers to achieving communicative competence. Over the past two decades, a lot of East Asian countries have experienced increasing exports of international students to English-speaking countries. In countries such as South Korea and China, since English is often considered a global asset to economic growth, government policies mandate the teaching of English from

primary school onwards (Lim, 2016). Despite remarkable investment in English teaching resources in both countries, Chinese and Korean students generally have low English proficiency and low confidence in conversational English. Their interaction (speaking and listening) levels are significantly lower than literacy (reading and writing) levels (Lim, 2016). In China, the popular term “deaf and mute English” indicates a phenomenon where the “traditional mode of English teaching [in Chinese classroom produces] students who cannot speak English well and have poor listening comprehension” (Wei, 2011, p. 488).

In the English classroom of China and Korea, the evaluation criteria of students’ English skills often focus on getting higher scores on the exam, while omitting the evaluation of verbal communication ability and understanding materials related to English sociocultural knowledge. English class is teacher-centred, and students are passive learners (Lim, 2016). In the limited class time, English teachers are pressured to translate as many English words and teach as much grammar as possible (Grammar-Translation Method), without letting students have opportunities to rehearse their speech and understand the contextual usage of words in class (Zhou, 2020). Thus, students seem to master grammatical abilities, but they do not have enough sociolinguistic and discourse competence to make speech acts unconscious, effortless, and strategic (Douglas & Rosvold, 2018). Liu and Xie (2013) performed a study on students majoring in English at a Chinese university and found that students’ English communicative competence was low despite their sufficient linguistic skills.

Intercultural Competence. Since sociocultural knowledge and discourse competence plays a crucial role in communicative competence, it is also related to the capacity to produce and interpret socially meaningful discourse in different relational contexts. Although scholars in different research fields have theorized intercultural competence in numerous ways, intercultural competence generally refers to the skills to maintain proper and rewarding communicative behaviours with individuals from various cultural backgrounds. Intercultural

competence is a dynamic ability that can lead to a desirable shift in individual perspectives to being more adaptive, empathetic, flexible, and ethno-relative, which in turn enhances individuals' observable behaviour in intercultural communication (Deardorff, 2006). According to Deardorff (2006), intercultural competence consists of three interrelated components: attitude, knowledge, and skills. Specifically, attitude represents the affective/emotional state that individuals experience while interacting with people from unfamiliar cultures, including respect for cultural diversity, openness to intercultural learning and interaction, and curiosity to tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty. Knowledge describes the cognitive resources to grasp cross-cultural information, develop deep sociolinguistic awareness, cultural self-awareness, and comprehension of cultural-specific knowledge in the process of intercultural contact. Finally, skills are generally considered behavioural skills and include the ability to "listen, observe, interpret, analyze, evaluate, and relate" (Deardorff, 2006, p. 254).

Byram (1997) and Okayama et al. (2001) point out that attitude is a necessary condition for acquiring knowledge and skills for desired outcomes of cultural competence, despite that people may possess an intuition of these knowledges and skills. Bennett (1986) also pinpoints that when individuals experience a change from a comfortable monocultural environment to an ambiguous multicultural situation, their affective state toward perceived differences will determine their attitudes toward respecting and accepting differences and coping with difficulties in handling intercultural situations. Ideally, as individuals possess more cognitive and behavioural abilities to deal with people with different worldviews, their intercultural abilities will improve, but the risk of inhibiting this improvement is due to affective difficulties resulting from their deep-seated ethnocentric beliefs (i.e., their cultures are superior to others) (Hammer et al., 2003). Culture, according to Tylor's 1871 definition, is not only habitual and shared collectively, but also self-centred. In a traditional sense, it

engenders a unilineal and top-down positioning of cultural importance derived from evolutionary thinking (e.g., barbarian to civilized), which posits the superiority of one's ruling culture in evaluating ways of other cultures. Relativism is another way of looking at culture and is mainly grounded in the work of Franz Boas, which perceives the “ideas and practices enacted by members of a given culture” situated in the context of that culture rather than owns (Bennett, 1986; Sobo, 2020, p. 71).

According to Bennett's (1986) intercultural competence model, when individuals become less defensive against losing their own identity and more receptive to other people's worldviews, they will develop from ethnocentric perspectives to an ethno-relative appreciation of cultural differences, and their sense of incongruity toward cultural distance is weakened. This reflects an adaptive shift in individuals' affective states in response to perceived differences. Intercultural competence may be used interchangeably with other concepts such as global awareness or global citizenship, which refers to the ability of “seeing ourselves as member of a world community, as well as participants in our local contexts, knowing that we share the future with others” (Bennett & Salonen, 2007, p. 46; Douglas and Rosvold, 2018; Hanada, 2015).

Connection to Intercultural Sensitivity

According to Chen & Starosta (1996), ICC incorporates three concepts – intercultural sensitivity, intercultural awareness, and intercultural effectiveness, respectively measuring the affective (attitude), cognitive (knowledge), and behavioural (skill) processes of individuals adjusting to an environment with people from different cultures. Intercultural sensitivity is the most studied of the three dimensions. Because for a long time, the field of intercultural communication has been thwarted by the shortage of effective instruments to theorize the other two concepts (Davila et al., 2013). The term intercultural sensitivity pertains to the attitude and affective desire of an individual to engage in intercultural

communication (Bennett, 1986; Chen & Starosta, 1996). Because EAIS tend to come from a more homogenous background than non-EAIS, it is of utmost importance to acknowledge that their sensitivity toward different cultures may be influenced by being used to living with people who share the same values, norms, and traditions, without many opportunities to spend time in in-depth conversations with foreigners. In one study by Morales (2017), Korean high school students reported significantly lower intercultural sensitivity than non-Korean counterparts. Although a person may possess culturally relevant knowledge and skills, having an ethno-relative attitude to cultural differences is a prerequisite for communicative and intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006). In a university with a multicultural student population, intercultural sensitivity generally measures students' willingness to communicate (WTC), the affective processes of interacting with peers from culturally diverse backgrounds, and attitudes toward becoming a globally-minded person (i.e., a global citizen) (Chen & Starosta, 1996; McDowell, 2000).

Willingness to Communicate. In the L2 classroom context, WTC is a concept that measures one's perception of their interest to participate in or initiate intercultural interaction (Logan et al., 2014). Low WTC in intercultural interaction has been demonstrated by numerous studies as a suppressor of intercultural sensitivity, which is associated with a high level of ethnocentrism and identification with one's own culture (Lin & Rancer, 2003; Logan et al., 2014, Neuliep & McCroskey, 1997). Using between-groups designs, Lu and Hsu (2008) found that the WTC of Americans to Chinese students was higher than the WTC of Chinese to American students in both Chinese and American universities, but that study did not evaluate in-classroom WTC.

Shao and Gao (2016) have argued that students' WTC in L1 is more associated with their predisposition to participate in speech than contextual factors that affect their free choice, while WTC in L2 seems to be related to the perceived readiness to engage in

discourse (e.g., think thoroughly to become ready for speech and unforeseen responses) “at a particular time with specific persons” embedded in the medium of cultural and social conditions (p. 117). Further on perceived readiness, Cao (2011) theorized that WTC in L2 classroom relies on lingo-affective factor (e.g., foreign language anxiety), meaning that the fluctuation of WTC is due to their perceived communication competence and sense of communicative security of students towards teachers and instructional methods, to makes it easier or harder for them to feel ready to speak. Similarly, Peng (2014) suggests that contextual factors, such as a relaxing classroom atmosphere and the need for oral speech, may stimulate voluntary classroom speaking behaviour (not to be confused with the assumption of improving WTC in class). WTC also has something to do with the nature of curricula where discussions are held—subjects of which typically follow a traditional knowledge transfer routine may reduce in-classroom WTC compared to those courses that stimulate students’ enthusiasm for communicative activities (Peng, 2014).

Given this paper measures WTC as the general attitude to speaking in an L2 classroom (affective domain), the caveat is that students’ self-knowledge of their WTC might be more dynamic than the scope of this paper allows. Put succinctly, students may judge their WTC with a more intuitive effort based on immediate senses of themselves and their surroundings, or using more conscious reasoning by evaluating their actual classroom speaking behaviour. In this paper, however, what WTC can show is the link between students’ in-classroom WTC and influential factors like L2 apprehension, subjects of study, and perceived readiness toward unforeseeable communicative consequences (see Long-term Orientation).

Affective Processes of Intercultural Sensitivity. The affective processes during intercultural interaction are generally regarded as emotional skills which enable individuals to avoid dissonant feelings by observing and reconciling with differences in individual values,

thoughts, and behaviours embedded in cultures (Chen & Starosta, 2000). When exposed to new cultures, interculturally sensitive individuals are equipped with the skills to overcome the “denial or concealing of cultural differences,” motivate themselves to “understand, appreciate, and accept differences among culture,” maintain positive feelings amid challenges of intercultural communication, and acquire a degree of mixed identity (Chen & Starosta, 1998, p. 231; Chen & Starosta, 2000; Davila et al., 2013, p. 9). Accordingly, Chen and Starosta (1998) identify six affective qualities that make a person interculturally sensitive: self-esteem (having a high degree of confidence and self-worth to cope with interactive challenges), self-monitoring (being attentive to social cues and others’ expressions and utilizing them to guide appropriate self-expression), open-mindedness (being willing to accept alternative viewpoints and express their emotions to others), empathy (being observant of others’ inner feelings and showing considerations to them), interaction involvement (having the ability to continue reciprocal conversational patterns by comprehending others and responding appropriately to communication), and non-judgment (enjoying deep communication with others without making superficial judgments). Based on the six affective qualities in intercultural communication, Chen and Starosta (2000) develop five constructs for conceptualizing the affective processes of intercultural sensitivity, namely, interaction engagement, respect for cultural differences, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment, and interaction attentiveness.

Attitudes Toward Global Citizenship. Adler (2008) contends that willingness to give up ethnocentrism and narrow-mindedness is the prerequisite for developing global citizenship, which has a positive impact on one’s intercultural sensitivity. However, little is known to date about EAIS’s account of how their experiences of school adjustment and worldview affect their construction of identity, understanding, and attitude toward global citizenship. Lin and Rancer (2003) and Neuliep and McCroskey (1997) suggest that while

ethnocentrism secures harmony and cohesion within a cultural group, it is also a vehicle to out-group bias, prejudice, and intercultural communication incompetence. In the Confucian worldview and glossary, there is an ancient concept called *Tianxia* 天下 (“all under heaven”), which is commonly used among Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans. It is used to describe a Sinocentric global system that treats China as the indispensable central state of the world and less civilized peripheral tribes as “barbarians” (Babone, 2017). After the Ming dynasty, China lost its dominance in East Asia, and Korea uses *Tianxia* to describe itself as the core culture of Confucianism (Berger, 2015). Due to the long-term impact of ethnocentrism in Confucian-influenced countries, cultivating global citizenship and intercultural sensitivity requires EAIS from a Confucian background to reduce their ethnocentrism and be more open to people from other cultures.

In a doctoral dissertation on intercultural contact and intercultural sensitivity of Chinese international students in Canadian universities, Weber (2011) discovered that Chinese students in the study chose not to identify themselves as global citizens and asserted that they belong to the collectivistic culture into which they were born, rather than to the whole world. The finding illustrates the hierarchical (as opposed to egalitarian) nature of collectivism, which puts the interest of culture and people of the similar kind first. More surprisingly, the study also found that Chinese students’ intercultural sensitivity decreased after a year of academic study and communicating with domestic students. The lack of identification with global citizenship among Chinese international students or potential EAIS may also have something to do with social stressors they experience at university, while at the same time having to take responsibility for and care for social justice problems that are not of their making. Belonging to the collectivistic culture became complicated with nationalism. It establishes a sense of solidarity among fellow people based on one’s national identity, instead of the greater humanity. In the face of diplomatic conflicts between China

and Canada and between China and the U.S. that have intensified in recent years, Chinese students may find global citizenship a threat to their Sino-centric identity. Pena (2015) suggests that the active citizenship framework in socialist China is quite different from that of global citizenship, that is, the purpose of global citizenship aims to provide prosperity to everyone, while the Chinese version of active citizenship believes in the “socialist dream of rejuvenating the Chinese nation... [and] prosperity for all of her people [Chinese]” (p. 287). This not only reflects the social significance of national “belonging-identity” in China but also a strong sense of in/out-group distinction and Sino-centrism (Zhicheng, 2020).

Global Citizenship Education. The issue here is the role of education in improving EAIS’s attitudes towards global citizenship. In parallel with multiculturalist policies, Universities Canada recognizes that international students are crucial to the Canadian vision of global democracy wherein they introduce multicultural perspectives and diversity to Canadian universities (Cudmore, 2005). Canadian universities also serve as active agents in creating global citizenship education (GCE) that prepares students to increase individual responsibility, intercultural sensitivity, social justice and decolonial awareness, and commitment to the democratic process (Rathburn & Lexier, 2016). Nowadays, GCE has become an educational trend and slogan for universities as a response to the internationalization of education to attract future international students with global perspectives in a pragmatic sense. However, the downside of GCE, as argued by Pais and Costa (2020), is that universities’ financial and reputation concerns force themselves toward corporatist, competitive, and hegemonic views of global education that erode ethical GCE among students and subordinate GCE to the neoliberal market rationality. At the same time, it undermines students’ ethical and accountable citizenship development as the key to social change.

In the teaching about global citizenship, conventional curricula, textbooks, and educators are ill-equipped to address issues such as privilege, poverty, and historical power inequality underlying the world's conflicts. Mikander (2016) argues that GCE initiatives are "too often produced in particular Northern or Western contexts... material relationships are often presented as if they were not historical or structural, but the result of fortune" (p. 9). She further points out that in addition to normative and objective knowledge, one's critical thinking is also embedded in their own material reality. Objective discourse sounds something like this—a country that is rich in natural resources is poor because it has wasted too much money on war expenses. This statement falls into the trap of conventional wisdom which fails to provide any historical and critical analyses about issues like colonialism; it portrays the country as having failed to 'earn' its privileged position in the world as a result of misfortune and militarism. Thus, discussions of privilege, poverty, and historical power inequality should not be situated around feeling lucky and certainly not reducing one's misfortune to their failures. Different approaches could be taken in a curriculum to focus on discussions that address issues such as the roots of inequality, the link between wealth and poverty, the relationship between privileged and exploited, the connection between local and global, telling of different stories than the normative narrative, and the role of power in contesting inequalities in a globalized world (Mikander, 2016). Words like privilege and inequality are often replete with tension because their definitions may ostensibly deflate one's ego and bring guilt. For example, people are particularly sensitive to being told they are privileged when they perceive privilege as 'unearned.' But still, it should not refrain educators and GC curriculums from addressing these uncomfortable issues that may disrupt efficiency, stability and hierarchy (Andreotti, 2010). Educators have been used to carefully avoiding controversial topics that differ from norms and traditional beliefs in order to maintain control of meeting the course objective (Lapayese, 2003). For GCE to bring about

ethical and accountable outcomes, educators and curriculum scholars need to reduce their emotional investment in objectivity and conflict avoidance, while integrating critical literacy into historical-structural analyses to approach global justice issues (Andreotti, 2010; Mikander, 2016). Teaching global citizenship requires educators to lift the veil of fear, initiate, and skillfully moderate discussions of social justice and privilege. Everyone is privileged in certain areas of life. Therefore, GCE needs to empower students to analyze the world, reflect on their positions in society, and use their privileges to reach out in their own ways (Mikander, 2016).

The complexities of globalization can be better addressed by a shift toward critical GCE. While the conventional GCE tackles global equity issues through social justice content and teaching, its initiatives are defined more rhetorically and are limited to the policy level (Lapayese, 2003). In order for GCE to be able to respond readily to the expeditious trend of globalization, it should not be framed within normative and fixed Western narratives based on reductive views of democracy, equality, and freedom; that is, people from different cultures position themselves differently and hold contextual conceptions of ‘citizenship,’ which are legitimate in relation to their backgrounds (Andreotti, 2010). The decentralized form of GCE critically challenges the Western bias of democracy, in which anti-racism, feminism, anti-hegemony, and limitations of global citizenship are carefully scrutinized. Critical GCE allows the roles of students and educators to mix, and co-create knowledge to touch upon all aspects of life related to globalization so that knowledge is no longer externally imposed from one on another (Lapayese, 2003).

Andreotti (2010) argues that GCE requires a discursive turn from the meta-narrative doing for modernity to ‘post-’ traditions grounded in pluralizing epistemologies. Prasad (2005) mapped three main elements of ‘post-’ traditions—Postmodernism (emerged in arts), Postcolonialism (emerged in anti-colonialism), and Poststructuralism (emerged in linguistics),

all of which have been appropriated with critical theories. Together, they offer GCE critical, reflexive, and analytical tools to help learners unlearn taken-for-granted narratives (e.g., ideology) that are potentially repressive, and then listen, learn, and establish respectful and accountable relationships with culturally different others. Learning to unlearn is not to negate the existence of these narratives, but to engage in self-reflexive dialogues to understand how these narratives are constructed to do and became ‘baggage’ for us and them (Andreotti, 2010). The ‘baggage’ is produced by the interaction of micro- and macro-level influences that affects our identities in a given context. Unlearning is the first step toward critical GCE. Next, learners listen to and discover the origin of each other’s ‘baggage’ and recognize that it creates internal differences in how different people understand the world, so learners become more sensitive to the limits of their own worldview and open to new perspectives. Learners then engage in difficult conversations with others in a conflictual discursive ‘inter-space;’ they work with each other reciprocally to generate opportunities for reasoning and relating with new logics and epistemologies (Yuan, 2022). Finally, learners integrate their learning into their real lives and into participating with others in an ethical and accountable way (Andreotti, 2010). The cyclical processes of unlearning, listening, learning, and action continue in absence of GCE. One becomes better prepared to negotiate and discover new ways of being and face other uncertainties in order to adapt to a more diversified world.

Rathburn and Lexier (2016) argue that in GCE, the concept of global citizenship requires contextual-dependent definitions that are positioned in diverse international student population, who might value social change and a global-oriented mentality but prefer to approach it in their own cultural ways without the pressure of assimilation and moral humiliation. For EAIS to truly adjust to a multicultural context, they must have the freedom to use resources to participate in their immediate sociocultural lives, even if only in their ethnic enclaves, and not to be held hostage by the moral superiority of the dominant global

citizenship discourse. The development of global citizenship is a lifelong process, not a defining characteristic of a moral person.

