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BEING INTERCULTURAL: YOUNG PEOPLE, EXPERIENCING CHANGE AND DEVELOPING COMPETENCE IN AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

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Thesis submitted as a requirement for
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University of Durham, U.K.
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ABSTRACT

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Despite the increasing mobility of some families, it is rare to find studies that examine the intercultural competence of young people within changeable and culturally diverse settings. The seventeen participants in this qualitative study attended an international school in South-east Asia that caters predominantly for multinational, multicultural and mobile families. The young people were interviewed about their perceptions of being international and intercultural. Analysis of the data focused on the intercultural competences used by the young people, and the social integration processes in which they are situated. It identified knowledge, attitudes and/or behaviour components that demonstrate their intercultural competences. These were abstracted and labelled as *change management, fitting in* and *perspective taking*. The research also analysed the young people's perceptions of the processes they use to initiate and manage social relationships. The result is a model of social integration in a South-east Asian international school. It reveals the functions and interrelationship of these intercultural competences, and highlights the role of mindfulness and locus of control within this social framework. The study presents two major findings. Firstly, that change can bring about conditions, and operate as a process, that may create competence under certain circumstances. Secondly, that social integration processes may become more predictable and intercultural competences increasingly embedded, with multiple intercultural experiences. This research emphasizes that schools can support young people in managing challenging and difficult circumstances. In particular, operational conditions embedded in both the formal and hidden curriculum can nurture competence, even in dynamic situations. The findings have implications for existing theories of change and mobility, intercultural competence and cross cultural adaptation.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background to the study

This thesis explores interculturalism in an international educational setting and, per se, requires an inter-disciplinary approach. It deals firstly with being intercultural as a social phenomenon. Secondly, it links current understandings of this experience to that of young people attending an international school. Overall, the aim is to make explicit the processes young people experience and appear to use to fit in to unfamiliar and culturally diverse settings, and their ways of thinking about themselves and others in such a context. This knowledge can inform theorists, researchers and educators working in social and educational fields.

1.2   The researcher's interest in the topic

I had been a teacher in Australia before moving to South East Asia in 1993. Subsequently, I worked and lived in Singapore, Indonesia and Hong Kong.

As a teacher, I began to notice characteristics of the young people in some international schools. They seemed to be able to move into a new setting, establish friendships with young people from diverse backgrounds, and maintain effective social practices, before frequently

moving on again. I began to question the relative ease with which the young people appeared to do this and consider what their understandings of this process might be. I believed that improved understanding of this behaviour would inform educators and schools.

Additionally, I consider international schools to be unique settings that present a relatively unexplored source of data to researchers and theorists interested in understanding people's encounters with those from different cultures. By situating the study within such a setting, this area could be further investigated.

1.3　Context of the study

We live in an increasingly complex world. Individuals today are expected to deal with rapid change and face new situations that may carry both benefits and tensions. Human responses to these shape our relationships with others and the communities in which we live. In writing for UNESCO, Delors *et al.* stress that:

> the far-reaching changes in the traditional patterns of life require of us a better understanding of other people and the world at large; they demand mutual understanding, peaceful interchange and, indeed, harmony - the very things that are most lacking in our world today
>
> (1996: 22)

Whilst one might agree with this assessment, the challenge is determining *how* to promote mutual understanding, respect and harmony.

In an interdependent world, Gudykunst and Kim suggest that the ability to understand and communicate effectively with those who are culturally different has taken on 'extreme urgency' (1997: 4). As people from different backgrounds encounter each other, conflict has too often been the outcome. Yet there are communities of culturally diverse people that are able to 'live together' (Delors *et al.*: 1996), and these situations present the possibility of intercultural interaction.

Factors that are involved in 'living together' in intercultural situations are complex and will be discussed later in this thesis. Meyer, for example, highlights the need for the learner to consider multiple cultural perspectives, including his/her own (1991: 142). It is this ability to see things from multiple perspectives that can advance the mutual respect and understanding advocated by Delors *et al.* (*op cit.*).

This mutual understanding is important because, as Pauwels suggests, 'intercultural communication is rapidly becoming the norm rather than the exception in communication' (1993: 8), due to migration, a vast increase in international travel for business, tourism and education, and the creation of global communication technologies and systems (*op. cit.*). If this is true, there is a need to foster the attitudes, knowledge and skills that promote competence in intercultural situations. Accordingly, theorists and researchers have addressed the ways in which people react, respond and communicate in experiences with those who are culturally different. Existing studies, however, are drawn from mainly adult

populations, including experiences of individuals as sojourners in a different culture and/or situations involving migration. This research explores adolescents' perceptions of being intercultural. It is primarily concerned with how young people in international and intercultural situations perceive and manage them. It considers the ways in which they see the world, and how they situate themselves and others within rapidly changing environments.

The study links four important areas:

i.   Change and mobility:

The consequences of a more globalized world have led to increased interest in the effects of change and mobility. Young people such as those participating in the present study may have different experiences to other (adult) groups, due partly to the absence of the strong identity with a home country and their lack of choice in being mobile. Existing but limited literature and research in this area, such as that addressing the 'third culture kids' (Pollock 2001; Useem 2001), 'global nomads' (Schaetti 1993) and 'internationally mobile adolescents' (McCaig 1991) can help illuminate the ways in which these young people cope with diversity whilst growing up.

ii.   International schools and international education:

International schools present a population that is compelling to study, as their students are negotiating cultural differences presented by their host country, home and school. Current research has addressed various

factors within this field, but there are limited studies examining the experiences of young people from their own perspectives.

iii.   Culture, interculturalism and being intercultural:

Examination of individuals' responses can help to explain the mechanisms and processes used by individuals in attempting to understand one another. In particular, current literature on intercultural communication, competence, sensitivity and adaptation can facilitate understanding of how people interact in particular situations (Bennett 1993; Byram 1997; Cushner 1994; Goodman 1994; Kim 1988).

iv.   Coping with change:

Relevant literature can offer insights into how individuals cope with change. In particular, culture shock (Furnham and Bochner 1986; Oberg 1960; Ward 1996; Ward *et. al.* 2001), acculturation (Kim 1988), adjustment (Caligiuri *et al.* 1998; Parker and McEvoy 1993; Stroh 1990; Stroh and Brett 1990; Ward and Kennedy 1992, 1993, 1993a) and social identity theories (Tajfel 1981; Berger and Luckmann 1966; Hofstede 1991 and Smith 1991) may be useful in illuminating the ways in which individuals deal with unfamiliar situations, adjust to new environments, categorize themselves and others, and respond to and are influenced by group/s to which they belong.

This research aims to link identity and communication theories within an international school context, and develop an analysis of the young

people's understandings of their experience. The study design uses qualitative methodology to explore students' perceptions of being intercultural. In order to maximize the potential for gathering relevant and high quality data, the school selected was believed to contain the essential elements of international schools (Grant *et al.* 1995; Langford 1998). In particular, the school's mission statement and programs advocated internationalism and interculturalism.

1.4   Purpose of the study

Over twenty years ago, Gellar correctly predicted that the international school movement would continue to grow (1981: 24). More recently, Langford has noted the increasing curiosity by educationalists in the development of international schools and the 'international education' that many multinational expatriates seek for their children (1998: 28). Nevertheless, the extent of these young people's acculturation, and the effect on their subsequent development, is largely unknown (Gerner 1992: 199).

This study recognizes the importance of furthering the understanding of young people in this situation. It is only through examining what might actually be happening that we can begin to contemplate the interrelationship between young people and their environment, and the behaviours that are manifested within consequent interactions.

I began with a pivotal question: *how do young people understand and explain being international and intercultural?* This was deliberately broad and open, in order to generate as many ideas and concepts as possible. The young people's perceptions were used to frame ensuing sub-questions, as Chapter 3 will explain.

I believed that responses to these questions would illuminate our understanding of what young people think and how they cope in diverse and culturally challenging situations. In turn, this knowledge can inform parents, educational practitioners, and researchers and theorists in the fields of interculturalism and education.

1.5   Significance of the study

Cultural, social, political and economic spheres have undergone transformation in the post-modern world (Harvey 1989). Increased human mobility has created opportunities for culturally diverse people to study, work and live together. At least in the developed societies, improved ease of transport and communication has diminished the effects of isolation. The concepts of globalization and interdependence are at the forefront of thinking by governments and business.

The resultant change in the significance of the nation state has been fundamental. It is no longer central to the business sector, which

increasingly functions outside of this traditional construct. In reaction to an essentially economic thrust, governments and international bodies have translated new themes to communities and individuals through public policy. These include the legitimacy of ethnic and cultural diversities that validate split and multiple identities, dual citizenship and a global network of shared symbols that render cultural exclusivity less tenable (Premdas 2003). National cultural identities form just one layer of the multiple cultural identities of people (Pearce 1998).

We are told that respect for and understanding of others is not only desirable, but also essential to our success as individuals and communities in an emerging global culture. Central to the ideas of interdependence and interconnectedness is the discovery of common bonds that exist across peoples (Tomiak 1997). Local, national and international arenas promote relevant concepts that encourage effective communication and peaceful co-existence with others. For example, Giordan suggests multiculturalism has been used by UNESCO as a response to diversity, because it embodies the ideal of respect for diversity with concerns for societal cohesion (2003: 2).