Adjustment to the Canadian Mentality

In most fields of mainstream psychological research and western popular media, the understanding of cultural differences is based on a Eurocentric gaze that oversimplifies culture into a rigid and dichotomous pre-set which negates “commonalities in psychological functioning across different cultures” (Hwang, 2012, p. 10). Our lifeworld is a reality comprised of “moving” cultures, especially in the context of globalization, where almost no culture can be described as mutually exclusive and entirely homogeneous so cultural differences should not simply be conceived as differences in psycho-behavioural patterns of specific geographical regions (e.g., east and west), but rather as different mentalities (ways of thinking) in a universal mind that rationalize those psycho-behavioural differences (Shweder et al., 2006). Hwang (2012) argues that mentality is shaped by the socialization process reflecting ecocultural conditions of that culture and is expressed through language to “exchange various resources with the appropriate cognitive framework” (p. 207). For example, Chinese people have a Confucian mentality as a result of living within Confucian culture. Other conceptualizations of mentality focus on social factors that activate unconscious social perception. Hinton (2017) pinpoints that mentality is how perception is formed to legitimize cultural differences and serves as the bridge to implicit cultural stereotypes. When students have limited knowledge of others, they might use short-circuiting of mind to make inductive judgments based on information they know about them (Turner, 2016). Overall, this study decides to generally describe social and cultural adjustment in Canadian universities as “adjustment to Canadian mentality.”

Social Factors in Adjustment

Clash of Identity in Multicultural Context. According to Jibreel (2015), most, if not all international students, will experience an identity crisis to some extent as they walk in two worlds and may have already identified with a particular culture rather than the host culture. While multiculturalism, equity, and diversity help facilitate EAIS transitions in Canada, the exact needs for sociocultural adjustment, such as identity reconstruction to Canadian ideals, become harder to articulate (Lee, 2013). One's dignity is relative to their sense of identity and how well one adapts to their surroundings. However, if asked about the theoretical underpinning of human dignity, few western politicians are able to define it precisely, because the word has different etymologies across cultures, let alone to explain it in a multicultural society (Fukuyama, 2018). Multiculturalism in Canada posits a blurring of cultural identity, making invisible the boundaries between individual and collective obligations, and requiring more guidelines for international students to cope with Canada's multiethnic realities. This can cause discomfort, stress, and anxiety for them because they don't grapple with what is expected of them.

While EAIS may adjust to a new societal environment through a priori competence acquired during socialization in heritage culture, they often have to broaden their scope of learning beyond their cultural comfort zone by interacting with other cultural groups to understand the mentality and appropriate social and conduct rules of the host culture (Lee & Chen, 2000). The context of where identity crisis is experienced has been widely recognized as that of the EAIS, whose heritage culture does not educate social norms of the host culture that are largely dissimilar to theirs (Dalglish & Evans, 2010). While it is commonly thought that the impact of social norms in loose societies like most American countries is weaker compared with tight cultures in most Asian countries, House et al. (2020) suggest that loose societies have culturally specific norms influenced by Christianity that encourage altruistic and prosocial behaviours which reinforce rejection and sanction for violating these norms.

In Canada, the convergence toward social norms implies a commitment to multiculturalism that requires immigrants or sojourners to “internalize any loyalty to Canada or to its norms of democracy, peace, and tolerance” (CIC, 2010, p. 14). The article further asserts that “there is simply no evidence that immigrants and their children in Canada are not internalizing liberal-democratic values” (CIC, 2010, p. 15). According to Narain (2014), this statement is a dangerous homogenizing way to say that all racialized minorities adhere to democratic values predicated on ideological norms of the majority, as it largely obscures the diversity of voices and norms in Canadian society by diverting public attention to the surface domain of multiculturalism, such as freedom of expression and personal liberty.

Thwarted by a neoliberal mentality, EAIS choosing to maintain undemocratic, passive, and traditional cultural characteristics is deemed as an obstacle to the Canadian identity, and they would be depicted as being “inherently opposed to the ideologies and values of the Canadian liberal democratic state” and would have to abandon their loyalty to those traditions to adjust successfully (Li, 2003; Narain, 2014, p. 123; Stoffman, 2002). When it comes to the tenet of political particularism (i.e., democracy) and individual multiculturalism, most defenders of cultural essentialism argue that we can’t have it both ways and insist that cultural identity is either something people are born with or the “enlightened” one after they give up their primitive traditions. Li (2003) holds a skeptical attitude toward multiculturalism and elucidates that multiculturalism and democratic policies have led us into a fallacy that students are endowed with greater cultural diversity than institutions actually allow, resulting in the traumatic experience of social injustice being reduced and leashed to “an aseptic folklorist entity” (Zizek, 1998). In fact, many international students come to Canada with an ambivalent emotion and confusion about what the Canadian identity means to them, or the trade-off between cultural diversity and Canadian citizenry. For example, a Chinese student may stay silent in a Canadian classroom because he does not know the appropriate time to

interrupt others, step in, or make contradictory comments. He may also understand that maintaining a low-profile behaviour demonstrates propriety (礼 li) to others, and renders face concerns (面子 mianzi) for the self and others. These are fundamental Confucian norms that hold high value in many Asian countries. However, Wu (2017) mentions that Confucian values are perceived by many Canadians as internally undemocratic, rhetoric propagandistic, and in direct conflict with the nature of academic freedom at Canadian universities.

Culture Shock. Boucher (2006) describes EAIS including Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese as *sojourners*. They are students who usually stay in their destination countries to finish their studies before returning to their home countries to advance career prospects or take care of their families (Nghia, 2019; Li et al., 2014). For many EAIS, the process of school adjustment in their first two years of the transition is a significant remark of their academic adjustment and development of ICC (Andrade, 2006; Volante et al., 2017). However, this process can be very devastating when they experience a *culture shock* that can remarkably compromise their ICC and psychological well-being (Chapdelaine & Alexitch, 2004).

Definition of Culture Shock. According to Kohls (1984), the concept of culture shock is defined as “pronounced reactions to the psychological disorientation most people experience when they move for an extended period of time into a culture markedly different from their own” (p. 63). Oberg (1960) describes the emotion of individuals facing culture shock as follows:

“Now when an individual enters a strange culture, all or most of these familiar cues are removed. He or she is like a fish out of water. No matter how broad-minded or full of good will you may be, a series of props have been knocked from under you, followed by a feeling of frustration and anxiety... Experience of a new culture is an unpleasant surprise or shock, partly because it may lead to a negative evaluation of one's own culture” (p. 142).

Stages of Culture Shock. Scholars including Furnham and Bochner (1986) and Oberg (1960) have defined four phases of culture shock: honeymoon, rejection/regression, recovery, and adjustment. The *honeymoon* phase is the period when there is a strong willingness to interact and delve into the language and customs of the host culture without being aware of stressors, cultural fatigue, and boredom. This is the moment when the life experiences of EAIS match their mental scheme of the host culture. When EAIS begin to sense an expectation mismatch and become easily triggered by the situational stressors in the host culture, they enter the phase of *rejection/regression*, the period when intense emotion is felt. This is when they experience the greatest amount of culture shock and realize that the grass is not necessarily greener in the host country. They begin to grouse about ways of the host culture, internalize stereotypes about their peers, feel homesick, alienated, helpless, and confused about their identity, and romanticize ways of the home country and their immediate culture (Lin, 2006; Mumford, 1998). Meanwhile, a strong dislike of the host culture helps to establish a strong *regression* to their heritage culture. During the process of regression, Oberg (1960) demonstrates that “all the difficulties and problems are forgotten and only the good things back home are remembered. It usually takes a trip home to bring one back to reality” (p. 142). A withdrawal from the present social world, which victims of culture shock no longer deem safe and sincere participating, leads them to “doubt the reality of the external world and to imprison themselves in a shell of protective irony... [they] become lost in themselves” (Lasch, 1978, p. 102, as cited in Pinar, 2004). Although initially describing Americans’ diminished intelligence capacity to acknowledge their past and future in the face of American educational bureaucracy and conservatism, Lasch’s (1978) quote provides an implicit account of a psychosomatic disturbance in some ESIS causing them to regress from their present lifeworld, entwined with a refusal of their social and ethical accountabilities as global citizens (Pinar, 2004).

If EAIS successfully overcome the rejection/regression phase, they bring the sweet memories of home to the phase of *recovery*. In returning to their roots, EAIS not only begin to feel better about their identity, but also develop a sense of reconciliation and coping strategies for their psychological struggles (Dutton, 2011). At this moment, EAIS may have made some friends and improved their L2 proficiency, allowing them to depend on both themselves and others for academic support. The final stage of culture shock is *adjustment*. At this point, the more integrated EAIS have become acculturated to norms of the host culture and endorse them as “just another way of living” (Berry, 1990; Oberg, 1960, p. 143). In multicultural Canada, they are more likely to internalize the values of global citizenship and develop a sense of empathy, inclusivity, and social justice in their transition to Canadian identity. They may also refine their views of their country of origin in a more fluid and ambivalent way based on the sense of cultural identity through connecting with people from other cultures (Ai & Wang, 2017). Accordingly, loss of identification with heritage culture may bring more re-adjustment and communicative difficulties for sojourners returning to their country than they initially anticipated (Ai & Wang, 2017; Chang, 2010; Pritchard, 2011; Sussman, 2000).

Features of Culture Shock. This literature review examines three features of culture shock—identity crisis, helplessness, and rejection. First, the fact that many EAIS experience culture shock in Canada shows that they try to reject the Canadian identity which makes them feel helpless and distant from their own traditions (Oberg, 1960). According to Erikson’s stages of psychological development, EAIS need to undergo a process of constant introspection on their identity and exploring independence, autonomy, and competence during their age of transition to foreign universities and environments (Erikson, 1964). While they are seeking personal achievement and validation in their lives to prove their sense of self, culture shock might be experienced in those contexts due to a sudden decline in perceived

belongingness, social support, and locus of control, which is caused by social isolation, status changes, homesickness, and inability to maintain relationships with people back home, all contributing to the identity crisis and role confusion (Erikson, 1964; Ishu Ishiyama, 1989).

During the battle with the identity crisis, they worry about assimilating into the Canadian ways of living when they also feel at odds with their cultural roots, resulting in an unbalanced state of cultural identification (Berry, 1990; Noel et al., 1996; Sandhu & Asraradi, 1994). When they encounter various social and academic hardships, they have no choice but to make rational decisions with minimal guidance and become accustomed to no longer having secure bonds with family and friends in their home country. This sense of culture shock might be more pronounced in countries like Canada due to its strong reliance on neoliberal governmentality, which treats the notion of welfare as a moral responsibility – that individuals should make rational life choices with minimal guidance and state intervention (Brown et al., 2013). Despite this, many EAIS arrive in Canada for the first time with almost no foreign knowledge to do “what is the best for themselves” (Brown et al., 2013, p. 338).

The psychological impact of studying abroad regarding the experience of loneliness, helplessness, and anxiety of exposure to unfamiliar situations has a strong moderating effect on coping with culture shock (Ishiyama, 1989). Perceived social support is often considered a benchmark for EAIS’s progress of socialization in a society, which reflects their ICC and the scope of their social network. Due to a lack of literacy and awareness, as well as the L2 ability to seek out various social networks and services in English, EAIS may experience barriers in seeking social support and professional help. On ICC, previous literature has demonstrated that low ICC is associated with low recognition of psychological problems (Islam et al., 2017), weak attitude toward seeking psychological help (Hamid et al., 2009; Kim & Omizo, 2003), low frequency of resource utilization (Frey & Roysircar, 2006; Tata & Leong, 1994), and poor overall mental well-being (Kim, 2012). Furthermore, there is a strong

linkage between East Asians' participation in health-related services and limited L2 proficiency in western countries, moderated by a lack of health literacy and knowledge of the cost and availability of these resources (Kim et al., 2011; Ngo-Metzger et al., 2009; Sentell et al., 2013).

From the perspective of the social network, Frey and Roysircar (2006) found that EAIS are less likely than South Asian international students to seek help during hardship due to lack of exposure to different cultures, L2 fluency, and avoiding making friends with domestic students, all of which exacerbate the feeling of shock. Sue and Sue (1999) and Mori (2000) pointed out that EAIS refuse to seek professional help from unfamiliar groups of people because of the stigma of needing help from outsiders, which results in a limited range of help options. Although establishing social networks with domestic students increases ICC and broadens social support options, EAIS prioritize interacting with people from their culture because they perceive western circles of friends as loose and superficial and not as cohesive and sincere as those in their culture (Frey & Roysircar, 2006; Mori, 2000).

Furnham and Bochner (1986) describe the feeling of “being rejected by members of the new culture” as one of the elements of culture shock, that intensifies one's interpersonal stress to produce the necessary psychological adjustment (p. 48). In particular, the feeling of rejection occurs when the ability to suppress negative emotional reactions is reduced when people are discriminated against and stigmatized.

Stereotypes of EAIS lead to discrimination and stigmatization made by teachers at universities. In 2019, a professor at an American university was held accountable for racial discrimination after urging EAIS not to speak other languages in a professional setting (Geanous, 2019). In the same year, a British university was caught stigmatizing Chinese international students for emphasizing the Chinese word “cheating” 舞弊 in an email sent to all international students about exam conduct because of pervasive plagiarism and cheating

among some Chinese students using chat applications and writing services (Zuo, 2019). In 2021, the same pattern occurred at a Canadian university where a professor was accused of making ethnocentric comments and wrote, “you must not cheat in Canada. Canadians do not like cheaters” (Mantyka, 2021). These incidents are just the tip of the iceberg in the stereotypical perception and discriminatory action against international students at Western universities.

In addition to perceived discrimination by teachers, international students report peer stereotypes and discrimination as the biggest situational stresses engendering culture shock (Greene et al., 2006; Klineberg & Hall, 1979). In Canada, some EAIS are mistrustful of domestic students because they feel alienated and embarrassed by unwittingly racist comments directed at them (Kuo et al., 2006). Similarly, Thompson et al. (2016) point out that most EAIS report a negative feeling about the experience of being stereotyped (including the model minority stereotype), which evokes a weaker sense of belonging to domestic students. In the context of multiculturalism, Dion and Phan (2009) and Fukuyama (2018) indicate that group-related threats such as discrimination increase the likelihood of defensive ethnic self-identification and weakening intercultural friendship ties.

Regarding model minority stereotypes, Greene et al. (2016) and Thompson and Kiang (2010) argue that East Asian American college students are cognizant of differential treatment by their peers and teachers and feel burdened to fit into the model minority image (even if they aren't treated differently in this context). Accordingly, they display more coping strategies related to reticence rather than academic achievement to avoid humiliating situations (Thompson & Kiang, 2016). Similarly, Shao and Gao (2016) suggest that EAIS suppress their WTC in class out of the anxiety of being negatively evaluated. In some circumstances with many EAIS competing against each other, the model minority stereotype may lead more academically privileged EAIS to internalize and use it to devalue and other

peers from their own culture, in order to distance themselves from the shock associated with their minority shame and to defend the legitimacy of model minority myth (Dey & Williams, 2021; Moosavi, 2021). This precipitates the reaction of culture shock among more EAIS.

Second Language Communication Apprehension. According to Neuliep and McCroskey (1997), communication apprehension is the “fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated interaction with others” (p. 145). Chen (2010) and Jackson (2002) pinpoint that L2 communication apprehension is associated with students’ WTC in class and their intercultural sensitivity in general. Some studies also found that WTC of L2 learners relates to both general language proficiency and their self-perception of language competence (Cao, 2011; Freiermuth & Jarrel, 2006). Moore (2007) studied the intercultural sensitivity of Spanish learners in an American university in his master’s thesis. He found that students’ foreign language anxiety reduces their intercultural sensitivity and their perception of the teaching effectiveness of their teacher. Likewise, Albrecht (2016) demonstrates that some Chinese students studying in the U.S. prefer to take online courses and study on their own rather than face-to-face lectures, because they feel safer communicating in this way when they do not understand unfamiliar English words. Similar studies by Robinson (1995) and Norton (1978) discover that students’ learning satisfaction and understanding of learning materials depend on their perception of cultural distance from the teacher and their L2 ability to understand the communicative information of the teacher.

Language is a vital carrier of culture because it acts as a “symbolic tool to express and understand a certain culture” (Culhane, 2004; Heckmann, 2005; Hwang, 2012; Ma, 2020, p. 85). Lack of L2 proficiency may result in EAIS staying with cultural groups of their own languages with “very shallow [or no] information exchange” with domestic students (Lin, 2006; Zhang & Zhou, 2010; Zhou et al., 2005, p. 301). Furthermore, communication apprehension evokes negative emotions about the distressful learning experience at

universities (Tallon, 2009). Nowadays, due to the significant increase in EAIS studying in Canada, it is easier for them to communicate in their L1 and provide support to acquaintances in their cultural niche, and their needs to adjust socially to domestic culture may be less pressing (Montgomery & McDowell, 2009). Montgomery and McDowell (2009) believe that EAIS can help each other out in the process of adjusting to the university learning environment, but it is also short-sighted to only seek support from their cultural niche, because it does little to improve L2 and intercultural communication skills. However, two studies by Armfield (2004) and Munawar (2015) oppose this view, finding that social interaction with domestic students has little impact on and is not associated with the change in international students' intercultural sensitivity. Furthermore, Munawar (2015) reveals that "international students who lived with other international students exhibited high social interactions with [domestic students] and their overall intercultural sensitivity was higher" (p. 78). This implies that a supportive living environment may be the cornerstone of the need for social and cultural exchanges with domestic students, similar to Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Moreover, Bai (2016) and Zheng (2010) argue that, in a culturally insensitive environment, EAIS feel unsafe disclosing their knowledge to others and fear being judged for their communication abilities and appropriateness of their speech. Also in class, they might be scared when their names are called and mentioned. Accordingly, they become more likely to study alone or stay with a group that has "other minority students... [and peers who have] common experiences" (Zhou et al., 2005, p. 302-306). They also form a stronger emotional tie to their own heritage culture and a wider cultural distance from domestic students (culture shock), which leads to maladaptive negative feedback loops that increase the risk of L2 communication apprehension, lack of sociocultural familiarity, being culturally discriminated, and acculturative stress (Babiker et al., 1980; Cemalcilar & Falbo, 2008; Chirkov et al., 2008; Tognoli, 2003; Ward et al., 2001).

Studies conducted on EAIS in North America suggest that L2 communication apprehension is negatively associated with psychological well-being (Kim, 2012; Li et al., 2014), psychosocial adjustment (Kang, 2006; Kim, 2012), peer relationships (Kang, 2006), and ability to seek social resources (Li et al., 2014; Noels et al., 1996). Bounded by the anxiety of speaking a different language to which they are not accustomed, EAIS may encounter a variety of life and psychological challenges that are implicit, non-verbal, and internalized (CBC Radio, 2018). Pascoe et al. (2020) demonstrate that prolonged exposure to stressors may be detrimental to students' well-being, especially those that can't be expressed verbally to others due to the L2 barrier.

Cultural Factors in Adjustment

Hofstede's Framework. Cultures vary in many ways, which can be categorized by utilizing Hofstede's (1984) cultural dimension theory. For decades, cultural dimension theory has been widely applied as a framework in the "field of intercultural communication, cross-cultural psychology, and international management" (Wu, 2006, p. 33). It measures differences in cultures and uses these differences to understand people's values and behaviours. As a scholar who grounds his work of cultural dimensions on the analysis of international organizational behaviour, Hofstede (1984) believes that each culture's worldview is distinguishable and thus modern management methods are far from universal. Assuming that the nature of mind is cultural-specific, he defined five dimensions: Individualism-collectivism (I-C), power distance (PD), uncertainty avoidance (UA), masculinity-femininity (M-F), and long-term orientation (LTO). Although the assumptions of these dimensions are grounded in Hofstede's management theory, their premises may be useful for use in educational settings. This study is one of the few that apply Hofstede's theory in educational studies. In an intercultural educational context, studies of cultural dimensions focus on I-C and PD while others are understudied (Alshahrani, 2017).

In this literature review, only I-C, PD, and LTO will be included. The reason for the exclusion of M-F and UA is related to the internal variations among Confucian heritage culture countries in these two dimensions (2011). In other words, Confucianism cannot fully explain the differences in uncertainty and masculinity orientation across East Asian cultures, so these two variables may not be representative in EAIS. For example, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan have high UA but mainland China, Hong Kong, and Vietnam are at a lower continuum of UA despite their similar I-C and PD indices. Similarly, Japan and China are significantly more masculine than Korea and Vietnam (Hofstede Insights). In the study of M-F and UA, the treatment of East Asian cultures as a homogenous entirety puts research subjects, academia, and professional practice at risk because it reinforces the stereotype of East Asians' culture-oriented values and behaviours (de Bellis et al., 2015). According to I-C, PD, and LTO indices from Hofstede Insights, all five East Asian countries have a relatively lower level of Individualism and higher levels of PD and LTO, reflecting the influence of Confucian heritage.

Individualism and Collectivism. The first dimension of I-C pertains to the level that individuals value individual rights and group relationships (Hofstede, 2011). From an anthropological lens, almost all earliest societies had a collectivistic worldview wherein hunting traditions and agricultural production were at the heart of basic survival, thus the perception of self-identity was deeply embedded in being an obligate member of a group, akin to an "extended family" ("Ideologies," p. 66). Collectivism, primarily associated with the Confucian heritage cultures and many Indigenous cultures across the globe, focuses on subordinating self-interest to more nebulous larger interests and ideologies, including cultural norms and obligation (Roland, 2020), peace and harmony (Friedman et al., 2006; Hertler, 2015), cohesive group relations (Green & Baldry, 2008), shared and filial responsibility (Hui et al., 2011; Mok et al., 2020; Stewart & Allan, 2013), and unquestioning loyalty of in-group

members (Hofstede, 2011). These characteristics emphasize a highly conservative, cohesive, and risk-averse orientation to collective welfare beneficial for survival but often contradictory to self-interests and acquisition of personal wealth (e.g., punishments for distinctive individuals who disrupt reallocations of wealth in collectivistic societies) (Platteau, 2000). According to Načinović Braje et al. (2019), each East Asian country is collectivistic, more or less.

On the other hand, the emergence of Individualism also has its ancient historical roots. The birth of property law and the Aristotelian notion of self-interest are considered pre-medieval examples of individualism (“Ideologies,” p. 65). During the medieval era, the sentiment of individualism was oppressed by a rigid hierarchical religious and political structure, and the Roman Catholic church gained immersive authority over spiritual and political matters. After the medieval era, the renaissance period in Europe prompted a renewed interest in understanding the significance of life for human beings and individual potential (“Ideologies,” p. 68). The Protestant Reformation within Western Christianity around 1500CE also tied its fate with the increasing influence of individualism. Owing to massive enhancement in printing methods and media, the Bible became more accessible to everyone. At that time, Protestants and literate people were able to explore and articulate their individual beliefs and abilities of self-transcendence in light of their understanding of the Bible (“Ideologies,” p. 70). Together, Protestantism and individualism created a radical societal movement to break from Catholic religious sentiment to a new ideological framework for modernity (Gross, 2003). With the rise of modernization and the Industrial Revolution in West Europe, Protestant ethics were then disseminated to many societies around the world. Individualism evolved from a mere ideology into a powerful spiritual, civil, political, and economic agent in modern society. It eventually became the fundamental ideology of Capitalism and the democratic political system in the U.S., Canada, UK, and

Australia, focusing on the principles of individual achievement, personal agency, and division of labour (Smith & Cannon, 2003; Ward et al., 2001; Weber, 1930). In contrast to collectivistic societies, cultures that emphasize individualistic values also encourage innovative, competitive, and risk-taking attitudes that prioritize productivity over basic survival needs (Breuer et al., 2014). Table 1 summarizes the key features of I-C. It should also be pointed out that all societies have distinctive cultural values that cannot be generalized by a selection of points.

With the socioeconomic transformation and internationalization of education, cultural traditions have become highly blurred. Since globalization, individualistic cultures have become more collectivistic in responding to global risks and preparing for uncertainties in a changing reality. Beck and Ritter's (1992) risk society theory argues that the present developed globalized society (i.e., late modernity) enables a new sociological imagination and helps facilitate a historical transition from mono-perspectival individualism to a collaborative global unity, although Beck and Ritter have faced many critiques for ignoring the legacy of colonialism and cognitive imperialism in the guise of cosmopolitanism.

Individualistic ideology has become increasingly influential in the globalized society and education too. Many collectivistic cultures have absorbed individualistic values that could be observed in examples of declining household size and elevated divorce rates in Japan and China (Ogihara, 2017). Yet, the collectivistic tradition remains as a cultural archetype, an unconscious frame of reference that continues to shape people's subjective well-being (Steele & Lynch, 2013). In Canada, many EAIS struggle to adjust to the social fabric in tandem with conscious perceptions of parental expectation, family obligations, and cultural niches. Since many EAIS study overseas with a desire to broaden their academic and professional horizons to pave for a better future for their families, they tend to downplay the need to socialize with other students and learn to adapt to domestic culture (Hui et al., 2011;

Zhu & Bresnahan, 2018). The lack of socialization desire is an affective component of intercultural communicative difficulty for EAIS in Canada.

Table 1

Differences Between and Principles of Collectivism and Individualism

INDIVIDUALISM	COLLECTIVISM
Personal freedom and self-reliance	Belonging, harmony, and interrelatedness
Self-expression and direct communication	Face concerns and contextualized communication
Self-interest and transcendence	Shared responsibility and obligation
Responsibility for the self and immediate family	Filial responsibility for immediate and extended family
Competition and winning	Cooperation and group effort
Low influence of social norms	High influence of social norms
Organic solidarity (each person has differentiated and specialized roles and distinctive consciousness)	Mechanical solidarity (each person performs similar tasks and shares similar values and experiences)

There is caution in examining the difference of I-C between EAIS and non-EAIS owing to the cross-over between collectivistic and individualistic values in modern societies, Singelis et al. (1995) and Triandis (1995) contend that more variations in patterns need to be made in addition to the I-C dichotomy. They purpose four distinctions: Horizontal Collectivism (HC; all individuals play equal roles of an in-group), Vertical Collectivism (VC; statuses of individuals in an in-group are unequally assigned, some individuals will serve and sacrifice for others), Horizontal Individualism (HI; all individuals are independent selves and enjoy an equal status), Vertical Individualism (VI; all individuals are independent, but statuses are unequally assigned based on competition). These variations are important for understanding EAIS's motivation to study abroad, their values of global citizenship, and attitudes of EAIS and domestic students toward each other. In particular, studies of cultural orientation generally describe East Asian societies as VC because there is strong collectivism and strong hierarchical dominance in the society (Hofstede, 2011; Ma et al., 2016; Shavitt et al., 2011; Soenens et al., 2018).

Power Distance. According to Hofstede (2001), PD refers to the “extent to which the less powerful members of a society expect and accept that power is distributed unequally” (p. 98). PD measures two interconnected aspects: power and social inequality. Low PD pertains to a more horizontal (egalitarian) orientation concerning social norms of status, capital, class, and rights, whereas high PD societies tend to think of power as a desirable agent of control, and that a vertical (hierarchical) orientation toward all aspects of life including status hierarchy, wage disparity, and discrimination are acceptable (Sharma, 2009). There is an association between I-C and PD, as Hofstede (1983) indicates that most, if not all cultures with strong collectivistic values, have a high PD. Also, many studies show that power orientation in collectivistic cultures is more likely to be vertical (Sharma, 2010). High PD societies emphasize the preservation of face and the status quo because people recognize the strong authority of social codes. For example, Confucian heritage culture countries like China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam are derived primarily from the civilization of the ancient Chinese feudal system wherein people’s power, reputation, and social status are manifested in the face (Hofstede, 2001; Reischauer, 1974). Losing face means losing status and respect from others, so people in many East Asian countries generally conform to social expectations of them, and tend to avoid situations that might violate social codes.

In the classroom, PD determines the way of interaction between teachers and students in the culture, reflecting the power of teachers (Wu, 2006). In a high PD classroom, it is expected that teachers are the superior and students are the subordinates, thus less powerful students would depend on teachers to spoon-feed knowledge to them. Classes in a high PD culture are more standardized than those in a low PD culture in that they are more teacher-centred—teachers are highly respected and considered know-it-alls who cannot be challenged. Students in high PD classes are expected to conform to teachers to avoid public criticisms and to save face, regardless of their feelings about the teachers (Alshahrani, 2017).

On the other hand, classes with a low PD are in favour of student-centred pedagogy. This means that teachers tend to involve students in discussions to generate diverse ideas rather than teach routinely (Alshahrani, 2017). In a low PD class, students are less likely to be punished for dissenting opinions (say “no” to teachers), and the power structure between teachers and students is flatter in comparison to that in a high PD class (Wu, 2006). In a literature review of East Asian classroom learning styles, Alshahrani (2017) points out that even though collaborative learning is more efficient in Confucian heritage cultures, students choose to study alone and behave more submissively in class due to a sense of publicized shame. As a result, they seldomly say they don’t understand a concept and need further clarification. They also manifest a low likelihood of asking teachers questions and a high possibility to ask them in-person outside of the classroom (CYR & Teck Choon, 2017). For Chinese students, actual PD and student perception of PD in class positively correlate with their communication apprehension in class (Zhang, 2005). Some EAIS may manifest a strong perception of PD when studying in western universities that tend to have low actual classroom PD (Alshahrani, 2017). One study shows that Chinese international students in U.S. higher education institutions are less likely to contact lecturers for help due to perceived power hierarchy and instead rely on technology and friends from the same culture (Albrecht, 2016). Another study conducted in the UK found that most Chinese students preferred formal rather than personal relationships with teachers, they also attributed their academic difficulties to their teachers not being able to spoon-feed them (Abubaker, 2008). However, more research is needed to understand EAIS’s perception of PD on their general intercultural sensitivity in Canadian higher education.

Long-term Orientation. The concept of long-term orientation (LTO) was first introduced by Hofstede (2001) and was initially named Confucian dynamism in 1988 (Sharma, 2010). LTO is aptly named to describe the dynamic way of thinking oriented

toward an unforeseeable future based on ethics derivative of Confucius teachings, including perseverance, patience, thrift, diligence, delayed gratification, benevolence (*ren* 仁; give people face), overcoming individuality, and hierarchical relationships (Hofstede, 2011). According to Hofstede (2001), countries with the highest LTO are all from East Asia (China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong), which undoubtedly reflects the long-lasting influence of Confucian heritage culture. Students with LTO tend to focus on long-term rewards and hard work rather than an immediate pleasure to ensure that they have enough resources to help themselves and their families achieve freedom of choice, rather than idolized freedom of self-expression akin to features of individualistic cultures (Hofstede, 2001). For example, Chinese parents often teach their children to plan things in advance by emphasizing Confucian virtues at a young age (such as *wei yu chou mou* 未雨绸缪), that is, to plan for a rainy day, even if it doesn't happen shortly. For students who are not intrinsically motivated to learn or rely too much on their parents, studying abroad may also reflect their parents' desire to send them away so that they can learn to endure hardship (i.e., *wo xin chang dan* 卧薪尝胆), accept challenges, and become a more responsible person for the family.

Societies with high LTO are more pragmatic in terms of planning for themselves and displaying altruism. People in LTO societies are less interested in interacting with and helping strangers or out-group members, than investing in self, immediate and extended social networks (Guo et al., 2018). Confucian teachings emphasize the concept of benevolence (“what you do not wish yourself, do not unto others”), kindness (“the superior man exalts others and abases himself; he gives the first place to others and takes the last himself”), and empathy (“a superior man loves another on grounds of virtue; a little man's love of another is seen in his indulgence of him”), and regard these virtues to be core aspects

of self-transcendence and a harmonious society (Confucius & Slingerland, 2003, p. 44; Gannon, 2001, p. 35; Legge, 2010, p. 67-351). Confucius believes that one should love each other by embodying and extending the virtues of benevolence, kindness, and empathy to all persons, including friends and strangers. Based on the quote of empathy, while Confucius highlighted the importance of compassion for others, he mentioned that a noble person maintain a sense of restraint and rationality to prevent them from being overly indulgent in helping behaviour, which might be motivated by the intent for immediate emotional gratification, instead of utilitarian thinking of one's action on the future self and others (Legge, 2010). Short-term oriented (STO) societies, by contrast, are more identified with religion-based values than utilitarian virtues of ethics based purely on history and life lessons (Hofstede, 2005). In general, societies located with little or no Confucian influence are thought to be more STO, and these societies tend to be impacted by the religiosity of which Christian and Islamic influences are more pronounced (Guo et al., 2020; Hofstede, 2001). People in STO societies tend to be more indulgent in spending, donating, and sharing, and as such, treating everyone equally as if they were friends is more of a moral obligation than a virtue (Hofstede, 2001). They may not care much about how their current spending and philanthropic behaviours will affect their future savings (Guo et al., 2018). Thus, STO might be a feature that benefits global citizenship attitudes.

This is not to generalize that people from LTO cultures are frugal and STO equals generosity as both cultures emphasize the importance of empathy with some variations in values. Several studies found that the extent of prosocial behaviours such as helping, sharing, networking, and collaborating is not solely predicted by LTO, but also by the moderation, prediction, and interaction of factors including I-C and PD (Lucia et al., 2015; Smith, 2015). For example, people with an individualistic mindset may view helping others as a self-responsibility as opposite to a shared mechanism to reduce inequality, while low PD societies

people may adopt a more more egalitarian way to helping without depending on authority figures to assist lower status individuals (Lucia et al., 2015). In more developed and individualistic countries like Canada and the U.S., LTO is positively correlated with PD and negatively correlated with Individualism and prosocial behaviour toward strangers, this effect is reduced by collectivism as a moderating factor (Gao et al., 2018; Hofstede, 2001). This means that collectivism focuses on the emotional bond and interpersonal relationship with their immediate and extended social networks, and thus prosocial behaviour is directed toward and manifested in the welfare investment of in-group members or similar others (Luria et al., 2015; Smith, 2015).

Moreover, Rienties & Tempelaar (2013) found that LTO is associated with more socio-emotional and academic adjustment problems, and difficulties in peer support among international university students. It also correlates with better educational performance among international students enrolled in high schools, due to the preference for delayed gratification (Figlio et al., 2019). For WTC, people with stronger STO attitudes appear to place more emphasis on self-expression and use interaction as motivation for self-enhancement (Kimmel & Kitchen, 2016). Although the association between WTC in class and LTO is not clear, it can be inferred that the premise of LTO in a classroom setting, understood as the preference to be adequately prepared for unforeseeable communicative consequences (perceived readiness) for face preservation, may reduce the occurrence of less-rehearsed speeches and thereby the WTC. Despite the few numbers of similar studies, there is a relatively reasonable ground to predict that LTO may also have an inhibitory impact on EAIS's overall intercultural sensitivity in universities.

Gender

Even though gender is not the focus of this study, it is still necessary to talk briefly about how a student's gender plays a role in their sensitivity to others, so that this is not

overlooked when predicting intercultural sensitivity. Previous studies on gender and intercultural sensitivity among European secondary students and American undergraduates have found that girls tend to score higher than boys on intercultural sensitivity and competence (Fabregas et al., 2012; Holm et al., 2009; Solhaug & Kristensen, 2020; Tompkins et al., 2017). But a study of third culture kids shows a marginal difference in intercultural sensitivity between boys and girls (Morales, 2017). In addition, Solhaug and Kristensen (2020) conclude that “females seem more emotional and empathetic in relationships than males,” based on the findings of a large body of research (p. 131).

Besides the gender differences in general personality and temperament types, male and female also differs in their experiences of intercultural encounters, which are guided by perceptions derived from gender socialization; similarly, perceptions of cultural attributes may also be constructed by ‘gendered’ expectations of individual traits, roles, duties, and behaviours (Solhaug & Kristensen, 2020). The above evidence reminds me that gender also influences the intercultural sensitivity in addition to social and cultural factors.

Chapter Summary

This chapter of the literature review pinpoints the previous research in the field of intercultural communication in curriculum studies. It demonstrates our areas of interest: 1) intercultural sensitivity 2) The social factors of adjustment to life in Canadian higher education; 3) Cultural differences between EAIS and non-EAIS in values of intercultural interaction. Together, they help destabilize the stereotypical nuances of previous cross-cultural studies. Finally, Hofstede’s cultural dimension theory is introduced to examine the consistency between current research results and previous literature. The next chapter will focus on the descriptions of the research paradigm, research design, and research method.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Research Paradigm

The research paradigm is the fundamental philosophical orientation of thoughts that guide research inquiry based on researchers' choices of study, trends, and previous life experiences (Creswell, 2013). This study adopted a postpositivist paradigm, that is, I used traditional scientific methods to collect data, with the caveat that our data is conjectural (inferential) and fallible (cannot be proved). In social science research involving human subjects, the postpositivist paradigm aims to observe and identify the "objective reality that exists out there" to create "generalizable knowledge about social patterns" in this world (Creswell, 2013, p. 7; Taylor & Medina, 2013, p. 3). This study attempts to use scientific methods, based on reductionistic ideas, which could break down a large body of literature into several small and testable variables—social and cultural factors in student university adjustment. I also explored the strength of these variables and their interactional effects on Canadian university students' in-class willingness to communicate, out-of-class (general) intercultural sensitivity, and perception of global citizenship (Creswell, 2013).