This thesis explores the belief that interculturalism is another valid response to the challenges posed by human diversity, interdependence and communication in a changing world. Whilst multiculturalism promotes the ideals of cultural groups living side-by-side, interculturalism entails another level of cultural understanding, as we shall discuss later.

Furthermore, it is suggested that there are existing pockets of expertise and knowledge of being intercultural that are, to date, unexplored. In particular, young people in some settings may offer significant insights into ways of thinking and behaviour that have potential benefits for others.

Education still has a significant role in preparing future citizens to live and work successfully within a global framework. Expectations at a macro level eventually filter down to schools in the form of new programs, best practices and improvements to the old way of doing things. As Heyward notes, not only are the competencies, understandings, attitudes and identities of the 1950's inadequate, they may actually be counterproductive to achieving success in a globalized world (2002: 23). There is a growing recognition of apparent inadequacies of some national curricula and the movement towards internationally minded frameworks. The emphasis is usually on schools teaching new skills *to* young people to achieve desired outcomes.

However, this study posits the view that in learning to live with diversity, the question facing educators may not only be what to *teach*. Rather, it should be what might we also *learn* from individuals who are already successfully living in such circumstances?

Any school can present a highly interactive environment. However, some international schools settings demand our attention. Complicating the multifarious transmissions between young people, parents and teachers

are a mass of diverse backgrounds and an underlying host country culture. Heyward suggests that without an understanding of interculturalism and its implications for young people, schools cannot understand the world of their young people or the young people themselves (2002: 23). This situation creates a *need* for international schools and young people to understand each other, simply in order to function.

Moreover, international school students will most likely undergo repeated crises of engagement as they move from school to school, or as their peers move on. Their experiences in dealing with multiple and varied cultural challenges, especially during their formative years, compel researchers to focus on them.

Knowing how *any* adolescents think and feel is a worthy aspiration. Familiarization with this group can contribute to our understanding of what it means to be intercultural, how being intercultural impacts people trying to fit in to a new environment, and the wider implications of this knowledge.

1.6   Limitations of the study

The following were unavoidable limitations:

    i.   a lack of existing research in this setting and field:

There has been scant research with children in this field. Those studies that do exist address either a different type of population or a different research focus. Whilst this opened up an obvious gap in existing knowledge, it also meant the researcher could not draw from the previous experience of others.

ii.   access to only one case and a sample from within it: Given the nature of the study, it can serve as a beginning to examine other groups. Research with a different case and/or another setting might yield further insights and dimensions. However, it was not the researcher's intention to compare groups.

Additionally, there were some other factors that affected the methodology of the study. These were, by contrast, of minimal impact and are dealt with in Chapter 3: Research Methodology.

1.7   Organization of the study

In order to address the research questions, the study consisted of a number of phases. The first phase was developing a set of themes from the literature, and subsequently, questions, to be explored in semi-structured interviews with the young people. The second phase involved conducting interviews with the participants. This methodology is justified on the basis that it would best uncover complex social phenomena. The

third phase was the analysis of the data, although some of this began during Phase 2. Writing up the thesis occurred across all stages.

The thesis consists of seven chapters. Chapter One is this introductory chapter giving background information relating to the type and scope of the study.

Chapter Two comprises a literature analysis, with focus on how the following themes illuminate the research:

    i.   Change and mobility;

    ii.   International schools and international education;

    iii.   Culture, interculturalism and being intercultural; and

    iv.   Coping with change.

Chapter Three describes the research design and methodology. It details the setting of the research, methods employed to select the participants, the procedures and instruments used for collecting, treating, and analyzing data, and the writing up of the thesis.

Chapters Four, Five and Six analyse the data and present the findings of the study. Chapter Four analyses and discusses the international and intercultural competences used by the young people. Chapter Five examines the social processes used by the young people, and situates their intercultural competences within these processes. Chapter Six

discusses the major findings of the study in terms of change and the

acquisition of intercultural competence.

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Finally, Chapter Seven outlines the study's conclusions and makes

recommendations for further research. Relevant appendices and the list

of references complete the thesis.

CHAPTER 2:   LITERATURE ANALYSIS

In order to situate the research, this chapter will review and analyse the relevant existing literature. It will address four main areas, pertaining to the frameworks in which the young people live and learn:

i.   Change and mobility - the world context in which they live;

ii.   International schools and international education - one environment in which they learn;

iii. Culture, interculturalism and being intercultural - the mode in which they respond; and

iv.   Coping with change - the mechanisms they have available.

2.1   Change and mobility

This section will consider the changing world, and the mobility of young people within this context.

2.1.1 Globalization and the changing world

Children today are growing up in an increasingly multifaceted and interdependent world, one that is often discussed as becoming more and more *globalized*. According to Held *et al.*:

> Globalization may be thought of initially as the widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life, from the cultural to the criminal, the financial to the spiritual
>
>   (2000: 2).

On the one hand, it seems that the effects of globalization are far-reaching, and it has become such an all-embracing term that the question must be asked if it has any use as a definition at all (Brown 1998). On the other, despite the absence of an agreed or precise definition, there is concern that globalization involves a worldwide shift in economic operation that is having repercussions in a number of social institutions, including education (Ganderton 1996: 393). Held and McGrew write that globalization is characterized by change (1999). This change carries with it a perception that a globalized world may require new skills, attitudes and knowledge. Schools are increasingly regarded as having a responsibility for developing these, despite the difficulties in reaching agreement on what they are.

Whilst globalization is a complex term, it would be fair to surmise that it has some relevant implications for education and educators, including those in international schools. We can consider these connections by briefly examining some current views of globalization.

Hyperglobalists (including Reich 1991 and Ohmae 1990, 1995, 1995a), stress the significance of moving away from national or government policies, to market-driven agendas. In Ohmae's 'borderless world', national boundaries have become economically meaningless as people, information and capital move globally. Consequently:

> Region states are the natural economic zones in a
> borderless world because, by definition, the demands of the
> global economy shape their contours
>
> (Ohmae 1995a: 134).

Although the hyperglobalists perceive globalization as essentially an

economic phenomenon, it is seen as affecting all types of relationships as

they become increasingly integrated at a global level (Castles 2000: 7).

Some educators can see a parallel that implies a shift from developing

good national curricula to creating a global core curriculum (Ball 1994:

30). This is one in which importance is placed on international

understanding and cooperation (Joslin 2002: 44). Taking this stance

could be viewed as a very human response to globalization.

Internationalization occurs when there are shared ideas, which are

utilized, agreed upon and mutually accepted. This contrasts with the

imposition of ideas associated with globalization (Paris 2003: 235).

Although definitions and types of international schools will be discussed

in Section 2.2, those adopting the hyperglobalists' view would include the

'pure' international schools.

On the other hand, the traditionalists or sceptics believe that globalization

has been exaggerated, is basically concerned with economics aspects

and that there is still a place for nations to determine their own agendas.

> We do not have a fully globalized economy, we
> do have an international economy and national
> policy responses to it
>
> (Hirst and Thompson 1992: 394).

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Rather than having a global view, the skeptics see 'regionalisation' as one way for nation states to maintain their dominant role, while allowing for international trade. They argue that most world trade continues to be dominated by highly-developed economies, and therefore prefer to use the term 'internationalisation' to reflect this. This outlook has a place for the encapsulated school, with its own ideology and purpose (Joslin *op. cit.*). International schools that blatantly promote a national curriculum (but with an awareness of the rest of the world) would fall into this grouping.

Finally, the transformationalist view sees a close relationship between the global and the local, with lives being influenced by both.

> Many of us feel in the grip of forces over which we have no control. Can we re-impose our will upon them? I believe we can. The powerlessness we experience is not a sign of personal failings, but reflects the incapacities of our institutions. We need to reconstruct those we have, or create new ones, in ways appropriate to the golden age
> (Giddens 2000: 19).

One of the institutions Giddens may have in mind is the school or education in general, as this perspective recognizes a central, driving force that has responses and repercussions at all levels of society. Accordingly, in education, this view would be represented by schools where importance is given to global curriculum, as well as attention being paid to local issues. International schools with a particular purpose might be placed here, such as mission schools or corporate-sponsored institutions.

The activities and purposes of international schools are multifarious, and can be interpreted in terms of these contrasting views of globalization (Cambridge 2000). Whilst this thesis does not intend to delve into these connections, it is nevertheless important to note one connecting theme in all approaches. Although it is given a different degree of credence in each view, there is a focus on world change. Brown suggests that the transfer of money, rapid development of information technology, new opportunities for international production and exchange of services, and the declining role of the nation state are commonly presented as evidence of globalization's impacts. In fact, globalization is most often used to describe a process of change (1999: 3) and institutions such as schools will be affected by this and, perhaps, respond to it.

In describing seven tensions education needs to overcome in the twenty-first century, Delors *et al.* list the strain between the global and local. The need for people to become world citizens without losing their roots, and continue to play a part in both their nation and community is a challenge (1996: 17). However, it is also seen as one in which education can play an important role. This role, at least in international schools, is largely determined by the schools themselves. It seems that schools are operating within, and responding to, the condition of change, be it in lesser or greater degrees. Whilst some schools may not overly concern themselves directly with globalization, there are those who believe that education has the potential to moderate some of its negative impacts

(Cheng 2004: 8). The arrangements schools make for their students may reflect both their view of global and local change, and the provisions they make for dealing with it. This is especially relevant for schools that cater for internationally-mobile clients.