Using scientific methods means that the research attempts to produce one reality instead of multiple realities (Ryan, 2019). The ontology of postpositivism supports the idea of constructive realism – there may be a social pattern governing the nature of reality, yet the version that we know is the lifeworld (i.e., the socially constructed worldview) conceived by our perceptions of nature, and the scientific microworld (i.e., theories) composed of concepts and terms (Hwang, 2012).

The epistemology of post-positivism has it that one reality exists, but a perfect interpretation of reality does not, like not all known cars have four wheels and not all known fish species don't have lungs. In this study, cultural differences, and differences in social experience among university students, as well as their intercultural sensitivity might be

warranted, but these features are inferred patterns of differences destabilized by time and context. A conjectural reality generated by frames of reference is always fallible until it can be perfectly proven by marking all the possibilities in the world.

The axiology of postpositivism is the ability to attempt to remain objective, rational, and unbiased when conducting scientific research, although true objectivity is impossible (Taylor & Medina, 2013). Therefore, the research rationale and process in this study must transparently reflect biases and interests in data collection and analysis and show evidence regarding the quality of the research (i.e., reliability and validity) (Coughlan et al., 2007). This study tries to achieve an appropriate sample size to enhance the validity of the results and use internal consistency tests (Cronbach's alpha α) to verify the instruments' reliability.

Finally, postpositivist research adopts both quantitative and qualitative strategies or mixed methods (Taylor & Medina, 2013, p. 3). This study was quantitative in the format of a questionnaire design consisting of self-reported items to compare social and cultural factors, intercultural sensitivity, and their interactional effects.

Sample

The present study used convenient sampling at Lakehead University and personal social media networks to identify potential international student participants of interest who are immediately available for recruitment. The study also integrated a snowball sampling method to identify more international students at Canadian universities based on participants sharing this study on their social networks. Because this study examines intercultural sensitivity among international students at Canadian universities, any currently enrolled international students at any Canadian universities were eligible to participate in the study.

This study recruited a total of 120 participants ($M = 4.21$ years in Canada, $SD = 4.43$ years) who self-identified as international university students. Three participants did not describe their countries of origin ($N = 117$), but all participants identified their gender ($N =$

120). Among them, Confucian heritage culture students from China, South Korea, Vietnam, Japan, Hong Kong, and Taiwan were grouped as EAIS ($N = 30$). The second group was non-EAIS ($N = 87$) and included all other international students who did not belong to the six Confucian heritage cultures. In regard to gender, 55 participants chose to identify as male and 65 participants identified as female. The third gender option was self-identification, but no participant chose to self-identify. More than half of the participants (62.71%) were undergraduate students, 30.51% were master's level students, and 6.78% were doctoral level students.

Procedures

The quantitative data of this study were collected by the questionnaire after ethics approval by Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. A recruitment poster was designed and used to recruit potential respondents. The poster specified two criteria for eligibility to take part in the questionnaire: 1) The respondent must be a current university student in Canada at any level of study; 2) The respondent must be an international student holding a student visa who resides or previously resided in Canada. The promotion of the study was carried out in two ways. First, the poster was included in the weekly newsletter of Lakehead international office that they send out to international students via email. It was also promoted on my personal social media accounts but specified that the study is conducted at Lakehead University. Potential respondents who saw the poster and were interested in the questionnaire could scan the QR code or contact me via email for a link to access the survey. Once they completed the questionnaire, they were able to share the poster with others through their own social media accounts and email.

The respondents were directed to an information letter before the start of the questionnaire, in which they were informed of the study purpose, format, and availability of the results, and assured that their participation would be anonymous, confidential, voluntary,

and carefully protected. The information letter also specified respondents' right to withdraw from the questionnaire at any time and to discard completed responses prior to submission without any penalties. Thus, only submission of the questionnaire could serve as evidence of consent for responses to be used in the study. Due to the anonymous nature of data collection, data withdrawal after submission was impossible. To realize data privacy, the collection of demographic data for the questionnaire only required respondents to complete information relevant to the study such as gender, country of origin, level of study, years in Canada, and area of subject, which was only reported in group statistics and not identifiable to anyone at the individual level, including me, my supervisor, reviewers, and audiences.

The study offered prospective respondents the chance to win one \$50 Amazon gift card as an incentive and reasonable compensation, which was paid by me. After completing the questionnaire, participants entered their email addresses in order to enter a draw. Their email addresses were only collected for the purpose of compensation and are not linked to the identification of their responses in any way. The prospective winner was entitled to the full gift card, no matter how many questions they answered. The reason for enabling an incentive in the study was to increase the sample size and diversity of respondents and responses, even though it assumed a certain degree of incentive-induced bias on the respondents' side.

The study was composed of five predictors and three dependent variables (DVs). The predictors were summarized into social factors and cultural factors in adjusting to Canadian universities. Social factors included two levels: CS (culture shock) and L2 (L2 apprehension). Cultural factors consisted of three levels: VC (vertical collectivism), PD (power distance), and LTO (long-term orientation). Both factors were compared between EAIS and non-EAIS. Measures of intercultural sensitivity were divided into three DVs: In-class willingness to communicate (WTC), out-of-class intercultural sensitivity (IS), and attitudes toward global

citizenship (GC). Comparisons of intercultural sensitivity were also made between the two groups.

Measures and Materials

In-classroom Willingness to Communicate

The assessment of In-class WTC used four items adapted from Lee and Lee (2020), with some minor word modifications to suit the context of Canadian universities (e.g., “Even when I have the opportunity to talk freely during the lecture, I am unwilling to communicate” or “I enjoy participating in a conversation when I have a chance to talk in front of the other students during the lecture”). Responses to these questions were recorded on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree,” which applied to all other variables used in this study. For the present study, Cronbach’s alpha for this measure was tested to be acceptable, $\alpha = .74$.

Out-of-Class Intercultural Sensitivity

To measure students’ intercultural sensitivity outside the lecture, this study adopted the 15-item Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS-15) developed by Wang and Zhou (2016), which had a higher level of reliability than the 24-item version (ISS) originally constructed by Chen and Starosta (2000). Methodologically, ISS-15 measures five domains of intercultural sensitivity, including interaction engagement, respect of cultural differences, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment, and interaction attentiveness. However, I decided to combine these subscales for two reasons. First, I wanted to enhance the internal consistency of ISS-15. Second, creating too many levels for dependent variables would make data analysis more difficult. Examples of items from ISS-15 include “I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures,” “I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded,” and “I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures” (Wang & Zhou, 2016, p. 6). All 15 items were modified to fit the out-of-class context. Cronbach’s alpha for

ISS-15 in this study was .71. This implies an overall above-satisfactory internal consistency for the scale (Taber, 2017).

Attitudes Toward Global Citizenship

I used Morais and Ogden's (2011) Global Citizenship Scale (GCS) to measure students' attitudes toward becoming global citizens, but only the items related to the dimension of social responsibility were selected (e.g., "The needs of the world's most fragile people are more pressing than my own;"). This was due to the fact that some of the dimensions of GCS overlapped with our assessments of intercultural sensitivity, while others (e.g., global civic engagement) focused more on actions rather than attitudes. Additionally, two items were dropped because they did not fit in the context of the current study (e.g., "Americans should emulate the more sustainable and equitable behaviours of other developed countries," "Developed nations have the obligation to make incomes around the world as equitable as possible") (Morais & Ogden, 2011, p. 454). Cronbach's alpha for GCS in this study was acceptable, $\alpha = .72$.

Culture Shock

Culture shock was assessed by using Mumford's (1998) "core" cultural shock items (e.g., "Do you feel strained from the effort to adapt to a new culture"). I made some changes to the wording of items to align them with the overall tone of the questionnaire (e.g., I feel strained from the effort to adapt to a new culture"). The core cultural shock items measured the following dimensions elucidated in the literature: Strain to adapt, homesickness, feeling accepted, wish to escape, confused about identity, shocked or disgusted, and feeling helpless. They were combined in the data analysis. Cronbach's alpha for this measure was acceptable, $\alpha = .76$.

L2 Communication Apprehension

L2 communication apprehension was measured by the short version of the Foreign Language Communication Anxiety (FLCA) scale validated by Guntzviller et al. (2016). The scale contains 7 items (e.g., “I start to panic when I have to speak in the language without preparation;”) and is suitable for numerous contexts where L2 difficulties may be experienced, including classroom and daily university interactional situations (Guntzviller et al., 2016, p. 623). In this study, Cronbach’s alpha for the short version of FLCA was acceptable, $\alpha = .73$.

Individualism-Collectivism

I-C was initially used as a construct for Hofstede’s research in the occupational values context. In recent years, we have witnessed more applications of I-C in diverse areas of study (Sharma, 2010). This study used six items from Chirkov et al. (2003) to measure VC (vertical collectivism) with a slight adjustment of words (e.g., “I would do what would please my family, even if I detest the activity”, “I would sacrifice self-interest for the benefit of group/collective”). The reason VC was chosen only to evaluate I-C is that the individual rating of VC was the most appropriate measure of understanding the degree of internalization of traditional Confucian values (such as in-group bonds and piety) between EAIS and non-EAIS. The instrument was tested to be good and reliable for the present study, $\alpha = .81$.

Power Distance

In the present study, PD was defined as social inequality and power distance between teachers and students, so it measures attitudes toward authority both generally and in the classroom setting. Here, I adopted Sharma’s (2010) Personal Cultural Orientations (PCO) scale because it measures cultural factors (including PD) at a personal level. In previous research, Cronbach’s α of PCO scale varies from .72 to .85, which implies an overall acceptable or good reliability. In the PCO scale, social inequality is conceptualized as one of the personal orientation dimensions with sample items such as “unequal treatment for

different people is an acceptable way of life for me” (Sharma, 2010, p. 794). Teacher-student power distance dimension items were adapted from Lagas et al.’s (2007) 15-item “social status teacher” subscale, which evaluates students’ perception of teachers’ power and affinity (e.g., “I address the teacher in the same way as I address my classmates”). In the original study, Cronbach’s α of the “social status teacher” subscale was .71, which is considered borderline acceptable. But for our study, I chose only seven out of 15 items that reflected the themes in our literature on PD. After combining two scales, Cronbach’s alpha was tested to be acceptable for the present study, $\alpha = .76$.

Long-term Orientation

To measure LTO, I used the 8-term two-factor LTO scale developed by Bearden et al. (2006), emphasizing values of tradition and planning. Tradition is associated with ethical behaviours that people and their culture view as virtues, and people with strong planning habits are more likely to carry out ethical behaviours that lead to long-term positive feedback and acclaim. An example of the “tradition” items is “Respect for tradition is important to me” and the example of planning items would be “I don't mind giving up today's fun for success in the future” (Bearden et al., 2006, p. 458). According to several studies implementing the psychometric characteristics of the scale, Cronbach’s α of the planning subscale (ranging from .60 to .76) was unexpectedly weaker than that of the “tradition” subscale (ranging from .77 to .88) (Bearden et al., 2006). Therefore, items from both subscales were combined to enhance the reliability of the LTO scale used in the present study. Cronbach’s alpha was acceptable for this measure, $\alpha = .79$.

Finally, the internal consistency test yielded a pooled Cronbach’s α of .78. This indicates a high internal consistency between eight measures which are all theoretically distinct. I accepted the distinctiveness as these measures were taken directly from separately published papers. Also, α indices of scales used for this study were all beyond the acceptable

level, with Chirkov et al. (2003)'s scale measuring VC showing a good reliability estimate exceeding .81. In general, the reliability of test scales in this study was found to be adequate.

Data Analysis Procedures

At the initial stage of data analysis, I explained the coding scheme of survey items and the method of handling missing data. Next, the descriptive statistics for student demographics and variable information were calculated.

Methods and Assumptions of Analyses for Research Question 1

For question 1, a general linear model (GLM) was deployed to compare intercultural sensitivity between EAISs and non-EAISs. Examples of GLM include OLS linear regression, quantile regression, and AN(C)OVA. In particular, linear regression and AN(C)OVA are types of GLMs with errors of DV(s) assumed to be normally distributed (Babyak, 2004). In this study, I decided to include the demographic variable gender to answer question 1. Based on the literature review, it is necessary to explore how gender influences the strength of association between participants' culture and intercultural sensitivity. As a result, the interaction between gender and culture was examined on three separate measures of intercultural sensitivity. I hypothesized that each measure of intercultural sensitivity (WTC, IS, and GC) varies by gender.

Next, I needed to decide on the appropriate GLM. Three assumptions [*i.i.d.* $N(0, \sigma^2)$] of OLS linear regression or AN(C)OVA needed to be met for them to work well and be valid. First, errors of the DV must be independent (i.) of or uncorrelated with values of predictors (or fitted value of DV). Second, the variance of the errors must be identically distributed (i.d.) over all values of predictors. Finally, errors of DV needed to be (approximately) normally distributed so that their M equals 0 and variance equals σ^2 . Note that it is the errors that are assumed to be approximately normally distributed since true normal distribution does not exist in reality (Box, 1976). GLM is fairly robust to violations of the third assumption

regarding normality of errors, so the assumptions of i.i.d. are far more important. Since errors cannot be observed directly, they were assessed by residuals, which are the deviations of observed values from the fitted values.

There is no formal agreement on the measurement for the first assumption regarding the independence of errors with categorical predictors (cultural group differences), so it boils down to the rigour of design and data collection processes. I am confident that the cases within groups were measured appropriately as each respondent's answer was separate from the others, and each group (male vs female, EAIS vs non-EAIS) was unrelated. Next, I performed separate heteroskedasticity and normality tests using Cameron & Trivedi's decomposition of IM-tests with two predictors (gender and culture) against the residuals of WTC, IS, and GC. Tests of heteroskedasticity were insignificant for residuals of WTC, IS, and GC, which indicates that the variance of errors are homogeneously distributed. The kurtosis tests were also found to be insignificant; this meant that datasets for three measures tended not to have widely spread outliers. However, based on the significance level from the test of skewness, normality assumption seemed to be violated for WTC ($p = .049$), IS ($p = .02$), and GC ($p = .04$). Distributions of residuals seemed more or less positively skewed for these three measures. In many cases, quantile regression may be used in the face of non-normality. But given the robustness of GLM to normality violation and just moderate skewness for WTC and GC, I decided to adopt two-way ANOVAs for group comparisons on measures of intercultural sensitivity. For IS estimate which values were more heavily skewed, a natural logarithm transformation was performed. The skewness of residual distribution of IS was then alleviated after the transformation ($p = .03$). Now, WTC, IS, and GC were only moderately skewed. By that, Rubin's (1999, as cited in Weaver, 2004) statement that "normality is not necessary for the validity of regression" was more rationalized for answering research question 1 (p. 18).

Methods and Assumptions of Analyses for Research Question 2

One-Way ANCOVA for Group Comparisons on Sociocultural Factors. Research question 2 intended to explore the association between sociocultural factors and each measure of intercultural sensitivity—WTC, IS, and GC. To address this question, a one-way ANCOVA was first performed to examine if sociocultural factors do differ between EAISSs and non-EAISSs with covariates of interest. Covariates were selected as confounders (rather than mediators), such as demographic variables like gender and years of acculturation in Canada, which were more preferred for this study as they are not as malleable as mediators (MacKinnon et al., 2000). This helped us to understand whether differences in sociocultural factors between cultures were influenced by predetermined differences in demography.

Tests of Assumptions for ANCOVA. For group comparisons on social factors, gender and years of acculturation were selected as two confounding variables of interest that were likely to explain a large proportion of variance in social factors. Gender was held constant according to the evidence from literature review. Variable years of acculturation was also held constant, as feelings of intercultural contact may be different in earlier and later years after studying abroad. Both normality and homoscedasticity assumptions were met for yielding valid parameter estimates for CS (culture shock), but normality was only slightly violated for L2 apprehension based on skewness test ($p = .047$). For group comparisons on cultural factors, gender was entered as the only third variable that confounded the association between cultural factors and cultural group differences. Variable years of acculturation was not selected, because early socialization is more likely to lead to differentiation of the perception of one's own culture than the acculturation process. The homogeneity of variance assumption of ANCOVA was met for all cultural factors, but normality assumption (measured by skewness) appeared to be violated for LTO (long-term orientation; $p = .01$).

LTO was then natural log transformed to alleviate skewness ($p = .06$) and produced more unbiased parameter estimates.

The literature suggests that there might be a nonlinear relationship between CS and years of acculturation in this study, because students' feelings of culture shock may differ over the duration of acculturation. As a result, the study examined the degree of nonlinearity to ensure that GLM was suitable for group comparison in CS with the confounder years of acculturation. The test of polynomial contrast indicated that none of the nonlinear trends was statistically significant – Quadratic, $p = .53$; Cubic, $p = .30$; Quartic, $p = .40$; and Quintic, $p = .87$. This suggested that GLM and the linear function of years of acculturation were warranted.

Regression Analyses on Intercultural Sensitivity Measures. Next, separate hierarchical regressions and OLS linear multiple regressions were conducted on three intercultural sensitivity measures. For hierarchical regression, participants' L2 apprehension was entered at the first block of the analyses, specified as the lingo-affective factor; for foreign language anxiety was associated with WTC and IS, and language anxiety being the primary source of intercultural barrier and preference of learning differentiation, according to the literature review. Other predictors culture shock, power distance, vertical collectivism, and long-term orientation were entered in Block 2 in the form of sociocultural factors, which examines if these predictors as a composite resulted in a significant enhancement in R^2 and model fit after their weights contributed to the regression model. The change in R^2 describes the squared semi-partial correlation between sociocultural factors and each measure of intercultural sensitivity, meaning that the Block 1 lingo-affective factor was partialled out of sociocultural factors. If the change in R^2 is not significant from Block 1 to Block 2, sociocultural factors may not be significant enough to explain collectively the percentage of variance in each measure. Next, OLS linear regressions were used to estimate the coefficient

and significance each predictor contributed to measures of intercultural sensitivity, while holding other predictors constant. This section of the study did not intend to differentiate the impact of these predictors on intercultural sensitivity between cultures or among genders, given the potential risk of overfitting and phantom degrees of freedom owing to moderate sample size of each cultural and gender group (Babyak, 2004).

Tests of Multicollinearity for Regression Analyses. Multicollinearity among five predictors CS, L2, PD, VC, and LTO were examined by variance inflation factor (VIF) and condition number. VIF evaluates the extent to which “the variance of a coefficient is ‘inflated’ because of linear dependence with other predictors,” while the condition number estimates the number of linear relations at stake (Allison, 2012, para. 3). As a rule of thumb, VIF over 2.5 or condition number exceeding 30 may yield multicollinearity concern. In our sample, VIFs of all predictors were less than 2.5, but condition number was greater than 30 (49.95), partly indicating the existence of multicollinearity. However, given the nature of the inquiry in this study, some degree of multicollinearity was expected in which sociocultural factors assessed by predictors were highly likely to be linearly related. It was not surprising that the number of linear relations among predictors were high enough to yield multicollinearity concern. But given the relatively low VIF values, I decided that multicollinearity was only less or not violated. No transformation was performed on the predictors since it did not affect model parameter estimation, even though some argued that transformation might mitigate multicollinearity (Allison, 2014, para. 11; Echambadi & Hess, 2007). Additionally, the impact of multicollinearity is less of a concern in model prediction because its goal is to provide linear combinations of predictors and estimate the predictive power of each predictor for the model. In other words, model parameter estimates in prediction studies such as coefficients are not expected to be unbiased to the extent that causal inference can be performed. Another way to extrapolate the impact of multicollinearity is to examine the

standard error of the insignificant predictor in the presence of other seemingly correlated predictors. If such a predictor is theoretically significant, but turns out to be insignificant with a large standard error in practice, then the impact of multicollinearity may be alarming and the predictor may require to be substituted.

Tests of Assumptions for Regression Analyses. First, the test of skewness was found to be insignificant for WTC, IS, and GC, which confirms that residuals of these variables were normally distributed. Furthermore, independence of errors and heteroskedasticity were subsequently assessed (using residual plots) to examine the relationship between residuals and fitted values of WTC, IS, and GC. For WTC and IS, residuals were not correlated with predictors, and residual variances were equal among fitted values. For GC, the test of heteroskedasticity shows that the equal variance assumption appeared to be violated ($p = .01$). And for the independence of errors assumption, the correlation between residuals and fitted values was less or not discernable based on the residual plot. To alleviate the violation, a natural log transformation was done on the values of GC. Heteroskedasticity then became no longer significant ($p = .07$) and potential violation of independence of errors was mitigated.

Methods and Assumptions of Analyses for Research Question 3

For question 3, the association among social and cultural factors was examined by conducting a correlation matrix. The choice of correlation measure was decided between Pearson's r and Spearman's ρ . Pearson's r examines the extent of data fitting in the bivariate linear relationship, while Spearman's ρ measures the consistency of a bivariate monotonic (one-directional) relationship, regardless of whether the relationship is linear or nonlinear in nature (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2017). For Spearman's ρ , perfect consistency underlines that it is the rank scores of paired variables that are expected to be linear. Furthermore, both methods are applicable to continuous variables. Spearman's ρ is better suited for data collected with ordinal (i.e., Likert) measures, whereas ratio- and interval-level

data are more likely to be reported with Pearson's r (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2017). In this study, items of each variable were measured with Likert scale. The score of each item was combined so the variable could be treated as continuous, thus, both Spearman and Pearson correlations were appropriate. Next, linearity was examined for bivariate relationships of predictors. The test of polynomial contrast of data indicates that each bivariate relationship exhibited an appropriately linear pattern. Some were more or less nonlinear but they generally pointed in one direction. However, the relationship between VC and PD appeared to be quadratic ($p < .05$) which underlined non-monotony. Unfortunately, the correlation of this pair of relationships could be disappointingly low and less valid. To keep the analyses simpler, this study decided to use Spearman's rho to test the consistency of bivariate relationships between predictors to account for the degree of nonlinearity, and be cautious in interpreting the correlation between VC and PD.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Note: The analyses were conducted using version 17 of StataCorp Stata Statistical Software. The missing values analysis and imputation were carried out with version 27 of IBM SPSS Statistics.

Data Screening Procedures

Coding Scheme

Values of all intercultural sensitivity measures, social and cultural predictors, as well as self-rated interaction, literacy, and overall English skill were originally collected with ordinal scales, their means would thus fall in the range of [0, 5]. During the data collection, individual responses for each survey item were entered and stored as string variables (e.g., ‘Strongly agree’). After the data collector was closed, each individual response was recoded into numerical value with some negatively worded items (in relation to each variable) reversely coded. Next, all individual scores that measured the property of each scale were summed up and averaged to represent the mean value of each variable.

Missing Data

The major drawback of missing data is the reduction of statistical power and distorted estimation of parameters due to decreased sample size. With missing data, important information is lost because many statistical programs use listwise deletions in which all cases with one or more missing values are excluded from the analyses; replicability and generalizability of results may also be affected by missing data (Kang, 2013). Following data collection, non-response rate of each predictor and DV ranged from 6.7% to 20.0%, which is not ignorable. Therefore, data imputation was carried out for all predictors and DVs. The continuous measures of these variables show an insignificant Little’s Missing Completely at Random test, $\chi^2 = 76.63, p = .07$, indicating that the data was missing in a random way. Missing data were then treated with a single imputation method with expectation

maximization approach for predicting missing values. For data that is missing completely at random, expectation maximization algorithm is relatively accurate at yielding parameter estimates (Enders, 2001). After imputation, the observation counts of all predictors and DVs were increased to $N = 120$.

Single imputation was implemented for all analyses performed in the study. Specifically in OLS multiple linear regression, imputation helps obtain more unbiased estimates of regression parameters representative of the population. For the linear regression model, Harrell (2020) adopts the 20:1 rule, that is, each predictor needs to contain 20 cases; similarly, Babyak (2004) argues that “a minimum of 10 to 15 observations per predictor variable will generally allow good estimates [when multicollinearity among predictors is not a severe concern]” (p. 415). This study had a total of five predictors, thus a minimum of 100 cases were required for the regression model. Data imputation ensures that Babyak (2004) and Harrell (2020)’s sample size criteria are met.

Descriptive Statistics

The two-way frequency statistics describing demographic information of participants’ level of study and field of study at Canadian universities are displayed in Table 2. The descriptive statistics including observation count (N), mean (M), and standard deviation (SD) of all numerical variables are shown in Table 3. Missing values of each variable can be inferred by subtracting the observation counts by the total number of participants ($N = 120$). Variables interaction, literacy, and overall skills in English were collected for understanding the background demographics of participants’ English proficiency.

Table 2*Descriptive Statistics: Level of Study by Field of Study*

Field of Study	Level of Study			Total
	Doctoral degree	Master's degree	Undergraduate	
Business	4	8	10	22
Art & Social Science	1	8	23	32
STEM	1	17	39	57
Total	6	33	72	111

Note. In this study, art & social science included students enrolled in humanity degrees, music, performance art, art design majors, psychology, and economics majors; STEM included all 'hard' science degrees, excluding finance, economics, and psychology. $N = 111$ (nine missing data)

Table 3*Descriptive Statistics of All Variables*

Variables	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Years in Canada	115	4.21	4.43
Literacy Skill in English	119	3.66	.99
Interaction Skill in English	119	3.62	1.03
Overall English Skill	119	3.66	.94
Willingness to Communicate in Class	120	3.09	.69
Out-of-Class/General Intercultural Sensitivity	120	3.34	.47
Global Citizenship Attitude	120	3.09	.40
Culture Shock	120	3.16	.43
L2 Apprehension	120	3.08	.69
Vertical Collectivism	120	3.39	.46
Power Distance	120	2.95	.27
Long-term Orientation	120	3.61	.46

Preliminary Analyses of Demographic Variables

Relationship Between Fields of Study and WTC

Literature review indicates that there may be an association between the nature of subjects (contextual factor) and willingness to communicate (WTC) in the classroom (Peng, 2014). The nature of subjects was represented by three fields of study—Business, Art & Social Science, and STEM. Using simple one-way ANOVA, WTC did not appear to differ by three fields of study, $F(2, 109) = 1.35, p = .26, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .02$. Thus, the result shows that the students' WTC in the classroom was not associated with the nature of curricula or the curricular context where the classroom discussion was held. The later analyses would then examine whether WTC is related to lingo-affective factors (Cao, 2011).

Non-Parametric Test of English Proficiency by Cultural Groups

Due to the large proportion (77%) of native English speakers from the U.S. and Britain in the non-EAIS group, interaction, literacy, and overall English skills were heavily negatively skewed for non-EAISs. In this case, the non-parametric test is more suitable for comparing self-reported English skills between EAISs and non-EAISs than a two-sample t-test. As a result, A two-sample Wilcoxon Rank-Sum (Mann-Whitney) test was used to test the null hypothesis that two groups reported equal median interaction, literacy, and overall English skills. The Wilcoxon rank-sum test of interaction proficiency indicates that there was no significant difference in median interaction skills between EAISs and non-EAISs, $Z = 1.18, p = .25$. The second test on literacy proficiency shows that the self-rated median literacy skill of non-EAISs was statistically significantly higher than that of EAISs, $Z = 3.17, p < .05$, rejecting the null hypothesis. The third test on overall English proficiency indicates that non-EAISs reported statistically significantly higher overall median English skill than EAISs, $Z = 2.87, p < .05$, rejecting the null hypothesis. Overall, two cultural groups reported similar median interaction skill, despite the significant median difference in overall reported English

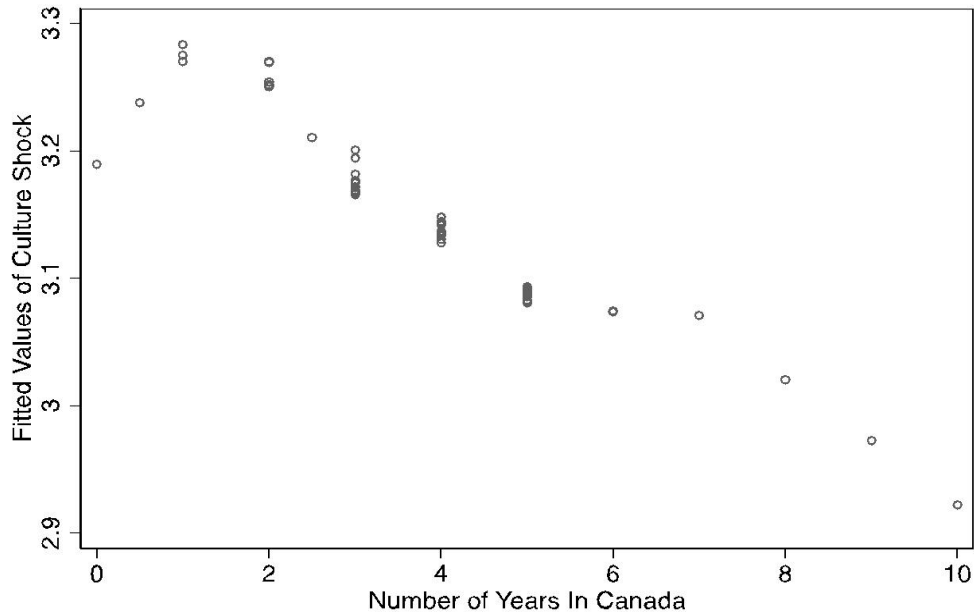
proficiency. When it came to literacy skills, the group median difference was larger than that of interaction skills.

Relationship Between Culture Shock and Years of Acculturation

A LOWESS graph describing the locally weighted regression of culture shock (CS) on years of acculturation is shown in Figure 2. The plot demonstrates that the relationship between CS and years of acculturation in Canada presented a relatively linear pattern (as examined previously), but the fluctuations of reported degree of shock were generally confirmed by Oberg's (1960) phases of culture shock. Based on the graph, the honeymoon phase was not evident as the rejection phase quickly peaked in about 1.5 years of acculturation in Canada. From the second year to about the fifth year, there appeared to be a near linear decrease in the reported shock feeling, reflecting that international students developed coping strategies and skills to recover from psychological distress and adapt to the Canadian environment. From the sixth year to the tenth year, students' sense of shock exhibited a concave down and decreasing trend, indicating that students were slowly acculturated to Canadian culture. Note that the number of sojourners dropped sharply after the fifth year, possibly because they completed their university degree or obtained permanent resident status. This resulted in insufficient sample size after year 5, making the model less reliable and therefore useful only for predictive purposes. Other culture shock phases of Oberg's (1960) were supported in this study except for the honeymoon stage, but this was probably due to the lack of samples; the study recruited only a small number of students who had just arrived in Canada in the face of travel barriers related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 2

A Scatterplot Showing LOWESS Smoothed Culture Shock Values Predicted Across Number of Years in Canada



Note. The relationship exhibited an approximate linear pattern.

Answers to Research Question 1

Research Question 1: What differences in intercultural sensitivity can be observed between EAIS and non-EAIS in Canadian universities?

First, the interaction between gender and culture was performed with a two-way ANOVA on the estimate of willingness to communicate (WTC). Overall, the gender and culture interaction effect was not statistically significant, $F(1, 113) = 2.39, p = .12$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$. This implies that the relationship between culture and WTC did not appear to depend on gender, and only about 2.07% of the variation in WTC was accounted for by the gender and culture interaction.

The results of the two-way ANOVA performed on out-of-class intercultural sensitivity were described, which was transformed to $\ln(\text{IS})$. The gender and culture interaction appeared to exist but was not quite up to reach statistical significance, $F(1, 113) =$

3.82, $p = .053$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$. Given that the effect was marginally statistically significant, I conducted simple analyses. Table 4 shows the simple effects analyses. There appeared to be a significant simple effect of gender for non-EAIS group, $t(85) = 2.71$. Specifically, female non-EAIS ($M = 3.5$, $SD = .5$) showed significantly higher IS than male non-EAIS ($M = 3.2$, $SD = .4$). Other simple effects remained insignificant. There seemed to be no cultural difference in students' IS for both male and female groups, $t(51) = 1.14$, $p = .26$; $t(62) = -1.59$, $p = .11$.

Table 4

Simple Effects Analyses of Students' Out-of-Class Intercultural Sensitivity

Groups	Measures	Condition Comparisons	Mean diff.	Contrast	SE	t	Sig
Female	Culture	EAIS vs non-EAIS	-.30	-.07	.04	-1.59	.11
Male		EAIS vs non-EAIS	.10	.04	.04	1.14	.26
EAIS	Gender	Female vs Male	-.10	-.03	.05	-.69	.49
Non-EAIS		Female vs Male	.30	.08	.03	2.71	.01*

Note. $N = 120$. EAIS = East-Asian International Students. Mean diff. = Difference in Mean Scores Between Conditions. * $p < .05$

The two-way ANOVA performed on global citizenship attitude (GC) shows that the gender and culture interaction was statistically significant, $F(1, 113) = 5.74$, partial $\eta^2 = .05$. This means that the association between culture and GC differed based on gender. But the strength of the gender and culture interaction on predicting GC, as examined by partial η^2 , was small (.05), meaning that about 4.83% of the variation in GC was accounted for by the gender and culture interaction. As shown in Table 5, the simple effects analyses suggest that GC in male EAISs ($M = 3.2$, $SD = .3$) was significantly higher than male students who were not EAISs ($M = 3.0$, $SD = .3$), $t(51) = 2.00$. Meanwhile, the between-group analysis on gender shows that female non-EAISs ($M = 3.2$, $SD = .5$) had significantly higher GC than male non-EAISs ($M = 3.0$, $SD = .3$), $t(85) = 2.26$.

Table 5*Simple Effects Analyses of Students' Global Citizenship Attitudes*

Groups	Measures	Condition Comparisons	Mean diff.	Contrast	SE	t	Sig
Female	Culture	EAIS vs non-EAIS	-.20	-.19	.13	-1.43	.15
Male		EAIS vs non-EAIS	.20	.23	.11	2.00	.047*
EAIS	Gender	Female vs Male	-.20	-.22	.15	-1.46	.15
Non-EAIS		Female vs Male	.20	.20	.09	2.26	.03*

Note. $N = 120$. EAIS = East-Asian International Students. Mean diff. = Difference in Mean Scores Between Conditions. * $p < .05$

Answers to Research Question 2

Research Question 2: What are the impacts of social and cultural factors on the intercultural sensitivity of international students?

ANCOVA on Differences in Sociocultural Factors

The results of one-way ANCOVA testing the differences in sociocultural factors between EAISs and non-EAISs were described in this section. These analyses compared the group means on L2 apprehension, culture shock (CS), power distance (PD), vertical collectivism (VC), and long-term orientation (LTO) while holding covariate(s) constant.

The group comparison on the social factors L2 apprehension and CS was conducted first. When gender and years in Canada were held constant, L2 apprehension did not appear to vary significantly between EAISs and non-EAISs, $F(1, 110) = 2.82, p = .10$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$. The post-estimation analyses show that the adjusted mean L2 apprehension of non-EAISs ($M = 3.14, SE = .07$) was higher than that of EAISs ($M = 2.88, SE = .13$). Years in Canada showed a significant but small negative confounding effect on the relationship between L2 apprehension and cultural differences, $F(1, 110) = 4.33$, partial $\eta^2 = .04$. Negative confounding effect of years in Canada implies that the culture and L2 apprehension association becomes greater when the confounder years in Canada is involved. Next, the cultural group comparison of CS was also significant when holding gender and years in

Canada constant, $F(1, 110) = 6.03$, partial $\eta^2 = .05$. The strength of this comparison, as indicated by partial η^2 (.05), was small, showing that roughly 5.20% of variation in CS was explained by the cultural difference after excluding the variation accounted for by gender and years in Canada. Years in Canada also seemed to significantly confound the association between CS and cultural differences, $F(1, 110) = 5.15$, partial $\eta^2 = .04$. The post-estimation analyses indicate that non-EAISs ($M = 3.22$, $SE = .05$) report higher CS than EAISs ($M = 3.00$, $SE = .08$). Overall, it appeared that social factors do seem to vary between EAISs and non-EAISs, but not in the same direction that was expected by the literature.