2.1.2 Mobility of young people

Whatever the view one takes of globalization, there is almost universal agreement that it has resulted in the increased movement of goods, services and resources around the world. One of these resources is people. Different groups of people, including migrants, refugees and sojourners, move for various reasons. However, this research is concerned with expatriate, internationally-mobile families, as it is this background that is common to the young people in this study.

In order to support corporate business agendas, the global mobility of professionals has become more significant. As this trend has also become increasingly expensive (O'Boyle 1989), it has created research interest. The business literature has considered the needs and challenges of expatriates from the perspective of making these experiences successful, and consideration has been given to adjustment to different cultural settings (Selmer 2002).

As people become increasingly mobile, their families may also move with

them. The children in these families form a significant core of the current populations of international schools. However, research into expatriate mobile families has been more concerned with adults and their partners than their children. It has not fully considered the needs of this group, despite acknowledging the importance of successful family adjustment for mobile professionals (Fukuda and Chu 1994; Solomon 1996; Tung 1987). Although consideration of spousal issues is now increasing (Copeland 2002; Forster 1999), the needs of internationally-mobile young people have largely fallen between the cracks in the business, education and social sciences literature. Some notable exceptions, drawn from specific populations, are detailed forthwith.

Young people in internationally-mobile families were first identified as worthy of study in the 1970's. As a result of her own family's cross-cultural encounters, Useem used the term 'third culture' to describe:

> the styles of life created, shared and learned by persons who are in the process of relating their societies, or sections thereof, to each other
>
> (2001: 2).

Useem then undertook research with American university students who had been raised overseas, and coined the phrase 'Third Culture Kids' (TCK's) in 1976 to describe them. Essentially, these young people did not feel they belonged to either the countries in which they were raised, or their home country.

Schaetti offered another précis of young people like these by introducing the term 'Global Nomad' in 1993, and recently reiterating this definition:

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> ...persons of any age or nationality who have lived a significant part of their developmental years living in one or more countries outside their passport country because of a parent's occupation
>
> (Schaetti and Ramsey 2003: 1).

TCK and Global Nomad are now terms used interchangeably to describe internationally-mobile children. The work of Pollock, in particular, has raised the profile of GN / TCK's in international schools (1994, 2001). According to Pearce (2003), Pollock's charismatic presentations at international schools have reassured audiences that it is perfectly normal for TCKs to feel like strangers when they return to their home country. Together with Van Reken (1987, 1999), Pollock has published books for TCKs, their families and counselors, which recognize not only their difficulties but also the rewards of their childhoods. Importantly, these young people build relationships with others of many cultures, without having full ownership of any (Pollock and Van Reken 2001: 19).

However, Pollock's work, and the experience of this group, has been largely neglected by other researchers until recently (Lam and Selmer 2004). The growth of international schools and international education has sparked interest in these young people, as has the desire by professionals who were once TCK's or Global Nomads to explore their own phenomena. These include C. D. Smith (1991), Stuart (1992), Fail (1995, 1996), Gordon (1997), Duin (1997), Mansfield Taber (1994), Purves (1998) and Schaetti (1996, 2003). Although this work may be quite systematic and rigorous, there is still a distinction to be made here between independent educational research and professionals working on

an interest that stems from their childhood experience. These professionals' reflections on their personal understandings, and the way in which these channel their research, may be partly responsible for the themes and treatment of GN/TCK's in the literature.

So what do we know about these internationally mobile young people? Firstly, their experiences vary widely. Killham has profiled an 'average' GN/TCK and determined that, by adulthood, they will have lived in six different countries, and their cultural identity will have become unglued from that of their monocultural parents and formed into a new sensibility (1990: 56). However, even this statement suggests a profile that cannot always be common. Pollock advises that trying to profile a TCK would run the risk of stereotyping (1994: 72). Family background is one of the huge variables of internationally-mobile young people, carrying with it a complicated mix of cultural awareness. Additionally age, schooling, sponsor dynamics, host-country cultures and involvement with them are just some of the other variables (Schaetti and Ramsey 2003: 1).

Nevertheless, at least in the North American literature, there have been attempts to describe some of the GN/TCK's sub-groups (McCaig 1991; C.D. Smith 1991). For probably pragmatic reasons, specific literature deals with diplomatic/foreign service children (Fakin 1998; Rodgers 1993; Wallach and Metcalf 1982), missionary kids (Echerd and Arathoon 1989; Tucker 1989; Wickstrom 1993) 'military brats' (Hunter 1982; Truscott 1989; Wertsch 1991), and absentee Americans (C.D. Smith *op. cit.*).

Additionally, Stultz considers that domestic nomads, who move and live among different cultures in one country, share many of the same needs and challenges (2003: 1).

This raises our next theme in the literature: GN/TCK's lives are regarded as having a balance of challenges and benefits. Correspondingly, current references to these young people tend to focus on their characteristics, abilities or matters affecting them. Culture and identity issues are a common theme, with the general consensus being that these young people move between cultures, taking a little of this and that from home and host cultures, but at the end perhaps devoid of a real sense of belonging (Hill *et al.* 1976; Pollock and Van Reken 1987). 'Home' may be difficult to define (Pascoe 2000; Storti 2001). Whilst some of the insecurities and rootlessness that may plague GN/TCK's has been documented (Killham 1990; Pollock and Van Reken 2001), parent, teacher and student audiences are eager to learn about the positive characteristics presented by Pollock. These include cross-cultural and multilingual skills, a world view, sense of independence, maturity and a heightened ability to cope with crises (1990: cited in Killham 1994). Additionally, there have been studies of reentry into the home culture (Austin 1986; Downie 1976; Gleason 1970; Salmon 1987; Jordan 1981). However, the two common factors of GN/TCK's lives are that they are raised in a cross-cultural and highly mobile world (Pollock and Van Reken 2001).

Nevertheless, most of the GN/TCK's research has focused on North American adolescents (Gerner *et al.* 1992). One of the difficulties in relying on this research is its implicit reference to a norm group. To compare current international school clients with home country compatriots, as well as being often impossible, ignores the very point GN/TCK's researchers seem to be making. These young people are different, either because of, or in spite of, their experiences. The qualities they have and the ways in which they deal with challenges is worthy of study in its own right; not only because they may be different from their cousins 'at home'.

In response, some research has tried to identify what *is* different about these young people. One angle has been to consider the identity they seek or claim. Schaetti (2000) considers global nomads from the perspective of them having a global identity, and utilizes more heterogeneous research participants. Other research has recognized less desirable traits of internationally-mobile young people, including less positive self-concepts, greater insecurity about the future, and less comfort and reliance on interpersonal relationships (Werkman *et al.*1981).

According to Lam and Selmer (2004), the design of research into expatriate adolescents has tended to be simplistic (de Leon and Mc Partlin 1995; Gerner *et al.* 1992; Hayden *et al.* 2000; Useem 2001). Studies have included observations, exploratory studies and qualitative reports. Gerner *et al.* (1992) report that exploratory research has been

mostly found in doctoral theses (Delin 1987; Downie 1976; Gleason 1970; Olson 1986) and statistical studies with large samples are rare. Exceptions are that of Allan (2002), Gerner *et al.* (*op. cit.*), and Hayden, Rancic and Thompson (2000). Hayden *et al.* made use of a psychometric instrument to determine the characteristics of 'being international' by distributing a questionnaire to 200 teachers and 1200 students at international schools worldwide. Whilst there was some small difference between the opinions of the teachers and students, there was agreement that characteristics included international-mindedness, open-mindedness, second language competence, flexibility of thinking, tolerance and respect for others. Consideration of the qualities or characteristics of these young people using this approach, or variations of it, have been taken up by others, including Lam and Selmer (2004). Even so, although these studies can identify some characteristics and abilities of these young people, they have not fully explored how or why they develop these traits.

Furthermore, the literature seems to pass over the ways in which young people living with constant change and disruption deal with these challenges. Living in a highly mobile environment carries with it the dual-edged swords of separation and developing new relationships. According to Akram, there are many types of separation, including leaving people behind as one moves on, losing friends in a new location as *they* move on, and separation from friends within the current environment as classes change. These occur concurrently with the young person's developmental

changes and pressures on family life (1995: 41). Ledman notes the disruptions to education, self-identity, and relationships with family and friends (2001: 343). The literature suggests we should be concerned about the stresses created by change and mobility, and how young people's adjustment can be facilitated (Akram *op. cit*; Elkind 1981; Jalongo 1985). The theme of adjustment will be taken up later in this chapter, but is characterized by a growing number of studies (Gerner *et al.*1992; Nathanson and Marcenko 1995; Pascoe 1994; Simon *et al.* 1990; Willis *et al.* 1994).