Table 6

Cultural Group Comparison of Mean L2 Apprehension and Culture Shock

Culture	L2 Apprehension			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% Confidence Interval	
Non-EAIS	3.14	.07	2.99	3.28
EAIS	2.88	.13	2.63	3.14
Culture	Culture Shock			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% Confidence Interval	
Non-EAIS	3.22	.05	3.13	3.31
EAIS	3.00	.08	2.84	3.15

Note. *M* = Mean. *SE* = Standard Error

The results of group comparisons on the cultural factors PD, VC, and LTO were described here. When the only covariate gender was held constant, there was roughly no difference in PD between EAISs and non-EAISs, $F(1, 110) = .01$, $p = .90$, partial $\eta^2 = .00$. Similarly, the difference in VC between two cultural groups was insignificant, $F(1, 110) = .21$, $p = .64$, partial $\eta^2 = .00$. Finally, LTO (natural log transformed) did not appear to vary between two cultural groups, $F(1, 110) = .13$, $p = .72$, partial $\eta^2 = .00$. Overall, it appeared that cultural factors (using PD, VC, and LTO) did not vary between EAISs and non-EAISs when holding gender as the only covariate.

Hierarchical and Multiple Regression on Factors Influencing WTC, IS, and GC

This section described results from hierarchical regression examining the L2 apprehension as the lingo-affective factor and CS, PD, VC, LTO as sociocultural factors influencing in-class willingness to communicate (WTC). In Block 1, the lingo-affective factor L2 apprehension was a significant predictor of WTC, $F(1, 118) = 48.30, p < .001$. The lingo-affective factor alone explained 29.05% of the variance in WTC ($\Delta R^2 = .29$). When sociocultural factors were entered in Block 2, the increase in R^2 was statistically significant, $F(4, 114) = 3.31$. An additional 7.39% of the variance in WTC was uniquely accounted for by five predictors as the composite of sociocultural factors ($\Delta R^2 = .07$). This meant that the squared semi-partial correlation between sociocultural factors and WTC with lingo-affective the factor partialled out of sociocultural factors was .07. Regardless, the size of this increase may not be sufficient enough to become necessary in practice. Overall, both lingo-affective and sociocultural factors contributed significantly to the regression model predicting WTC. The total R^2 after the introduction of sociocultural and lingo-affective factors was 0.36, meaning that the remaining 63.57% of the total variance in WTC was yet to be explained.

Table 7***Hierarchical and Multiple Regression on Willingness to Communicate***

Willingness to Communicate	ΔR^2	B^a	SE	t	p
Lingo-Affective Factor	.29	-	-	-	< .001
L2 Apprehension	-	-.41	.09	-4.53	.00**
Sociocultural Factors	.07	-	-	-	< .05
Culture Shock	-	-.14	.14	-.95	.34
Power Distance	-	-.60	.21	-2.82	.01*
Vertical Collectivism	-	-.14	.15	-.99	.32

Long-term Orientation	-	.05	.15	.31	.75
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Note. ^a Unstandardized regression coefficient. ** $p < .001$, * $p < .05$.

This section described the results from hierarchical regression examining the influence of the lingo-affective factor and sociocultural factors on out-of-class intercultural sensitivity (IS). In Block 1, the lingo-affective factor L2 apprehension was a significant predictor of IS, $F(1, 118) = 46.93, p < .001$. The lingo-affective factor alone explained 28.45% of the variance in IS ($\Delta R^2 = .28$). When sociocultural factors were entered in Block 2, the change in R^2 was statistically significant, $F(4, 114) = 34.87, p < .001$. An additional 39.37% of the variance in IS was uniquely accounted for by five predictors as the composite of sociocultural factors ($\Delta R^2 = .39$). This meant that the squared semi-partial correlation between sociocultural factors and IS with the lingo-affective factor partialled out of sociocultural factors was .39. Overall, both lingo-affective and sociocultural factors contributed significantly to the regression model predicting IS. The total R^2 after the introduction of sociocultural and lingo-affective factors was 0.68, meaning that the remaining 32.18% of the total variance in IS was unexplained. Compared to the regression model of WTC, the regression model of IS depended more on sociocultural factors.

Table 8

Hierarchical and Multiple Regression on General/Out-of-Class Intercultural Sensitivity

General Intercultural Sensitivity	ΔR^2	B^a	SE	t	p
Lingo-Affective Factor	.28	-	-	-	< .001
L2 Apprehension	-	-.20	.04	-4.43	.00**
Sociocultural Factors	.39	-	-	-	< .001
Culture Shock	-	-.09	.07	-1.25	.22
Power Distance	-	-.17	.10	-1.65	.10

Vertical Collectivism	-	-.29	.07	-4.09	.00**
Long-term Orientation	-	.73	.07	10.25	.00**

Note. ^a Unstandardized regression coefficient. ** $p < .001$, * $p < .05$.

This section described the results from hierarchical regression examining the influence of the lingo-affective factor and sociocultural factors on global citizenship (natural log transformed; GC). In Block 1, the lingo-affective factor L2 apprehension was a significant predictor of GC, $F(1, 118) = 49.44, p < .001$. The lingo-affective factor alone explained 29.53% of the variance in GC ($\Delta R^2 = .30$). When sociocultural factors were entered in Block 2, the change in R^2 was statistically significant, $F(4, 114) = 13.43, p < .001$. An additional 22.58% of the variance in GC was uniquely accounted for by five predictors as the composite of sociocultural factors ($\Delta R^2 = .23$). The squared semi-partial correlation between sociocultural factors and GC with the lingo-affective factor partialled out of sociocultural factors was .23. Overall, both lingo-affective and sociocultural factors contributed significantly to the regression model predicting GC. The total R^2 after the introduction of sociocultural and lingo-affective factors was 0.52, meaning that 52.10% of the total variance in GC was accounted for. Regression models of IS and GC appeared to be influenced more by sociocultural factors than lingo-affective factor; the composite of sociocultural factors was also more statistically significant in IS and GC models than that in WTC model.

Table 9

Hierarchical and Multiple Regression on Global Citizenship

Global Citizenship	ΔR^2	B^a	SE	t	p
Lingo-Affective Factor	.30	-	-	-	< .001
L2 Apprehension	-	-.06	.01	-4.02	.00**
Sociocultural Factors	.23	-	-	-	< .001

Culture Shock	-	-.00	.02	-.19	.85
Power Distance	-	-.07	.03	-2.22	.03*
Vertical Collectivism	-	-.10	.02	-4.62	.00**
Long-term Orientation	-	.13	.02	5.72	.00**

Note. ^a Unstandardized regression coefficient. ** $p < .001$, * $p < .05$.

Results from multiple linear regression demonstrating the association between predictors and WTC were described here. In predicting WTC, L2 apprehension ($B = -.41$, $p < .001$) and power distance ($B = -.60$) were significant predictors while holding other covariates constant. Other predictors of WTC were not statistically significant; their standard errors were also not large, which implies that the model was unlikely affected by multicollinearity.

Results from multiple linear regression demonstrating the association between predictors and IS were described in this section. In predicting IS, L2 apprehension ($B = -.20$, $p < .001$), vertical collectivism ($B = -.29$, $p < .001$), and long-term orientation ($B = .72$, $p < .001$) were significant predictors while holding other covariates constant. The associations between culture shock and IS ($B = -.09$, $p = .22$) and power distance and IS ($B = -.17$, $p = .10$) were not statistically significant; The standard errors of insignificant predictors were also small, which implies that the model is unlikely affected by multicollinearity.

Results from multiple linear regression demonstrating the association between predictors and GC (natural log transformed) were described here. In predicting GC, L2 apprehension ($B = -.06$, $p < .001$), vertical collectivism ($B = -.10$, $p < .001$), power distance ($B = -.07$), and long-term orientation ($B = .13$, $p < .001$) were significant predictors while holding other covariates constant. The association between culture shock and GC ($B = -.00$, $p = .85$) was not statistically significant and appeared to be nearly non-existent; all predictors

had extreme low standard errors (partially due to transformation), which implies that the model was unlikely affected by multicollinearity.

Answers to Research Question 3

Research Question 3: What is the interplay among social and cultural factors?

The result of Spearman's rho correlation coefficient testing the relationships among all predictors was summarized in Table 10. CS was positively related to L2 ($r = .51, p < .001$), VC ($r = .33, p < .001$), and PD ($r = .22$). Similarly, L2 was positively associated with CS, VC ($r = .36, p < .001$), and PD ($r = .23$). In addition, VC was related to CS, L2, and LTO ($r = .55$). PD correlated with all predictors except for VC. Finally, LTO was only related to VC and PD. Specifically, LTO was negatively associated with PD ($r = -.23$), but positively with VC. VIF scores are also displayed here.

Table 10

Spearman's Correlation Table

	Predictors	1	2	3	4	5	VIF
1	Culture Shock	1.00	--	--	--	--	1.43
2	L2 Apprehension	.51**	1.00	--	--	--	1.47
3	Vertical Collectivism	.33**	.36**	1.00	--	--	1.67
4	Power Distance	.22*	.23*	-.03	1.00	--	1.24
5	Long-term Orientation	.02	-.07	.55**	-.23*	1.00	1.67

Note. VIF = Variance Inflation Factor. ** $p < .001$, * $p < .05$

Chapter Summary

This chapter of the results describes the findings relevant to the research questions. The preliminary analyses of demographic variables years of acculturation and fields of study were conducted to determine if they should be included as covariates in subsequent analyses. The test of English proficiency found that EAIS and non-EAIS reported similar interaction skills in English, providing support in interpreting the results. In response to the first question,

there appeared to be no unique relationship between culture and three measures of intercultural sensitivity, it depended on the gender of the participant. It is worth highlighting and expected that female non-EAIS reported higher general IS and GC attitude than male non-EAIS. For the second question, there was no difference in the identification with Hofstede's three cultural dimensions between EAIS and non-EAIS, which is unexpected for such a well-established theory. EAIS also reported lower L2 apprehension and culture shock than non-EAIS. The results of hierarchical regression were also performed to show the weight of each social and cultural predictor and composite contributed to predicting WTC, IS, and GC. As for the third question, the correlation among Hofstede's three cultural dimensions seemed inconsistent, and long-term orientation had weak correlations with all other variables. Overall, the interplay among social and cultural factors was expected.

The focus of the next chapter is to interpret the core results in relation to the previous literature and to provide educators with implications for the results. Additionally, I incorporate unsupported findings, personal biases, and various methodological flaws to present limitations. Interpretations, implications, limitations, and gaps are then used to suggest recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

In this study, group comparisons were performed to examine differences in intercultural sensitivity and sociocultural adjustment factors in Canadian universities between EAISs and non-EAISs, then the role of sociocultural factors in predicting intercultural sensitivity was explored. The results of group comparisons show that measures of intercultural sensitivity did not appear to differ by the effect of cultural heritages, but by the combined effects of cultural heritage and gender as measured by out-of-class intercultural sensitivity and global citizenship. Secondly, the prediction that EAISs experience more social hindrances than non-EAISs as measured by culture shock and L2 apprehension was not supported, since non-EAISs reported significantly higher culture shock and L2 apprehension than EAISs. Third, no difference was found in cultural factors in adjustment between EAISs and non-EAISs as measured by vertical collectivism, power distance, and long-term orientation, which implies that items from Hofstede's cultural dimension theory do not accurately predict cultural distinctions in international students for this study. Next, most of the hypotheses related to the prediction of social and cultural factors on measures of intercultural sensitivity were supported. Finally, most of Spearman's rho correlations among variables were supported by the literature.

Intercultural Sensitivity Differs by Cultural Heritage and Gender

This study is among the first to explore the association between intercultural sensitivity and Confucian heritage of university international students. Previous studies identified a priori cultural differences as a vehicle for EAIS' school reticence and intercultural communication incompetence, but most of these studies are based on westerners' impression of EAISs from the western standard of communication competence and their limited understanding of Confucian culture (Cheng, 2000; Zhu & Bresnahan, 2018). By using a self-report approach, both EAISs and non-EAISs perceived the values of intercultural encounters

in their respective frames of reference. However, the downside of self-reporting is that participants' self-perception of intercultural sensitivity may not reflect their true behaviour and attitude in intercultural situations, such as reticence. The reason is that evaluation of one's own behaviour has to do with more thoughtful reasoning and introspection beyond what this survey allowed. Thus, self-reporting is considered more helpful in understanding participants' intuitive awareness of themselves.

Using self-report, the assumption that EAIS has lower intercultural sensitivity was not found in the study. The reason for using 'assumption' instead of 'hypothesis' here is that the intercultural sensitivity of students is moderated by a complex chain of contextual and personal causes, so it is only fair to explore an inference regarding group comparisons of intercultural sensitivity rather than to support one. Meanwhile, despite a fair number of previous findings on barriers to intercultural sensitivity among EAISs, they are mostly discovered by either impression of raters from other cultural groups or within-subjects (EAISs) designs (Zhu & Bresnahan, 2018). There are scant between-subjects studies on direct comparisons between/among international students besides Lu and Hsu (2008) and Morales (2017), and none was conducted in the Canadian context. For studies using within-subjects designs on EAISs, these results do not shed light on whether non-EAISs behave or value similarly to EAISs in the intercultural encounter. The results of the present study suggest that there was no significant evidence that EAISs have lower overall intercultural sensitivity than non-EAISs. On the measure of global citizenship, male EAISs scored significantly higher than male non-EAISs, indicating that male EAISs had stronger self-perception of ethnorelativeness, open-mindedness, and global orientation than male non-EAISs. Overall, the problematization of EAISs' intercultural sensitivity might be socially constructed, like the stereotype of being too 'Asian' (Cheng, 2000). Such a stereotype focuses on the uniqueness of cultural groups rather than the similarity of human cognition. The result shows that there

was neither a significant cultural group difference nor gender difference in willingness to communicate (WTC) in the classroom, which implies that WTC may reflect how international students generally behave in the classroom. Shao and Gao (2016) suggest that WTC “has to do with propensity for disrupting action control, that is, unsatisfactory ability to begin a task resolutely and focus on it until completion;” this failure to act on intent was also found in anglophones learning French in Canada (p. 117). This demonstrates that reticence as a Confucian cultural tendency may have been exaggerated, since Confucian heritage culture countries may be perceived as more traditional and less democratic. Perhaps reticence is a fairly normal thing among international students and students learning L2 in general.

According to Hymes (1972), EAISS are types of multilinguals who are immersed in the intercultural linguistic context to some extent when they study abroad in Canada, hence they develop stronger intercultural sensitivity and knowledge than monocultured individuals. It is also assumed that EAISS have acquired adequate linguistic skills prior to receiving admissions from Canadian universities. However, this does not mean that non-EAISS are not multilingual. In this study, students from the U.S. and Britain ($N = 67$) made up a large proportion of all non-EAISS who might only speak English. Both countries appear to be more developed, with more immigrants and visitors, and thus have the promise of building more inclusive and diverse societies by encouraging multicultural participation. However, it is unclear whether students in multicultural societies are fixated on ethnocentric cultural mindsets or are willing to maintain conscious efforts to interact interculturally. When they study abroad in a similar cultural, behavioural, and linguistic context like Canada, they might be less enthusiastic about learning the culture and the language compared to students from non-English speaking countries (Yao & Kierstead, 1984). For example, McMurray (2007) found that there was no significant difference in intercultural sensitivity between American students with or without overseas study experiences. For EAISS, especially sojourners, they

need to acquire intercultural learning experiences to achieve pragmatic learning goals after their basic belonging needs are satisfied (Munawar, 2015). In one study, McMurray (2007) reveals that international students studying in the U.S. reported higher intercultural sensitivity than domestic American students, possibly due to their higher attendance at campus-wide multicultural events. Regardless of cultural differences and sensitivity to intercultural interactions, all international students have at least equal access to multicultural environments that provide resources for cultural learning. This may explain the lack of evidence for differences in intercultural sensitivity between EAISs and non-EAISs.

In addition to the lack of support for the cultural heritage effect, there is partial support for the gender effect on intercultural sensitivity. Specifically, the results show that female students reported significantly higher out-of-class intercultural sensitivity (IS) and global citizenship (GC) than male students for the non-EAIS group. However, the gender difference in the EAIS group was not statistically significant, and the WTC, IS, and GC of males were only marginally higher than that of female students. The findings of higher self-reported intercultural sensitivity for female non-EAISs were supported by Fabregas et al. (2012), Holm et al. (2009), McMurray (2007), and Tompkins et al. (2017). This may support the argument that female non-EAISs tend to have higher empathetic capacity and are more sensitive to implicit communicative nuances than males (Morales, 2017). Furthermore, it is unclear why male EAISs reported insignificant and slightly higher intercultural sensitivity than female EAISs, and it would be unfair to lend substantive interpretation to it without inspecting the causes. However, it is still reasonable to think of reasons that are worth further investigation. First, compared to female EAISs, male EAISs may show greater improvement in intercultural competence, global perspective, and ethnorelativism after studying abroad and experiencing different cultures (Tompkins et al., 2017); and the reason why such gain was not observed in non-EAISs might be that most of them are native English speakers who exhibit

similar lifestyles, interaction patterns, and relation-making capacities after moving to another English-speaking country. Next, certain aspects of socialization in Confucian culture may homogenize the expression of communicative style and attitudes of inter- or intra-cultural interaction. Also, since most female EAISs recruited in the study were from mainland China, it is possible that enculturation experiences in China may be quite different from those in other countries with Confucian heritage culture.

Sociocultural Predictors of Adjustment Between EAISs and non-EAISs

Another goal of this study is to examine if EAISs and non-EAISs report themselves differently in social adjustment factors culture shock (CS) and L2 apprehension, as well as cultural factors power distance (PD), vertical collectivism (VC), and long-term orientation (LTO). I hypothesized that EAISs experienced higher CS and L2 apprehension than non-EAISs due to stronger perceived cultural distance, language barriers, and lack of sociocultural familiarity; and both cultural groups would differ in Confucian cultural dimensions PD, VC, and LTO. The results were not supported by previous literature, which I elaborated on below.

Group Comparisons of Social Factors

In this study, non-EAISs reported significantly higher adjusted mean CS and L2 apprehension than EAISs after adjusting for years of acculturation in Canada and gender effect. It should also be pointed out that in this part of the analysis, years of acculturation is a negative confounder in which the differences in social factors between two cultural groups are amplified when lengths of studying in Canada remain constant.

On the measure of CS, years of acculturation were adjusted at the mean so all international students did not differ by stages of culture shock, which may yield different emotional reactions during integration (Furnham & Bochner, 1986). The data suggest that non-EAISs experienced higher culture shock as measured by the three features—identity crisis, helplessness, and rejection. In the literature review, these features are used to describe

EAISS' experiences of western culture. This unexpected finding is perplexing and novel since the impact of culture shock tends to rise with cultural distance (Mumford, 1998). By that, non-EAISSs (mainly composed of westerners) were expected to perceive Canadian culture as less distant than EAISSs. This study suggests that there might be various unexplained reasons that potentially lead to the unexpected finding. First, EAISSs' overseas tertiary education is more likely to be financially supported by their families as for them to give back in the future, so that EAISSs' basic living and economic needs are secured to enable them to pursue higher learning objectives. Second, the perceived distance between the heritage culture of EAISSs and the Canadian culture may not be as high as expected. The large East Asian diaspora communities in Canada (e.g., Vancouver and Toronto) may help EAISSs receive sufficient emotional, sociocultural, economic, and career supports for adaptation to social lives without the pressures to interact interculturally. Next, EAISSs account for a large proportion of all international students in Canadian universities in that co-national peer supports reduce the feeling of loneliness and helplessness (Montgomery & McDowell, 2009). Finally, culture shock, as measured by identity crisis, helplessness, and rejection, might impact and be felt by EAISSs and non-EAISSs differently. Mumford's (1998) core culture shock items used in this study were primarily used to understand the individual experiences of British people abroad. However for EAISSs, other tenets of culture shock may also affect adjustment: preference for self-disclosure (Wu & Hammond, 2011), initiating contact (Ward, 2001), learning orientation (Wu & Hammond, 2011), and coping style (Fox, 2020). In one study, EAISSs reported culture shock experiences but were able to cope with the stress of shock (Fox, 2020). In another study, Wu and Hammond (2011) argue that cultural difficulties experienced by EAISSs may not be as pressing and long-lasting as the literature suggests. For example, Chen (1996) argues that Chinese international students experienced only minor culture shock while studying in Canada. They elaborate that Chinese students perceive academic performance to

be more necessary than identity reconstruction and sociocultural familiarity for school adaptation, and that they perform well in school because of their previous education in China. It is also possible that EAISs tend to tell stories of feeling shocked in qualitative studies but rate low shock in the survey when the feeling of dissonance is not severe. Of course, many other explanations exist beyond the discussion.

The results also indicate that the L2 apprehension is significantly higher for non-EAISs compared to EAISs. Given the large number of native English speakers in non-EAIS groups, this is puzzling and counterintuitive. L2 proficiency is important for self-disclosure and communicating and seeking help out of cultural niches (Lin, 2006; Zhang & Zhou, 2010; Zhou et al., 2005, p. 301). In the study, L2 apprehension reflects the interference of communicative ability due to anxiety. In other words, it describes a lack of perceived communication proficiency and proximal factors (state and situational anxiety) that inhibit the input, processing, and output of verbal and non-verbal communicative information (Heng et al., 2012). In our sample, non-EAISs reported significantly higher literacy and overall skills in English than EAISs, but this difference was diminished when comparing interaction skills. This means that while non-EAISs self-rated overall strong competence in English, they felt more confident in reading and writing English than in listening and speaking. This is partially indicative of anxiety in using language for conversation and interaction due to a lack of social competence. Speakers with low L2 proficiency may experience apprehension, but native English speakers may also exhibit poor oral performance when they are affected by anxious feelings (Heng et al., 2012). For example, people with social phobia have developed adequate communicative skills but these skills “are not used [properly] due to anxiety, fear, or distress about social interactions” (“Social,” 2021). One reason for EAISs’ lower self-rated L2 apprehension may be that while their overall English skills are not perfect, they may have worked hard to improve their agentic interaction skills by interacting with local people and

other international students through networking and employment. Thus, their communication skills have been enhanced and used appropriately in situations where intercultural contact is required.

Group Comparison of Cultural Factors

The data indicate that after adjusting for gender effect, there was no significant difference in the cultural factors of adjustment between EAISs and non-EAISs as measured by vertical collectivism (VC), power distance (PD), and long-term orientation (LTO). Years of acculturation were removed from the list of covariates because the psychological impact of heritage culture on international students has more to do with the length of enculturation than with the length of acculturation. The study did not ask the age of the participants, so it was not possible to make enough inferences about the length of enculturation to know how committed the students were to traditional cultural values.

These insignificant findings contrast with previous literature using Hofstede's cultural dimension theory to distinguish Confucian cultural-specific tendencies from non-Confucian ones (Abubaker, 2008; Alshahrani, 2017; Hofstede, 2001; Hofstede, 2011; Sharma, 2010). However, the findings echo Ogihara's (2017) view that many Confucian heritage culture countries are intertwined with individualistic values, and individualistic countries become more collectivistic, making cultural traditions across the globe highly blurred. The results support Hwang's (2012) view of moving cultures in the context of globalization, but do not support the view of differential mentality. This is especially true for Canada as a multicultural nation. But a better explanation is to use Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory in which the cultural attitudes of EAISs were more directly influenced by the microsystem (proximal school and social environments) compared to the macrosystem (ideologies of Confucian culture). Similarly, Cortina et al. (2017) demonstrate that school adaptation is more likely to reflect the settings and constraints of school infrastructure than the general

cross-cultural differences. In terms of teacher-student PD, the result contrasts with Abubaker (2008) and Rienties and Tempelaar (2013) that EAISs maintain strong PD and favour a teacher-centred approach in the UK and Dutch higher education contexts. Similar to the finding, Chen (1996) points out that Canadian educational practices and agendas incorporate diverse cultural influences and student-centred learning so that EAISs tend to become more used to other cultures and differentiation in pedagogy. In terms of PD as an inequality issue, the reason for the insignificant finding may be that EAISs from high PD countries were not aware of their personal beliefs on PD as a factor in the problem of social status inequality (Lagas et al., 2007). High PD may not be perceived as a healthy lifestyle for individuals but may fit into societies characterized by PD as a cultural dimension that individuals must therefore adhere to. By that, EAISs in Canada could be considered voluntary migrants from high PD societies who want a low PD (liberal) way of living, which partially explains the non-significance of the finding and echoes the importance of microsystem on human cognitions and behaviours (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

In terms of LTO, the results do not show evidence that EAISs were more long-term oriented than non-EAISs. I predict that this is because Bearden et al.'s (2006) LTO scale may not be suitable for use in an educational context, especially for international students studying abroad. The scale was initially developed to compare eastern and western consumers' decision-making processes based on general cultural values. It is worth noting that most international students tend to be long-term oriented for making decisions and plans to study abroad, regardless of the mainstream cultural influences. This means that they may view time more holistically and tend to use the opportunity of studying abroad to map their future, regardless of cultural differences. In order to overcome the hardship of adapting to a new and uncertain context, international students may prefer to adopt the traditional ethics of hard work, patience, restraint, and relationships to short-term oriented beliefs like self-indulgence

and immediate gratification (Hofstede, 2001). Moreover, the insignificant finding may also reflect the shortcomings of the LTO scale in that all items are positively worded. The consequence is that all respondents feel morally enticed to respond positively by showing respect to the past, no matter whether they are LTO or STO. Other more unfashionably toned aspects of LTO such as out-group bias, hierarchical orientation, face concerns, and perceived stability were not examined to understand their psychological effects on students (Hofstede, 2001). Consequently, EAISs may identify with some traditional Confucian values but not all, even though they tend to be long-term oriented. Similarly, students from STO cultures may also share intersectional beliefs with students who are more traditionally oriented.

Overall, since all cultural factors remain irrelevant for group comparison, there is good reason to believe that students' individual beliefs cannot be generalized through a cultural-specific framework. Meanwhile, in a higher education context where students are at least partially committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion, students with conservative beliefs may appear to be less conservative than they actually are (Abubaker, 2008). Hofstede (2001) also self-admitted that in the face of globalization, rapid cultural integrations have weakened the impact of certain cultural dimensions in some countries. This study confirms that this is indeed the case in Canada with many recent immigrants and international students. However, the findings of this study do not attempt to justify that Hofstede's theory is outdated or incorrect, as the distinction between cultural dimensions "has been proven useful in numerous psychological studies" (Cortina et al., 2017, p. 8). A larger dataset may help validate the findings. However, this study argues that education as an overseas study discourse might be different from the learning context of the heritage culture including language learning and is better explained with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory than a general cultural framework. This study also suggests studies such as Rienties and Tempelaar (2013), which take Hofstede's cultural indices for granted to predict school

adjustment of international students by cultures, shift away from presumed cultural heterogeneity and re-examine actual differences in students' cultural dimensions in small-scale studies. The same suggestion also applies to the study of Hofstede's dimensions as predictors of transnational school belongingness by Cortina et al. (2017).

Relationships Between Sociocultural Predictors and Intercultural Sensitivity

Another purpose of this study is to explore the association of sociocultural predictors and three measures of intercultural sensitivity—willingness to communicate in classroom (WTC), out-of-class intercultural sensitivity (IS), and global citizenship (GC). Hierarchical and multiple regressions were performed to show that at least some sociocultural predictors predict intercultural sensitivity measures. Based on the result of WTC, L2 apprehension itself as the lingo-affective factor was entered first and accounted for a large and significant proportion of the variation in WTC. When CS, PD, VC, and LTO were combined as the linear composite of sociocultural factors and entered subsequently, its predictive power on WTC was modest but still significant; and PD was the only significant predictor of WTC among all sociocultural predictors. Therefore, WTC was mostly explained by L2 apprehension compared to other sociocultural adjustment factors, as expected by Cao (2011) and Freiermuth and Jarrel (2006). They found that WTC was associated with a sense of communicative security and perceived communication competence. For the directionality, change in WTC was negatively associated with changes in both L2 apprehension and PD. The relationship between WTC and PD (holding other predictors constant) suggests that, the more likely international students were to rate themselves based on perceived teacher-student distance and social hierarchy, the less willing they were to communicate in the classroom. As mentioned previously, EAISs and non-EAISs did not differ in reporting power distance, so the fluctuation of power distance scores in the sample predicted the change in WTC but did not predict cultural group differences. This is partially consistent with the study conducted by

Rienties and Tempelaar (2013) in Dutch tertiary educational institutions, which found that international students with high power distance tend to favour a teacher-centred approach. The data do not suggest the predictive power of long-term orientation on WTC, but this is probably due to the omission of some important tenets in the measurement of long-term orientation. Thus, more research is needed to explore the actual relationship with more inclusive criteria. One caveat to accepting this model prediction of WTC is the weak total R^2 after accounting for all existing variables, given that 63.57% of the total variance in WTC could be explained otherwise. That is, the list of variables in this study is not exhaustive enough to represent social and cultural factors underpinning the change in WTC.

Hierarchical and multiple regressions on the second measure out-of-class intercultural sensitivity (IS) show that both lingo-affective and sociocultural factors contributed a large and significant amount of variance to IS at school. But variation in IS appeared to be explained more by sociocultural factors. First, L2 apprehension as an important predictor of IS was supported by Chen (2010), Jackson (2002), and Moore (2007), as well as potentially numerous other studies. Next, only vertical collectivism (VC) and long-term orientation (LTO) were significant predictors of IS among sociocultural factors while holding other predictors constant. After holding predictors constant, the increase in VC per unit led to a significant decrease in self-rated IS. This result is consistent with the hypothesis that students with a strong sense of family obligation and family role hierarchy tend to have a lower desire to socialize with students from intercultural backgrounds (Hui et al., 2011; Zhu & Bresnahan, 2018); it also underlines the importance of cultural identity to appropriate nonverbal expression of people in the intracultural interactive network (Hofstede, 2001). The most unexpected finding of this section of analyses was that LTO positively predicted general IS. While no study has explicitly identified the link between LTO and IS, Kimmel and Kitchen (2016) and Hofstede (2001) do underscore that people with low LTO appear to be more

expressive, indulgent, and interactive, and are less likely to avoid situations that induce long-lasting shame. However, low expressive behaviour cannot easily be deduced as low sensitivity to cultural counterparts, as it may represent showing respect, active listening, self-monitoring, and emotional regulation (Lu & Hsu, 2008; Snyder, 1974)—attributes that ensure harmonious intercultural relationships. These qualities may explain the finding that LTO alone as measured by respect for tradition and future planning explained a large amount of variation in IS, in the positive direction. More research is needed to explore this relationship with refined LTO scale items for international students, or to compare students' IS based on their assigned LTO dimensions for convenience. Finally, the change in power distance was insignificantly associated with the change in IS in the negative direction. The directionality was expected but based on the strength, power distance as a predictor was probably not as important as VC and LTO. This may be because perceived power distance did not predict sensitivity toward cultures as much as it did toward social capital.

The results of regression analyses on global citizenship (GC) indicate that variation in GC was accounted for by both lingo-affective and sociocultural factors. L2 apprehension was a significant predictor of GC, reflecting the notion that language is an important carrier of culture, and lack of social competence inhibits socio-emotional domain of global citizenship potency which helps students develop affective skills for respectful co-learning (UNESCO, 2015). Also, English competence affects the extent to which linguistically diverse students understand English-written global citizenship items in accordance with how they define them personally (Andreotti, 2010; Rathburn and Lexier, 2016). In a multicultural context, effective multilingual communication is an important factor in global citizenship development, as it strengthens contacts and connections with people across cultures, despite internal differences. Without good confidence in English communication and in situations where there is a lack of awareness of linguistic variations in the dominant literacy context, students become

vulnerable to language-based discrimination in which their speeches are easily drowned out or put down by those who dominate the dialogue (Abe & Shapiro, 2021). As a result, the opinions of linguistically disadvantaged students are excluded, even if these are potentially constructive, if not articulated in the dominant language. This is detrimental to developing global citizenship awareness and reciprocity.

In terms of sociocultural factors of GC, all predictors VC, PD, and LTO were significant except for culture shock. The explanation is that, first, international students with a high level of in-group preference, and hierarchical- and status-oriented mentality are less likely to endorse the egalitarian doctrine embedded in the global democratic process. This may be also true for conservative or neo-conservative students who identify with populism or are skeptical of the imperialist underpinnings of globalization ideology. Furthermore, it is surprising to see that change in LTO was once again positively associated with the change in GC. In contrast to Guo et al. (2020), Hofstede (2001), and Hofstede (2005), who problematize LTO as a barrier to reciprocity, charitableness, and prosociality, this study found that respect for tradition and long-term planning may actually promote a positive attitude toward global citizenship among international students. This implies that LTO may potentially be a cooperative and prosocial attribute, as students identify with their peers through collective interpersonal and emotional bonding (Luria et al., 2015; Smith, 2015). Therefore, I suggest that the construct of LTO at the individual level may be much more malleable than that at the national level, especially in explaining how well migrants adjust to the mentality of the host culture during acculturation.

Note that culture shock remained an insignificant predictor in all three predictive regression models, when the other predictors were included. In the literature review, this study attempts to apply sociological and social justice frames of reference to examine the importance of culture shock to the adjustment problems of international students at Canadian

universities. It describes how the neoliberal and multicultural contexts pave the way for clashes of identity, helplessness, alienation, and perceived rejection. The data indicate that the predictive power of culture shock on intercultural sensitivity was not as strong as that of other sociocultural factors. This does not mean that culture shock did not affect intercultural sensitivity, but other influencing factors of intercultural sensitivity might be more important. This result may stimulate further research to re-examine the association, by utilizing different scales, contexts, age groups, and praxes of conceptualizing culture shock.

Correlation Analyses of Social and Cultural Factors

Spearman's rho correlation among all predictors demonstrate that most social and cultural factors were correlated in a direction that was confirmed by literature. Ranked by the correlation strength, culture shock was most positively associated with L2 apprehension, then vertical collectivism, and finally, power distance. As expected and consistent with the literature, students' feelings of shock during acculturation elevated with perceived communicative incompetence. The positive monotonic relationship of culture shock with vertical collectivism and perceived power distance was relatively new, but made sense in the context of relevant literature (Dion & Phan, 2009). This means that students with stronger perceived communicative incompetence also tended to have higher in-group favouritism and perceived distance in power and hierarchy. The positive relationship between vertical collectivism and long-term orientation also confirms the findings of Gao et al. (2018) and Hofstede (2001) that long-term orientation decreases with the level of individualism in individualistic countries.

Some correlations were aberrant from those expected in the previous literature. For example, power distance was not significantly correlated with vertical collectivism, but significantly negatively correlated with long-term orientation. The reason this was so unexpected is that these attributes were theorized to partly explain the influence of

Confucianism on East Asian cultures, so they were expected to increase or decrease in the same direction (Hofstede, 2001). The previous analyses show that there was no difference in these attributes between EAISs and non-EAISs using Hofstede's framework. Thus, the results of the present study may differ somewhat from Hofstede's (2001). As noted earlier, there appeared to be a quadratic relationship between power distance and vertical collectivism which did not make sense based on literature. Furthermore, it was unclear why power distance decreased with an increasing long-term orientation, whereas vertical collectivism increased with an increasing long-term orientation. But it confirms our previous conclusion that the impact of heritage culture on sojourners may not be accurately predicted by a putative general cultural framework. When international students rated themselves according to their relevant scheme, it reflected differences in individual beliefs and value systems rather than the cultural heterogeneity. Finally, the study found that long-term orientation was unrelated to culture shock and language apprehension, which implies that students who focused on long-term achievement and traditional values may not perceive acculturative and communicative problems as high stressors, or have learnt to cope with them to reduce their stressful feelings; or they may be more intrinsically motivated and goal-oriented to face challenges. This is in stark contrast to Rienties and Tempelaar (2013) who found long-term orientation to be positively correlated with school adjustment and peer support problems among sojourners in Dutch higher education institutions. There could be several interpretations of these insignificant correlations, and further research is much needed in the Canadian context.

Implications of Findings for Educators

The findings of the present study are of great significance to the field of cultural and educational psychology. Although the overall unexpected results of comparisons of social and cultural factors may not apply to all international student populations at Canadian

universities, the study brings a quiet, diverse, and critical energy to the large body of work attempting to explain differences in intercultural competence or similar attributes based on a deterministic view of cultures. Being diverse means there are more ways to interpret students' so-called reticence rather than using cultural norms as camouflage to justify stereotypes. This study suggests that while intercultural attitudes may not vary greatly among cultures, intercultural communicative behaviour still requires the development of personal agency and autonomy to transform attitudes into actions (Deardorff, 2010). University resources, including ESL programs and general university education courses, should continue integrating the idea of intercultural agency. For example, Gao (2010) argues that ESL courses should not only focus on grammatical rules and learning English, but should prepare students for pragmatic language usage in real-life social and disciplinary contexts beyond the classroom. Furthermore, university instructors need to acknowledge that reticent behaviour is relevant to the fear of miscommunication in intercultural contacts, such as that students misinterpret each other's intentions and pragmatic meanings since they use different communication strategies (Douglas & Rosvold, 2018). Students may also remain reticent in order not to be subjected to language-based discrimination (Abe & Shapiro, 2021). Because discourse is a two-way street, miscommunication should not be treated as a problem of inadequate communicative skills for some individuals with certain personal, cultural, and linguistic attributes. Educators must be prepared to engage in critical, diverse, and productive discourses with students, with an open mind for appreciating the output of students from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Curricula need to incorporate the idea of critical literacy at all times—for example, global citizenship education should prepare students to challenge normative narratives and encourage conflictual and reflexive dialogues among multicultural student groups (Andreotti, 2010; Mikander, 2016); ESL curricula need to integrate critical language awareness by approaching the 'what,' 'how,' and 'why' questions about

assumptions of either a familiar or an unfamiliar language form (Abe & Shapiro, 2021). The list goes on and on.