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Additionally, the current literature has tended to consider the experiences of these young people retrospectively, either on repatriation, at the end of high school or beyond. One notable exception was Willis' ethnographic study of students at an international school in Japan (1992), an attempt to consider the perspectives of internationally-mobile young people *whilst* they are immersed in their experiences. This critical viewpoint begs further exploration, as does the environment created when many of these young people come together in one place, such as an international school.

<center>*   *   *   *</center>

In summary, we know that the world is rapidly changing. Within this context, young people are moving internationally. They are learning to cope with separation and relocation and their accompanying challenges

and benefits. What we *don't* know is how they perceive these, or the processes they employ to deal with them.

Langford believes in the reciprocal effects of these young people and their environment: international schools are unique because of the preponderance of GN/TCK's, and that these young people develop unique characteristics in part because of the social and academic environment at international schools (1999: 34). Yet there has been very little analysis of such environments. Perhaps it is time to consider the processes at play, not only the products of these young people's experiences. Let's now go on to consider an important social environment for many of these young people: international schools.

2.2 International schools

This section will consider what constitutes an international school, the relationship between these schools and international education, and current research themes.

2.2.1 Defining international schools

International schools have existed for over 50 years. Their development has been documented since the involvement of the League of Nations in

the foundation of the Geneva International School (1924). The Yokohama International School independently commenced operations shortly after (also in 1924), and the United Nations International School in New York, 1947.

The history of international education and the international schools movement have been summarized by Sylvester (2002) and Hill (2001, 2001b). Sylvester presents a historical survey of international education from 1893 - 1944, noting the influence of both world organizations and significant individuals. Hill provides us with a series of useful articles tracing the history of, and influences in, what could be regarded as the modern era of international schools and the international education movement (2001, 2001b). He notes UNESCO's international diploma (1946 and 1948), and the importance of UNESCO-sponsored conferences for international school educators in 1949 and 1950, establishing an educational, cultural and ideological focus. The influence of the European Baccalaureate from 1959 is credited with creating interest in equivalence of university entrance examinations. Various groupings of international schools began to emerge in the 1950's with the purpose of supporting and assisting each other, including the Conference of Internationally-minded Schools (CIS), later to become the International Schools Association (1951). It proposed the first teachers conference in 1962 and provided a catalyst for the International Baccalaureate diploma. What is most apparent in this historical overview, however, is the continued growth and development in this area of education.

Anticipation of the expansion of international schools, and interest in their curriculum, was predicted by Gellar more than two decades ago:

> ..there is every indication that the international school movement will grow, that many national overseas schools will of necessity become more international. More and more of these schools will come to realize that they have a major and permanent role to play in the education of the children of the internationally mobile community - a group that will not diminish in size or influence
>
> (1981: 24).

This positive view of growth was reiterated more recently by Hayden & Thompson (1996: 46). There are now between one and two thousand international schools worldwide (ECIS 1999; Hayden and Thompson 1995). Although it is difficult to ascertain current enrolments, there were in excess of one million internationally mobile youth living with their families outside their home countries by 1992 (Gerner *et al. 1992*). Schools catering for these students have now become a significant educational group, and a recognized field of study.

Initially, the goal of these schools was pragmatic: to cater for internationally mobile families (Jonietz 1991). However, despite their continued growth, there is as yet no shared meaning of what it is to be an international school (Hayden and Thompson 2000: 50). This ambiguity existed as early as 1964, when Bereday and Lauwerys labelled these schools as having been 'founded with the specific purpose of furthering international education', but noted the uncertainty of aims and fundamental premises. This is partly due to the fact that there is a diverse

range of schools that call themselves international, and an equally varied group of clients for whom they cater.

Accordingly, the composition of such schools varies. Some contain fifty or more nationalities; others have one very dominant group with a sprinkling of other nationalities. Some cater exclusively for service families, or families working for a certain corporation. Others exist in large cities where an ever-changing mix of students passes through. There are also international schools that cater for boarders and a small but significant group of host country nationals or permanent residents who attend international schools in their own country.

Any attempt to define such schools must grapple with this multiplicity. Whilst there has been considerable input from various organizations including the League of Nations, UNESCO and the IBO, no international school system has as yet emerged. Attempts to gather impetus for developing such a system have been, and are being, worked on (Thomas 1996; Hayden and Thompson 2000). However, one major obstacle has been the diversity of international schools. Another may be their constant evolution.

Despite the existence and development of diverse international schools with little apparent concern about their own identity, the literature seems to suggest that delineation is, or ought to be, important. As early as 1969, Leach attempted to define international schools. According to Grant *et al.*,

Leach's sixteen ideal elements can be classified in three basic categories (1995: 503). Hayden and Thompson (1995, 1996) have since found these to be an integral part of international schools in the mid 1990's:

1. international schools should hold membership in the International Baccalaureate Organization (i.e. an international curriculum);
2. international schools should have a multinational student body, faculty/staff, board, and administration; and
3. international schools should follow an international mission and emphasize a tolerance for differences, especially religious differences.

Leach's attempt was visionary. He suggested the 'spirit of internationalism' should permeate these schools, and his ideal elements utilized school personnel, curriculum, goals, students, and governance to pursue this goal (Grant *et al.* 1995: 502). Various other definitions have been put forward by Belle-Isle (1986), Sanderson (1981), Ponisch (1987), Terwilliger (1972) and Pasternak (1998), and incorporate an awareness of cultural diversity.

Yet consensus on a universal definition has not been forthcoming. Given the diversity of these schools, it is sometimes clearer to get a sense of what an international school *is* by comparing it to what it is *not*. In particular, these schools share distinctive characteristics that set them apart from national schools. One of these is their view of the world.

National schools have a concept of the society in which their students will live. They are charged with socialising children to become members of that society. There is an understanding, or at least a perception, of the

values and traditions that are revered. Despite the very obvious and sometimes ignored differences between national schools, there is a commitment to perpetuating certain accepted social views and expectations, which are regarded, rightly or wrongly, as an extension of the child's home environment. The national, state-run school system controls the curriculum that schools use to help develop citizens who will fit into society. The significance of this role in creating and maintaining nation states and national identity has been documented by Anderson (1983, 1991), Barrett (2000), Gellner (1983), Hobsbawm (1992) and Smith (1991). The concept of a monocultural society, or a multicultural society which has a dominant cultural group, may be important in perpetuating this cycle. In contrast, Hill describes a 'pure' international school as one that does not emphasize the culture and education system of any particular country (2000: 26).

Matthews distinguishes between national schools, overseas schools with national curricula and international schools by offering this definition of an international school as one that has:

- an international teaching staff;
- an international student body;
- a body of governors representing different cultural views;
- an international curriculum that encourages international understanding; and
- a broad-based non-academic program that facilitates cultural mixing and cross-cultural fertilization

(1989, as cited in Heyward 2002: 21).

Such criteria represent a clear alternative to national and/or host country schools, and an awareness of the clients for whom they cater. These clients are another difference between national and international schools.

Indeed, Langford (1999) notes some definitions use characteristics of school populations to describe these organizations, including those by Matthews (*op. cit.*), Gellar (1981), Hill (1994), and Hayden and Thompson (1996). In doing so, they introduce factors that are becoming themes in the international schools literature. The influences of mobility and other cultures in international school settings are two of these notably included in Langford's (1999: 29) definition. It describes international school populations as being characterized by their multinational composition, high levels of student turnover, and tendencies to be influenced by the host country's culture. Students typically attend university in another country.

Definitions such as these recognize that international schools need to operate on a different premise to their national counterparts. To cater for their clients, these schools must address students' preparedness for functioning in different and changing environments, including that of their current school. There may be fifty or more nationalities in an international school. Rather than preparing students for a dominant socio-cultural group, there is a need to encourage the development of a critical perspective towards a variety of cultures. Students should engage but compare; consider and reflect. Their view of society will be influenced and tempered not only by their home environment, but also by interaction with their culturally diverse teachers and peers. Consequently, and most importantly, these schools do not necessarily have the narrowly-focused view of society which is held by national schools.

However, as well as recognizing the challenges sometimes faced by these young people, researchers also acknowledge that international schools may attract clients who are more prepared for and experienced with change, due to their high mobility. Although some schools offer a small number of scholarships for disadvantaged students, Hoffman's description is probably more accurate: international school students belong to 'highly mobile and well-off families' (1991: 43). They may have atypical backgrounds and additional needs to their non-international peers. For example, Hoffman remarks that students from this group attend international schools that contribute towards establishing bilingualism.

Fundamentally, these young people are a unique population in that they are often in various stages of transition, and/or surrounded by others in transition. Due to their highly mobile lifestyle, experiences of change may continue for a significant portion of their lives (Ezra 2003). Most individuals are learning to cope with not only the foreign host culture, but also an unfamiliar school culture, with new peers and teachers. Some students are encountering another culture before their foundation in a previous community has been established. Even if a student is moving from one international school to another, the schools may be quite different.

Such diversity has led to a range of terms being used within the

international schools literature. In particular, the distinction between international schools and international education is one that has often been blurred. Let us now consider their relationship.

2.2.2 International schools and international education

As this research is concerned with international schools, it will explore the current literature that is pertinent to this field. In particular, this includes some aspects of international education.

International education is a term that has been used with some ambiguity, mainly because of the varying contexts in which it has been applied. These include comparative education and international development, and international and non-international schools. Cambridge and Thompson note the confusion arising from these different connotations (2004: 161). However, Fraser and Brickman present this concise view of what an international education means:

> [An international education] connotes the various kinds of relationships - intellectual, cultural and educational - among individuals and groups from two or more nations, (being) a dynamic concept (which) involves a movement across frontiers, whether by a person, book or ideal
> (1968: 1; cited in Hayden and Thompson 1995: 17).

Underpinning this definition is an interest in interactions between people. According to UNESCO, an international education is one that develops international understanding, co-operation and peace (1974). The

alignment of international education with international schools is significant because it either recognizes or raises the importance of human relationships in this context.

On the other hand, it is notable that international schools are only one of the ranges of contexts for international education. Although they may enjoy a relationship, its nature and extent is extremely varied. There are international schools that may not be providing international education, and some non-international schools that do. Hayden and Thompson conclude that the relationship between international schools and international education is confusing (1995: 343). Hill agrees the link is tenuous and it is best to treat the concepts separately (2000: 30). Even if this is valid, educators are increasingly aware of, and perhaps influenced by, the implied relationship between an *effective* international school and an international education. This may be because an international education is seen as one that prepares students for the real, *international* world, as articulated in this statement:

> An international education ... represents the vision for a way of life and can be seen as a way to prepare to live in an increasingly interdependent world
> (Hayden and Thompson 1995: 327).

It is, therefore, not surprising that international education is becoming a popular theme for schools. Increased population mobility in the last thirty years or so has seen amplification of both the number of international schools and interest in international education. Gellar noted that as the number of overseas schools grew, the term 'international education'

gained currency, despite there being few shared understandings about its meaning (1981). Whilst there were once utilitarian reasons for completing an international education, there now also seems to be merit attached to this experience. With this perceived value, it seems that international schools, and those claiming a commitment to international education, are attracting interest.

Indeed, the value of an international education has been recognized in both international and national schools. Around 43% of schools offering the IBO are state schools, and approximately one third of the remaining 57% are private national schools (Hill 2000: 24). International education is enjoying a wider-ranging popular appeal.

Correspondingly, Hayden and Thompson make room for the inclusion of non-international schools. Based on research, they proposed the following *Universals of International Education* that present the notion of 'international-mindedness':

- diversity of student cultures within the school;
- teacher as exemplars of international-mindedness;
- exposure to other different cultures outside school;
- a balanced formal curriculum;
- a management regime value-consistent with institutional philosophy

(1996: 55).

Other writers have grasped this concept, allowing non-international schools to claim access to some of the ideas and philosophy that may be seen as desirable. Use of the idiom *international education* could be seen as a more inclusive umbrella term with appeal to a wider audience, and

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one that seems to be growing. It remains to be seen how far this relationship will be exploited.

In summary, there are some aspects of international education that are relevant to, or linked with, international schools, and may be pertinent to this research. What, then, is reflected in the existing literature on both international education and international schools? Let's look at some current themes.

2.2.3 Current themes in the literature

Literature in this area is relatively scant. It is dominated by international school educators, and institutions including the Centre for the study of Education in an International Context (CEIC) at Bath University, U.K., and George Mason University, U.S.A. The existing research has been summarized by Hayden and Thompson (CEIC) and Shafer (GMU). One précis has identifying and defining schools and their characteristics as its focus. The other looks at school culture, and the human interactions within it.

In 1996, Hayden and Thompson considered that research on international schools fell into two main areas:

    i.   that which tries to group schools into categories that share something in common; and

    ii.   that attempting to define characteristics of international schools

                                        (1996: 47).

Given the difficulty in defining what constitutes an international school, it is not surprising that there have also been issues in identifying their characteristics. However, it has been an important theme in the literature. Whilst there were various attempts to define school features by Gellar (1981) and Hill (1994), it was Matthews (1988) who distinguished between 'market driven' schools, catering mainly for mobile expatriates, and 'ideology driven' schools, founded to further international understanding and cooperation. If this distinction was clear then, it has become less so now, as market driven schools begin to lay claim to some of the popular ideological philosophies. Conversely, few international schools can afford to ignore market forces (MacKenzie *et al.* 2001).

In contrast to this focus on school identities and characteristics, other studies are more concerned with people and culture. Hayden and Thompson make the point that whether or not a school is international is less important than the nature of the education there (1995: 338). Recent literature is reflecting this, and seems less concerned with what international schools *are*, and more concerned with what they *do*. Although there is still limited literature in this area, Shafer has produced several useful synopses of themes, including:

   i.   perceived challenges for students - mobility, culture shock, reentry, cross-cultural communication and schooling issues; and

   ii.   school organization - school culture, professional development & training

<div align="right">(1998a and 1998b).</div>

It is hereby suggested that addressing the theme of what is *happening* in international schools is now significant. As Shafer says, in talking about the curriculum in such schools:

> While it is quite easy to speak of the need for an international educational curriculum, as so often the case, the 'Devil is in the details.' How one goes about putting this into practice is the most challenging part of making this philosophy a reality
>
> (1998a: 13).

This challenge is reflected in one theme in the literature, that of a commitment to advance cultural understanding. A core element in international education is that of mixing with those of different cultures (Hayden and Thompson 1996). This is not surprising, given the history of international schools and education. Walker notes that international schools have long accepted this notion and gives examples of Leach (1969), Renaud (1991) and the Charter of the International School of Geneva, that promote the ideas of cultural understanding (2000: 11-12). It is unclear whether there is currently increased interest in cultural matters in these schools, an increase in the number of schools addressing such issues, or simply better communication between educators. What seems apparent, though, is that many international schools are aware of, and addressing, issues of cultural understanding.

Additionally, there is a theme that concerns itself with influences and/or reasons for student outcomes. This theme has two underlying beliefs: students at international schools enjoy desirable outcomes in both academic and affective domains.

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Firstly, students at these schools are supposed to be achieving well. Langford's definition of international schools notes that students move onto post-secondary education (*op. cit.*). Matthews (1988) provides statistics that 95% of these students enter higher education; although this may have changed in the years since. It is also suggested that not only do these young people learn important knowledge at school, but they may enter school with some socio-economic advantage (Harris *et al.*1996). Although it is highly probable that family factors are diverse and not clearly understood, Willis *et al.* point out students at international schools are the 'privileged elite' (1994).

Whatever their backgrounds and academic proficiency, an international school education is perceived as having positive potential effects on students' attitudes and values, including cultural understanding. Literature in this area is largely concerned with curriculum and/or young people's attitudes (Bartlett 1996; Thompson 1998; Waterson and Hayden 1999; Yip 2000). In particular, community service programs receive considerable support in the literature as building desirable attitudes and understanding of other cultures (Hobson and Carroll 2000). A world view and/or globally-oriented curriculum also receive attention under various conceptual labels. These include global citizenship (Nussbaum 1997; Roberts 2003), world citizenship (Thomas 1996), world view (Gerner *et al.* 1992; Schaetti and Ramsey 2003; Sylvester 2000); international-mindedness (Hayden and Thompson 2000), world mindedness (Hayden and Thompson 1995) and international attitude

(Shafer 1998a). However, Waterson and Hayden suggest that factors other than schools themselves influence student outcomes, and that the development of students' attitudes and values require further research (1999: 23).

Additionally, cultural understanding is increasingly presented as being desirable and useful for young people because it may ease transition. In fact, part of the role of international schools is to find ways to smooth changeovers for their students, and the significance of international mobility is recognized:

> their challenge is to find ways which help their students and their families to become part of supportive social networks so that they might develop ease with whomever they are - where ever it is in the world that they may live
> (Shafer 1998c: 14).

Shafer also notes that international schools develop their own approaches when adopting this role. These multifarious perspectives on their own and other cultures are expressed in the variety of philosophies and missions characteristic of international schools (1998c). Organizations with diverse philosophies can be *expected* to be different, not only from national schools but also from each other. The complexities and challenges inherent in this reality are noted by Hill, who describes the need to enhance relationships between culturally diverse individuals in these settings with academic programs, methodology and international comparisons that enable them to see their own cultural identity in relation to the rest of the world (2001: 36). This was predicted by Gellar:

> ...these trends will,...in the area of curriculum, make more urgent the need for collaborative efforts between teachers and scholars to revise or develop new syllabi with a less parochial view of what is important and of what the world and man are
>
> (1981: 24).

Yet, in spite of the apparent challenges faced by international schools and young people, it is unclear what role is played by the school social setting. International school students are in a highly mobile environment, where relationships undergo constant change. These conditions must impact, and be affected by, human interactions. However, whilst there is concern about global or world views, there is, thus far, little emphasis in the emerging literature on international schools on exploring young people's interdependence and relationships. Burleigh suggests that some students gravitate towards those of the same language and cultural background (1993). Sherif notes the breaking down of group prejudice (cited in Hayden and Thompson 1999). Nevertheless, these studies are largely concerned with outcomes, rather than the processes that contribute to them.