The results regarding the group comparison of social and cultural factors should motivate educators and researchers to critically render deterministic views of cultures problematic. The study is also the first to show quantitatively how similar international students rate their cultural dimensions, regardless of national cultural distinctions. The study is also special in that it indicates that EAISs reported less social hindrance compared to non-EAISs. Overall, the results implies that educators need not accentuate that students from certain cultures do not adapt themselves well in the intercultural school context, but rather accept that it is fairly normal for everyone to experience difficulties socializing with their cultural-linguistic counterparts (Gao, 2010). This is an important aspect of living in a globalized world and learning from adversity and trials-and-errors. Educators should therefore listen to students' socialization experiences, and prepare and encourage students to step out of their comfort zones to interact with other students who may be phenotypically different and have different experiences.

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to this study. The first limitation concerns the methodological issues of the questionnaire. As mentioned earlier, self-report using a questionnaire may not accurately describe respondents' true behaviours and values due to a lack of access to thoughtful reasoning and memory. Next, online questionnaires may suffer from uncertainty of the distribution of the population where the sample was selected and sampling bias in the population (Andrade, 2020). For example, after the promotion and sharing of the survey poster, I had less confidence to determine the population and platforms from which respondents saw the poster and were drawn, the characteristics of the respondents,

and the generalizability of the answers from online respondents to all persons including those who did not use social media often.

In the study, there is a clear sampling bias in the recruitment of international students. In the EAIS group, most respondents were Chinese; In the non-EAIS group, most respondents were native English speakers from the U.S. and Britain. This shows the disadvantages of convenient and snowball sampling. The respondents in the study may have been more active on popular social media, more attentive to school email, and closer to my personal social network, so other potential respondents were not accessible to the questionnaire. Sawyer (2011) argues that there may be a positive “impact of using social media on the intercultural adaptation process” (p. 2). Thus, popular social media use may have been a hidden covariate in the comparison of intercultural sensitivity among cultural groups. Besides, if most respondents in the study tend to be active on social media, they may be over-representative of the international student population, leading to biased findings.

Another important limitation of the questionnaire is that it measured intercultural sensitivity but not the frequency of intercultural contact. It is important to acknowledge that the first measured the attitude to go out of the comfort social zone, while the latter measured the actual behaviour of going out of the comfort social zone. Also, sometimes it might be difficult to distinguish between attitude and rationality if literate respondents (e.g., university students) figured out what was measured by the scale and then provided rational and morally acceptable answers to some sensitive items, rather than honest answers (Murray, 2007).

A limitation in the data analysis is that the length of acculturation had to be kept as a covariate for the group comparison of social factors, as students' level of social adjustment may vary depending on time spent in the host country. Since there were not enough samples in the study to explore whether social factors differ between groups in different periods of

acculturation, the only option was to account for the variance, rather than examining length of acculturation directly.

The fifth limitation concerns Hofstede's framework in the multicultural context. In this study, Hofstede's cultural dimensions failed to predict the cultural differences between EAISs and non-EAISs, which may be because students evaluated themselves based on individual beliefs instead of collective cultural-specific beliefs in a multicultural situation. In other studies replicating Hofstede's theory, such as Abubaker (2008), Cortina et al. (2017), and Rienties and Tempelaar (2013), they found cultural differences and influences to be highly relevant in intercultural school contexts, relying merely on Hofstede's cultural indices without examining actual individual differences. Based on the present study, the insignificant findings on the distinction in cultural dimensions reflect that there may be potential drawbacks of Hofstede's framework.

The next limitation is the problem of classification in cultural group comparison. If Hofstede's framework was found to be less than ideal for the study, it also invalidated the grouping of international students into EAISs and non-EAISs by Confucian heritage based on pre-determined cultural indices. This is confirmed by the results of the study, in which individual-level and gender differences were more evident than cultural group differences.

Furthermore, it is important to highlight the methodological flaw in measuring willingness to communicate and language apprehension. Both may be felt differently by native English speakers and English as L2 speakers, thus there would be different operant definitions for these two variables in different language contexts. Specifically, in the L1 context, willingness to communicate is more closely related to students' personality traits; while in the L2 context, contextual and lingo-affective factors play a greater role (Shao & Gao, 2016). Language apprehension measures both actual and perceived interaction skills in L2 context rather than just the perceived skill in L1 context (Heng et al., 2012). Given the

large number of native English speakers in the non-EAIS group, it is likely that these two variables measured different cognitive attributes in EAISs and non-EAISs.

Finally, the overall insignificant cultural group comparisons on intercultural sensitivity and social and cultural factors may reflect the theoretical shortcomings of the present study and instruments developed based on Hofstede's framework. My initial hypotheses, guided by extant literature, may have shown unnecessary determinism pertaining to the role of macro-context, including neoliberalism, multiculturalism, and heritage culture, on students' individual value systems, while understating that human cognition was also driven by individual will, proximal influences, and universal mind (Hwang, 2012). This is not to say that broader societal and systemic issues should be ignored, but we should also acknowledge that different students may perceive and respond to them differently, so that it boils down to the individual level of inquiry besides assuming group identities. For instruments used in the study, while internal consistency was met for all scales, there might be a partial understanding of theories used to construct certain scales (e.g., long-term orientation) that rendered their use in higher educational context ineffective. Also, there might be doubts as to whether variables including willingness to communicate and language apprehension were applicable to measure communication competence outside of second language curricula (e.g., intercultural school settings).

Recommendations for Further Research

Overall, the recommendations for future research can be summarized in a few points. First, better sampling techniques should be adopted to alleviate sampling bias. University departments can offer incentives such as bonus course marks to encourage international students who aren't active on social media to complete the questionnaire. Cross-cultural questionnaires can also be targeted at different groups of people other than university students, and toward different job sectors where levels of intercultural contact vary.

Further studies can also measure the difference in knowledge and skills of intercultural communication among international students besides attitude. Attitude is more malleable than knowledge and skill, because true feeling tends to be intertwined with rationality and moral correctness. It is also recommended that further studies incorporate the frequency of students' intercultural interaction into the assessment to measure the actual behaviour of dealing with culturally different counterparts. This can make sense of the transition from having the attitude, knowledge, and skill to engaging in intercultural interaction.

First, refinements are needed for Bearden et al.'s (2006) eight-item LTO scale to encompass all attributes of long-term orientation that hold importance in the educational context beyond just 'tradition' and 'planning.' Future studies may examine if long-term orientation is related to culture shock and language apprehension, or other adjustment problems.

Next, educational research should be cautious to use Hofstede's cultural dimensions to predict or compare students' behaviours and values cross-culturally, because these behaviours and values are likely to be caused by other contextual or individual factors. If possible, researchers should first evaluate and confirm actual cultural differences rather than relying on differences in cultural dimensions based on a large-scale study. But again, questionnaires developed upon cultural dimensions need to be continuously refined to meet the needs.

In intercultural contexts, alternative theoretical frameworks such as Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory may be more relevant than Hofstede's assumption that cultural identity is fixed. Learning context of the heritage culture is different from education as an overseas study discourse—potentially more different from the multicultural context. The study suggests that while cultural differences may be significant at some point, they may be

effaced by adjacent and systemic factors over time (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Therefore, the impact of heritage culture on cognition may be related not only to the length of enculturation but also to the length of acculturation of different cultures. This opens the possibility of repeated measures design that change in cultural values and behaviours is assessed over time.

Due to the limited sample size of the present study, it was not possible to measure the level of intercultural sensitivity of international students at different periods of study in Canada to indicate patterns of change in the level of intercultural sensitivity. Therefore, further research can also use repeated measures design to uncover these patterns by achieving larger sample sizes.

Further research can employ a mixed-method research design to better understand students' identification with their culture, barriers to adjustment, and sensitivity to culturally distinct counterparts. Mixed-method design is important as it allows participants to evaluate themselves both intuitively and thoughtfully. This helps researchers to identify potential factors in the intercultural context that lead to the fluctuation of students' intercultural sensitivity. Between-subjects research is also an important approach for similar studies in the future. The reason is that many current within-subjects studies on international students' communication and adaptation draw conclusions based on researchers' impressions and knowledge of students' cultures without examining whether their impressions apply to specific cultures or universal cognitive structures. This can promote cultural stereotypes.

Finally, this study suggests that more studies are needed on international students' intercultural sensitivity and sociocultural adjustments in the Canadian educational context, given that Canada is a popular destination for study and immigration that sows the seeds for intercultural interactions and becoming global citizens.

Conclusion

Cultivating the intercultural sensitivity of international students has great implications for their school adjustment, social participation, global citizenship development, and individual accountability. The study demonstrates that overall measures of intercultural sensitivity were not significantly associated with the cultural backgrounds from which students came, but more related to students' gender. Furthermore, the results of the present study do not support previous literature which found students from Confucian heritage culture tended to experience more social adjustment problems in the intercultural context. First, students from non-Confucian cultures reported higher culture shock and language apprehension than Confucian heritage culture students. Second, there is no evidence that cultural differences assessed by Hofstede's cultural dimensions even exist among international students. The study also found that language apprehension played a major role in the self-perception of overall intercultural sensitivity, while culture shock did not; Cultural dimensions contributed to overall intercultural sensitivity moderately. Specifically, willingness to communicate in the classroom was mainly explained by language apprehension, and general intercultural sensitivity at school and global citizenship attitude were jointly explained by language apprehension and cultural adjustment factors. These models predict and support the proposition that the intercultural skill development must be integrated with the development of L2 literacy and agency. Finally, most social and cultural factors are interrelated expectedly. However, one without evidence of students' 'actual' identification with cultural dimensions, as opposed to presumed tendency based on large-scale studies, often invalidates themselves in predicting social adjustment by cultural differences. The study stressed the need for further research on international students' experiences to shift the focus from static, stereotypical, and deterministic perceptions of cultural differences to more fluid, micro, and contextualized examinations of social

influences and learner agency. While cultural attributes do contribute to the development of intercultural sensitivity, it is important to acknowledge that we live in a global community that lays the foundation for both individual and collective ways of being that cannot be reduced into cultural compartments and essentialized perspectives of others. Thus, the study inspires further research to continue exploring the complex interplay of multiple factors that underlines the promotion of intercultural sensitivity in international students and other migrants. In the socio-political context of their host country, students' new identity often supplements their default cultural identity, adding to insinuating itself in the absence of an original one (Derrida, 2016). As the title suggests, *it was neither Confucian nor confusion*, not just one or another, that orders the necessary condition of intercultural sensitivity in intercultural encounters.

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Appendix A Intercultural Sensitivity Survey Items

Demographic Information

Gender: _____ Level of Study (e.g., Bachelor): _____ Major: _____
 Year in Canada: _____ Country of Origin: _____

English Proficiency

I rate my interaction (speaking and listening) ability in English as _____

I rate my literacy (reading and writing) ability in English as _____

I rate my overall English proficiency as _____.

A. Very poor B. poor C. acceptable D. good E. very good

In-classroom willingness to communicate

1. Even when I have the opportunity to talk freely during the lecture, I am unwilling to communicate.
2. I enjoy participating in a conversation when I have a chance to talk in front of the other students during the lecture
3. I don't like having to speak in a group discussion during the lecture.
4. I don't like to give a presentation in front of the class, even when I am given the opportunity to do so.

Out-of-class intercultural sensitivity

1. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.
2. I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterparts during our interacting.
3. I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons.
4. I don't like to be with people from different cultures.
5. I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.
6. I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded.
7. I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures.
8. I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.
9. I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.
10. I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures.
11. I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures.
12. I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures.
13. I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.
14. I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during our interaction.
15. I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures.

Global citizenship

1. I think that most people around the world get what they are entitled to have.
2. It is OK if some people in the world have more opportunities than others.
3. I think that people around the world get the rewards and punishments they deserve.
4. In times of scarcity, it is sometimes necessary to use force against others to get what you need.
5. The world is generally a fair place.
6. No one country or group of people should dominate and exploit others in the world.

7. The needs of the worlds' most fragile people are more pressing than my own.
8. I think that many people around the world are poor because they do not work hard enough.
9. I respect and am concerned with the rights of all people, globally.
10. I do not feel responsible for the world's inequities and problems.
11. I think in terms of giving back to the global society.

Culture Shock

1. I feel strained from the effort to adapt to a new culture.
2. I have been missing my family and friends back home.
3. I feel generally accepted by the local people in the new culture
4. I have ever wished to escape from my new environment altogether.
5. I have ever felt confused about my role or identity in the new culture.
6. I have ever found things in my new environment shocking and disgusting.
7. I have felt helpless and powerless when trying to cope with the new culture.

L2 Apprehension

1. I start to panic when I have to speak in the language without preparation
2. When speaking to a native speaker, I can get so nervous I forget things I know
3. I worry about speaking in the language, even if I'm well prepared for it
4. I get nervous and confused when I speak in the language
5. I get nervous when I do not understand every word in the language
6. I fear that people will laugh at me when I speak the language
7. I get nervous when I am asked questions in the language that I have not prepared in advance

Collectivism

1. I would do what would please my family, even if I detest the activity.
2. I believe that children need to learn to place duty before pleasure.
3. I would sacrifice an activity that I enjoy very much if my family did not approve of it.
4. I respect decisions made by my group/collective.
5. I would sacrifice self-interest for the benefit of the group/collective.
6. I would take care of my family, even when I have to sacrifice what I want.

Power Distance

1. I like to chat with the teacher about my hobbies
2. I address the teacher in the same way as I address my classmates
3. I share my personal problems with teachers
4. I am afraid to ask teacher questions in class
5. I tell the teacher when I disagree with him/her
6. I can make my teachers change their minds
7. I tell the teacher when he/she makes a mistake
8. I believe that a person's social status reflects his or her place in the society
9. It is important for everyone to know their rightful place in the society
10. It is difficult to interact with people from different social status than mine.
11. Unequal treatment for different people is an acceptable way of life for me.

Long-term Orientation

1. Respect for tradition is important to me.
2. I usually plan for the long term.

3. Family heritage is important to me.
4. I value a strong link to my past.
5. I work hard for success in the future.
6. I don't mind giving up today's fun for success in the future.
7. Traditional values are important to me.
8. Persistence is important to me.

Appendix B Promotion Poster



RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

For Research Survey on International Students' Intercultural Communication at Canadian Universities

Have interactions with students from other backgrounds been successful for you? Challenging? Have you ever felt shocked by the way other students think and speak? Do you feel lonely or supported at universities? Tell us what you think and how you feel.

You May Qualify If You

- Are a current university student in Canada at any level of study
- Are an international student holding a student visa who resides or previously resided in Canada

Impact of Participation

- Your responses have practical potential, which will serve as valuable evidence of international students' experiences

The Research Survey

- Includes questions that ask for your opinions
- Takes about 15-20 minutes to complete
- Will be anonymous

Compensation

- You will enter a draw and have a chance to be the winner of a **\$50 CAD AMAZON GIFT CARD!**

Two Ways of Participation in the Survey

1. Scan the QR Code Here → 

2. Contact Xuechen Yuan at xyuan3@lakeheadu.ca for a link to the survey or more information



Appendix C Information Letter



Lakehead University Faculty of Education
e: xyuan3@lakeheadu.ca

January 1, 2022

Dear Potential Participant,

My name is Xuechen Yuan. I am a Master's student in the Faculty of Education. I invite you to participate in my research project with my supervisor Dr. Tanya Kaefer from the Faculty of Education at Lakehead University. This research project aims to examine the social and cultural factors of intercultural communication among international students in Canadian universities. Lakehead University is a diverse school with international students making up 15% of the total population. The goal is to better understand the challenges and differences faced by international students from different backgrounds. Even if you believe that you've never experienced barriers in intercultural communication or issues in other facets of school life, your participation will make a big difference in understanding and supporting those who struggle with it.

If you agree, you will participate in a single online survey. This survey is in the form of 5-point scales and takes about 15-20 minutes to complete. The survey will ask your opinion and perspective. There are no right or wrong answers so feel free to express your opinions. You may refuse to answer any question(s) that you do not wish to answer. I will also collect demographic information like age, gender, and country of origin. This information is only ever reported in group statistics. Your privacy will be carefully protected. None of the results will ever be linked with your name or any other identifying information. During the period of analysis, data will be stored on a password-protected server. Once analysis is complete, all data is stored on a hard drive that is password protected. The hard drive is stored in a locked cabinet within a locked room (Dr. Kaefer's office) and will be maintained for a minimum of 5 years.

Only Dr. Kaefer and I will have access to your responses, and no one at Lakehead will know whether or not you participated, so whether you choose to participate will have no impact on your status as a Lakehead International Student. The results of the study will be used for a master's thesis, stored at knowledgecommons.lakeheadu.ca. It may also be used for journal publications, conferences, and other academic platforms.

The online questionnaire used in this project, SurveyMonkey, is hosted by servers located in the U.S. and may be subject to the United States Patriot Act. The Patriot Act allows U.S. law enforcement officials to conduct counterterrorism inspections and seek court orders. This would allow personal information to be assessed without the individual's consent.

Your participation is entirely voluntary, which means you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time. By clicking the link and completing the survey you are giving your consent for your responses to be used in the study. Because the survey is anonymous, it is impossible to withdraw your data once you have submitted it.

As a token of appreciation for participation, at the end of the survey, you will have the opportunity to be entered into a draw for one \$50 Amazon gift card. When you provide your email address for the draw, it will be immediately separated from the rest of the survey, so your email address will not be connected with your answers.

This project has been approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions about research ethics, please contact Sue Wright at the Research Ethics Board at (807) 343-8283 or research@lakeheadu.ca.

Here, I wholeheartedly appreciate your patience and effort in completing the questionnaire. For any inquiry related to the study and copies of published reports, please feel free to email me at xyuan3@lakeheadu.ca or my research supervisor Dr. Tanya Kaefer, tkaefer@lakeheadu.ca.

By starting the questionnaire, you consent to participate in the study.

Sincerely,

Xuechen Yuan
Lakehead University