This raises a crucial issue for international schools. Educators and researchers believe that these schools can lay claim to having success in some academic and affective student outcomes. Although some explanations have been offered for academic achievement, it remains unclear how affective development occurs. Much of the international education literature is more concerned with content and/or context, rather than processes (Roberts 2003: 69), and the same can be said of studies

of international schools. Lewis laments that these schools are not international enough, and introduces the importance of the hidden curriculum in the embodiment of values (2001: 36 - 7). He touches on the role of student interactions, and what schools do to contribute to these. This raises a point that will be addressed by this study: in addition to looking at intended curriculum, it is time to simply consider what is being learned, and how it happens.

*   *   *   *

In short, a national school socializes children to become members of a particular society. An international school may not make these assumptions. It can, however, offer an experience that allows young people to discover and learn to deal with both commonalities and differences in those around them. These school settings often have transitional populations, learning to deal with diverse cultures. Because of this unique environment, and its relevance to a changing world, international schools are worthy of study.

It seems apparent that international school students are perceived as enjoying some benefits. Two of these are their alleged academic achievements and international outlook. These outcomes fuel the interest in international schools and international education. However, our knowledge about the development of young people's values and attitudes is limited. It is true that, although we can identify some attitudes and

behaviours that seem to convey students' understanding of others, the literature has so far largely neglected the processes involved in their development.

Existing themes in the literature have considered international school characteristics, and student outcomes. Implicit in these studies is the belief that international schools are unlike other schools. Gellar suggest that international schools are different because of what takes place in the minds of children as they work and play together with children of other cultures and backgrounds. It is the child experiencing togetherness with different and unique individuals (1993). Given the perception that these schools can turn out worldly and successful students, it is time to consider what is happening in these settings, or, more specifically, what is happening in the minds of the young people there. If it is desirable to *be* international or internationally-minded, the next obvious question is how do young people develop this trait? It is quite likely that this is a laudable challenge for researchers. The ways in which young people think about and deal with diversity and change may offer lessons for others.

2.3 Culture, interculturalism and being intercultural

This literature analysis has previously considered the changing world, and the mobility of young people. Within this context, we have also

examined the current literature on international schools. This section will

consider the contributions current literature offers to illuminate people's

responses to a changing world. In particular, it will focus on intercultural

learning and the opportunities international school environments can

present for developing intercultural behaviour. The following relevant

themes will be addressed in this section:

o   culture, interculturalism and intercultural learning;

o   the foundations of cultural learning: socialisation and identity;

o   intercultural learning: communication and competence; and

o   interculturalism in an international school: circumstances and

    opportunities.

2.3.1 Culture, interculturalism and intercultural learning

Despite its widespread use, the term *culture* is problematic to explain.

Two important definitions are given by Geertz and Goodenough. Geertz

stresses the inherited nature of culture as:

> an historically transmitted semiotic network constructed by
> humans... which allows them to develop, communicate and
> perpetuate their knowledge, beliefs and attitudes about the
> world
>
> (1973: 89).

Goodenough describes culture in terms of a concept held in the minds of
people:

> a society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know
> or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its
> members. Culture is not a natural phenomenon; it does not
> consist of things, people's behaviour or emotions. It is rather
> an organisation of these things. It is the form of things that

> people have in mind, their models of perceiving, relating,
> and otherwise interpreting them
>
> (1977: 36).

In reality, culture is probably a combination of both historically transmitted

and developing ideas, and understandings of what these are and mean.

However, Geertz' definition, which accents an historic transmission basis,

is probably more relevant to traditional or national schools. In contrast,

Goodenough emphasizes the way in which people *think about* the various

facets of a culture, their perceptions of their own situations. This

description of culture, with its emphasis on shared meanings and

interpretations, could be seen as relevant to the changing and more

global nature of today's world, and, in particular, to many international

schools. Whichever way it is passed on, culture is 'the shared beliefs,

values and behaviours of a social group' (Byram 2002: 1).

It is a premise of this research that culture is learned, and that students in

international schools do need to perceive, relate and interpret various

facets of the cultural richness surrounding them, in order to function and

fit in. Furthermore, the cultural diversity experienced by these young

people also creates the opportunity for intercultural communication.

Various definitions of intercultural communication share a common

theme, that of an awareness of the need to straddle different cultures.

Ting-Toomey describes it as the communication process between

members of different cultural communities (1999: 16). According to

Byram and Zarate, to act interculturally is to bring into a relationship two different cultures (1997). Meyer defines interculturalism as the learner being able to explain cultural differences between his own and foreign cultures. He is able to stand between the cultures. The learner can see a culture not only from his own perspective, but also from others' (1991: 142).

Whilst these definitions recognize the importance of being adept at managing different cultural communities, this research is also concerned with how people *become* intercultural. If culture is learned, then there must be a process for learning to be intercultural. Let's now consider some of the traditional foundations of culture learning, and their relationship to becoming intercultural.

2.3.2 The foundations of cultural learning: socialisation and identity

If Meyer's definition of interculturalism is valid (*op. cit.*), children can discern differences between their own and other cultures. To do this, they need a cultural basis from which to explain and extend their understandings. This forms the framework upon which subsequent cultural learning can be built.

Additionally, the ability to explain cultural differences implies some understanding of them. The current literature suggests cultural

understanding is subject to a process of development. In the homogeneous society (which may not exist, but is a convenient simplification for the sake of clarification of the issues and theories), this process would include the following aspects: internalisation, socialisation and the development of identity.

According to Berger and Luckmann, the basis of understanding others and the world as a meaningful social reality is internalisation, or the interpretation of an objective event as expressing meaning (1966: 150). Internalisation underlies socialisation, a process which is necessary to enable a person to become a member of society. Socialisation has several phases.

Primary socialisation occurs in childhood under the guidance of the primary caregiver/s. Smith writes that, in early socialisation, class identities emerge from production and exchange. Religious identities emanate from communication and socialisation (1991: 6). It seems reasonable to assume that any development of intercultural competence may draw on these previously-used processes.

Secondary socialisation involves the internalisation of the role-specific vocabulary and behaviours of sub-worlds, thereby inducting an individual into new sectors of society. This process, which is a key role of schools, often includes the development of national identity. This is one juncture where the roles of international and national schools may differ.

Some schools downplay the role of national education. However, young people in an intercultural situation may be removed from the traditional society where establishing a national and/or monocultural identity is a priority. Diminished attention by schools to dominant national and/or cultural identities may contribute to the 'tertiary socialisation' described by Doyé (1992). This can occur when new beliefs and schemata are held side by side with the existing ones, the individual being ready to operate with whichever is relevant in a given context. Tertiary socialisation differs from primary and secondary forms because it moves beyond the use of just one frame of reference.

Even without the acquisition of tertiary socialisation, Smith concludes that a child develops multiple identities, and that these serve to locate the individual within a certain world (1991: 4). Some of these identities are related to the individual's identity with various groups, and this will be further examined in section 2.4 of this chapter.

The processes of internalization and socialization are the foundations of culture learning. It seems reasonable to assume that these processes can be applied to help to support the individual's intercultural learning. Additionally, Hofstede suggests that an individual's own values and sense of identity underpin intercultural understanding. By having a sense of identity that provides a feeling of security, it is possible to encounter other cultures with an open mind (1991: 237).

On the other hand, Parmenter criticizes this view as being too narrow (1997: 28), and its application to an international school situation may demonstrate some shortcomings. If interculturalism is regarded purely as an extension of national and monocultural identity, there is an assumption that individuals who are secure in their own identities are able to become successfully intercultural. However, this inference fails to consider the role of the school or other environments in the development of interculturalism.

Furthermore, individual situations vary. Some children are developing intercultural behaviours at an age when they would be normally cementing their national or monocultural identities. This happens despite the fact that interculturalism goes beyond the conventional classifications of secondary socialisation. It involves individuals relating further experiences to their previous socialisation, reflecting and establishing relationships, or mediating between the previous and the new.

If the development of intercultural behaviour sometimes punctuates secondary socialisation, children in intercultural situations may circumvent the usual (linear) process of establishing a national or monocultural identity. How, then, are they learning to be intercultural? Let us now consider current literature on intercultural learning.

2.3.3 Intercultural learning: communication and competence

Intercultural learning involves the acquisition of characteristics required to become intercultural. In the literature, intercultural learning and interculturalism are closely aligned. Thomas offers this definition of intercultural learning, which emphasizes the active role of learners in developing and applying new competences and perspectives:

> intercultural learning takes place if a person seeks to understand the orientation system of perception, thinking, valuing and acting of another culture by interacting with its members and if this person attempts to integrate this orientation system in his or her own culture orientation system and to apply it in his or her thinking and acting in the foreign environment. Intercultural learning implies not only understanding the orientation system of a foreign culture but also a reflection of the orientation system of one's own culture
>
> (1988: 83).

Thomas' definition raises two recurring themes that are found in the current literature: communication and competence. Intercultural learning is not synonymous with assimilation, but rather the appreciation of multiple heritages and cultures. It does not aim to preserve cultural identity. Rather, it attempts to overcome and transcend cultural barriers. It is, therefore, a multilateral and reciprocal process, requiring people to be open towards others and accepting of their culture (Fennes and Hapgood 1997: 37). Openness in communication is a recurring theme in the literature, and one that might be expected to surface in this research.

Furthermore, communication has a critical purpose. The success of intercultural communication is judged on both the effectiveness of the

exchange of information, and the development of relationships (Byram

1997: 32). The establishment and maintenance of relationships enhances

intercultural communication, and, in turn, enables modification of personal

knowledge and attitudes. This process is a function of the skills of the

people involved:

> i.   skills of interpretation and establishing relationships
>   between aspects of the two cultures; and
> ii.   skills of discovery and interaction
>
> (Byram 1997: 33).

Without the development of relationships, the purpose of becoming

intercultural is unclear. Developing the skills associated with interaction

and building relationships will, therefore, be central to any intercultural

learning.

An individual seeking to develop relationships with others from multiple

and diverse cultures will need to be able to learn about culture. In

reviewing current literature in this area, I will draw on Liddicoat *et al.*'s

(2003) useful *Report on Intercultural Language Learning*. Brislin and

Yoshida (1994) suggest culture-learning involves dealing with the things

people share with each other (culture-general aspects) and those in

which they differ (the culture-specific elements). Paige *et al.* allude to the

links between culture learning and intercultural learning, and offer this

definition of culture learning:

> Culture learning is the process of acquiring the culture
> specific and culture-general knowledge, skills, and attitudes
> required for effective communication and interaction with
> individuals from other cultures. It is a dynamic,
> developmental, and on-going process which engages the

learner cognitively, behaviourally, and affectively
(1999: 50 cited in Liddicoat *et al.* 2003: 16).

Just as culture is learned, people learn to be intercultural. Paige and

Stringer's (1997) model of intercultural learning acknowledges the

importance of both culture-general processes, and culture-specific skills,

related to interacting in a particular linguistic and cultural context:

1. learning about the self as a cultural being;
2. learning about culture and its impact on human
    language, behaviour, and identity;
3. culture-general learning, focusing on universal
    intercultural phenomena including cultural
    adjustment;
4. culture-specific learning, with a focus on a particular
    language and culture;
5. learning how to learn about language and culture.
    (cited in Liddicoat *et al.* 2003:16).

In such discussions of intercultural learning in the literature, the

emergence of two viewpoints is evident. Sometimes these are expressed

as 'we' and 'they', at other times they are 'self' and 'other'. Nevertheless,

there is a focus on the dual frames of reference. Similarly, Stier divides

intercultural competence into content competencies, or 'static' knowledge

about culture and people, and process competencies, which include

intrapersonal and interpersonal characteristics that impact the 'knowing

how' aspect of intercultural competence (2003: 84).

Recognizing this need to attend to the dynamics of an intercultural

situation, Paige *et al.* (1999) contend that effective learners of language

and culture must employ a variety of strategies which will enable them to

learn from the context *while* they are immersed in it. This emphasis on active learners, reflecting and experimenting within a social context, is relevant to this study.

Liddicoat *et al.* have analysed the literature to define the culture-general component of intercultural learning (2003: 17). They suggest it includes developing an understanding of the concept of culture itself, the nature of cultural adaptation, the impact of culture on communication and the construction of meaning through language, the stresses involved in intercultural communication and how to deal with them, and the role of identity and emotions in intercultural communication (Byram 1999; Crozet 1996; Crozet *et al.*1999; Liddicoat *et al.*1997; Liddicoat *et al.*1999; Paige *et al.*1999).

However, merely understanding does not constitute competence. As a consequence of learning, it would be expected that a person *demonstrates* competences that were not apparent before learning. The act of applying understandings in new situations is central to establishing competences. Clarifying intercultural competences is a theme in the intercultural literature, and one that has produced some relevant models.

Byram describes intercultural competence as comprising of sets of skills, attitudes and knowledge, described as *savoirs*. Byram and Zarate (1994) originally penned four savoirs, and Byram (1997) has since added the fifth:

1. *savoir* 'knowings': knowledge of self and other, of interaction: individual and societal;

2. *savoir comprendre* 'knowing how to understand': skills for interpreting and relating information;

3. *savoir apprendre/faire* 'knowing how to learn/to do': skills for discovering new knowledge and for interacting to gain new knowledge;

4. *savoir être* 'knowing how to be': attitudes involved in relativising the self and valuing the other; and

5. *savoir s'engager* 'knowing how to commit oneself': education involving the development of critical and political awareness.

(1997: Chapter 2).

This culture-general model draws together the key characteristics of communication and identity. Byram's model of intercultural competence forms part of a larger model of intercultural communicative competence, with three further components of linguistic, sociolinguistic and discourse competence having explicit links to foreign language learning.

Another culture-general model, the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), was proposed as an explanation for the acquisition of ICS, or intercultural sensitivity by Bennett (1986 and 1993b) and, more recently, Bennett, Bennett and Allan (1999). ICS is defined as 'sensitivity to the importance of cultural differences and to the points of view of people in other cultures' (Bhawuk and Brislin 1992: 413). Hammer *et al.* clarify the difference between intercultural sensitivity and intercultural competence thus:

> We will use the term 'intercultural sensitivity' to refer to the ability to discriminate and experience relevant cultural differences, and we will use the term 'intercultural competence' to mean the ability to think and act in interculturally appropriate ways

(2003: 421).

The DMIS offers an explanation of how learners function, and how they operate and develop strategies within culturally different situations over time. Structurally, the model is based on a linear arrangement of stages.

As summarized by Liddicoat *et al.* (2003), the DMIS consists of two broad stages: ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism. Ethnocentrism is defined as a disposition to view one's own cultural viewpoint as central to reality, whereas ethnorelativism is the conscious recognition that all behaviour exists within a cultural framework, including one's own. Within each stage, the DMIS is further divided into three developmental stages. The ethnocentric stages are Denial, Defence and Minimisation, and the ethnorelative stages are Acceptance, Adaptation and Integration. Bennett *et al.* believe that learners' intercultural competence begins to develop in ethnocentrism and moves towards greater levels of ethnorelativism after being exposed to, and reflecting on, cultural differences (1999).

The DMIS has been used in one study involving international school students. Straffon found that levels of ICS were positively correlated with the length of time the student had attended international schools (2003: 1). This connection is alluded to in an analysis of the DMIS, in which Paige *et al.* reported low scores in US high school and college students and instructors in the area of Behavioral Adaptation which, 'being the highest stage of intercultural development, requires a substantial amount of intercultural experience, as well as a high level of maturity and sophistication in processing this experience' (2003: 482).

The underlying premise of the DMIS is that intercultural sensitivity develops progressively and in a generally linear manner. This may be appropriate for high levels of intercultural competence developed over long periods of time, but not for lower levels of abstraction over shorter periods (Liddicoat *et al.* 2003: 19).

In contrast, a cyclical model for developing intercultural competence is presented by Liddicoat (2002). Rather than achieving certain stages of intercultural competence, Liddicoat believes that the noticing of, and reflection on, different cultural elements creates a potentially continuous cycle of acquisition. It is important to note the role of both experience and reflection in becoming intercultural, a feature also mentioned by Paige *et al. (op. cit)*, and Bennet *et al. (op. cit)*.

Implicit in these models is the idea that repeated experience alone cannot develop intercultural competence. There also needs to be reflection and engagement. The question that begs to be asked, then, is *what causes young people to engage in these situations*, and develop intercultural competence? The afore-mentioned models have been developed as a result of examining people in specific situations, such as foreign language learning, where they are shifting frames of reference from one culture to another. Bennett's model suggests that intercultural competence increases as one's experience of cultural difference becomes more complex and sophisticated (Hammer *et al.* 2003: 423). However, the processes involved in undergoing multiple and varied cultural

experiences, and their effects on intercultural competences, are largely unexplored. Whilst there may be assumptions that there are relationships between multiple and continued culture-general experiences and culture-specific learning, there is scant literature examining the relevant processes and conditions that exist in international schools. Let's now consider some circumstances that might promote engagement in international school settings.

2.3.4 Interculturalism in an international school: circumstances and opportunities

In examining intercultural learning, it is critical to consider two aspects: the individual's possible reactions and responses (dealt with later in this chapter), and environmental conditions and influences. For the young people in this study, the environment consists primarily of home, school and the host community. Although the impact of family and wider society is acknowledged, this study will not extend to discussion of those areas. However, given the context in which the research takes place, it is necessary to consider any relevant literature regarding the school environment and intercultural learning.

The individual in a new cultural situation is in transition. Many international schools are aware that understanding and supporting young people at this time is important. How can, or do, international schools

function as international settings and what is their role in promoting intercultural learning?

Intercultural learning has the potential to prepare people for the reality of multiple cultural groups living together. Schools can, undoubtedly, help students become intercultural. However, in order to do this, schools need to draw on the current theories about intercultural behaviour and consider the conditions that might foster the development of intercultural behaviour.

On the most basic level, schools facilitate social contact between children, and can provide the basis for positive relationships between students. Schools can implement practices that build on this foundation, and encourage an open and inquisitive approach to learning about and from others. Fostering this type of social environment is critical to developing interculturalism. According to Weigand:

> children's preferences for, and dislikes of, particular people and places are based first on their own idiosyncratic reasons and then on the shared views of their widening social contacts
>
> (1992: 64).

An international school provides its students with a primary source of social contacts.

Although having social contacts is a valid starting point, Fennes and Hapgood suggest a broader dimension in developing intercultural learning. They write that to be intercultural implies certain practices:

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i.	the development of a greater openness towards other cultures;
ii.	an appreciation of cultural diversity; and
iii.	overcoming cultural bias and ethnocentrism

(1997: 37).

In overcoming bias and ethnocentrism, cultural relativism and reciprocity are suggested as fundamental principles. Cultural relativism conveys the absence of any hierarchy of cultures, and an essential acceptance of differences between people from different cultures. Reciprocity suggests that intercultural learning is a process between cultures, where learning occurs across cultural boundaries. Both cultural relativism and reciprocity imply the need for sensitivity towards the foreign. These imperatives may seem highly desirable in culturally diverse settings.

Accordingly, Fennes and Hapgood provide a framework for intercultural learning that may be useful in international schools:

i.	overcoming ethnocentrism;
ii.	acquiring the ability to empathise with other cultures;
iii.	acquiring the ability to communicate across cultural boundaries (which often implies bilingualism); and
iv.	developing a means of cooperation across cultural boundaries and in multicultural societies

(1997: 44).

Notably, interculturalism does not focus only on *other* people and cultures. Reflecting on one's own culture may lead to some personal adjustments, and carry the consequences of change in individuals.

Intercultural learning is useful in many situations, but particularly where

people of multiple cultural backgrounds co-exist. International schools, by definition, are multinational and multicultural. They have a significant social role to play in these environments. So how do they see this function?

Some international schools assert that students from different cultures not only co-exist in their institutions, but also develop intercultural characteristics. In making these claims, schools suggest the desirability of intercultural behaviours. A school may endorse and promote understanding of other cultures and people, cooperation between students of varied backgrounds, the establishment of working relationships, and respect for, and acceptance of, differences. These characteristics are manifested in students because the school environment is perceived to nurture such development. By claiming any part in cultivating students' intercultural behaviours, do international schools imply the existence of a curriculum in this area?

The TIMMS study notes that there are three perspectives of curriculum: the intended, the implemented and the learned (2001). A school's objectives may differ from what is taught and learned, and the hidden curriculum may have a significant function. Giroux's work on the hidden curriculum highlighted its significant effects on students and teachers, as they are introduced to elements of social capital by substantial, but largely uncontrolled, interactions with each other (1977: 42). Galloway

takes up the importance of relationships in this description of the hidden curriculum:

> the network of relationships in a school, between teachers, between pupils, and between teachers and pupils which determine what teachers and pupils expect of themselves and of each other
>
> (1991: 15).

This theme is echoed by Gellar (1993) and Hayden and Thompson (1995a, 1995b, 1999), who recognize that it is the interactions between students, as well as teachers and parents, that shape their international attitudes. Additionally, Waterson and Hayden (1999) note the role of the hidden curriculum in the development of attitudes.

According to Hargreaves, the hidden curriculum exercises a profound influence on students and can be a vehicle for achieving desirable ends (2001: 494). It should, therefore, be taken into account when considering how a school can support and nurture interculturalism in a complex international environment. This is not just about what to include in academic programs. There are some desirable circumstances, embedded in the hidden or explicit curriculum, that might allow or promote intercultural development, by creating potential opportunities for intercultural learning.

After the earlier consideration of some of the current literature, it is possible to extract some optimum circumstances for intercultural development. Particularly useful here is the work of Fennes and Hapgood (1997). The following seven elements are suggested as promoting or

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supporting the development of interculturalism in an international school setting. A brief explanation of each is given, in order that we may refer to these at a later point.

1. an emphasis on developing working and sustainable relationships between both individuals and groups, which includes communicating with those who may be culturally different:

In an international school, new peers may differ significantly from a student's previous friends, and both individuals and groups may need assistance during transition. Kim writes that compensation for lack of support from host nationals is required (1988: 62-3). Macro and micro environments are important, and opportunities to participate in on-going social activities will increase environmental receptivity (*op. cit:* 66).

Therefore, planned, multiple and varied opportunities for social interaction between students are imperative. Communication and interaction is based on the need for a shared world and knowledge of the (dominant) social culture. In international schools, the social culture is constantly changing. This is an ideal situation for developing intercultural competence in the context described by Byram, where the emphasis is on analysing and comparing different social groups in order to relate to others (1997: 17 - 22). A school with intercultural intentions should vigorously support both the purposes and strategies students need to develop working relationships, especially with those who are different.

2.   planned and multiple opportunities for social learning:

Fennes and Hapgood note that, in order to function effectively in a foreign

environment, it is necessary to observe and imitate the behaviour of

those who have already been socialised. Social learning is closely related

to this; an understanding of roles is critical if behaviours and actions are

to be adapted. Subsequently, cognitive learning can occur when the

individual reflects on experiences and integrates them into a mental

framework as a future resource (1997: 46).

During the transition period after entering a new culture, individuals must

be receiving support and some empathy, in order to prevent possible

isolation. International schools should adopt appropriate transition

programs for students from a variety of backgrounds.

3.   a focus on issues which foster an intercultural perspective:

As well as their own socialisation, students may benefit from opportunities

to focus on extraneous situations which require the application of

intercultural behaviours. Issues which provide a purpose for intercultural

learning allow students to experiment and reflect on their attempts.

Schools should offer opportunities to participate in culturally challenging

situations, both within the host country and in other environments.

4.   a positive view of, and preparation for, inevitable change:

Fennes and Hapgood write that intercultural learning implies change. It is

concerned with developing new attitudes towards both the unknown and one's own environment, and learning from and with other cultures. In cooperating with people from other cultures, the learner is able to put into perspective his own and the new culture (1997: 49).

Students in international schools are often in a change-laden environment and should view change as an ongoing component of life. As well as participation in unfamiliar activities, these students should learn how to prepare for upcoming changes, and then reflect on the process.

5.   critical cultural awareness/political education:

Students need exposure to critical cultural awareness/political education. This would develop what Byram expresses as 'an ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries' (1997: 101). Such awareness can encourage students to stand between cultures and contemplate aspects of a new situation, while reflecting on what has gone before.

International schools should introduce students to actual world issues, encourage consideration of different cultural viewpoints, and support appropriate responses to them.

6.   support for the ongoing processes of transition and inclusion:

The profile of students in international schools is one of multiple cultural

and linguistic backgrounds, within a multicultural school environment. Not only are students presented with opportunities for tertiary socialisation, they may be bombarded with a myriad of cognitive, social and behavioural cues.

International schools that intend to develop interculturalism will need to support students' processing of, and responses to, these cues, and bear in mind the range of cultural sources. Additionally, due to the highly mobile population, transition and inclusion will need to be addressed on an ongoing basis as social groups change or young people need to develop new relationships, not only when students are new to the school.

7.   the aspiration to overcome ethnocentrism and develop cultural relativism:

International schools have culturally diverse populations, requiring consideration of both the school's and the students' makeup. Cushner, in writing on diversity in U.S. schools, suggests that schools need to be innovative in four dimensions: socio-cultural inclusion, curriculum diversification, modification of pedagogy, and flexible assessment strategies (1994: 122). These are equally valid in international schools, and schools that are mindful of these dimensions can address the social, cultural, motivational and academic needs of students.

Additionally, Wiegand's work reminds us of the close relationship between children's knowledge of, and attitudes towards, other countries

and people, particularly as they get older (1992: 57). Therefore, schools that aspire to overcome ethnocentrism must also address student attitudes towards both individuals and groups. The needs of a dominant group, which guide curricula in national schools, are diminished in a pure international school.

*   *   *   *

Intercultural learning involves the development of both communication and other competences, within the context of establishing and maintaining relationships. In an international school setting, the criteria listed above can promote and support intercultural learning. International schools can, therefore, provide operational conditions that create circumstances and opportunities in which young people can experience culture-general and culture-specific learning, and develop intercultural competences.

However, whilst schools can create opportunities for young people, the ways in which they respond can vary. The next section of the literature analysis will consider some current literature on how people cope with change.

2.4 Coping with change

There is an extensive body of research addressing how people cope with change of the kind in focus here. Significant themes deal with adjustment to new and unfamiliar situations, and the connections between stress, communication and adaptation. This section of the literature analysis will examine the following perspectives on how individuals react, and their relevance to this study:

- culture shock;

- acculturation, deculturation and communication;

- adjustment; and

- change in social identity.

2.4.1 Culture shock

When a person is confronted with, or immersed in, another culture, the exchange involved may trigger culture shock. The term was first coined by Oberg, who put forward the idea that culture shock is precipitated by the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse (1960: 176). A more recent definition brings together both the unfamiliar (*alien*) and the negative effects (*disorientation*) of experiencing culture shock:

> culture shock is the psychological and social disorientation
> caused by confrontation with a new or alien culture
> (Byram *et al.* 2002b: 165).

Culture shock affects people in different ways, both positively and negatively. However, although it can and perhaps should be largely regarded as a normal reaction, it is the negative responses that feature predominantly in the literature.

Heyward indicates that typically, the person enjoys a touristic experience before undergoing culture shock, at which point they either develop overwhelmingly negative attitudes or move onto a cross-cultural learning stage (2000: 34). Furnham and Bochner propose an apparent connection between culture shock, alienation and anomie (1986: 49). Consequently, themes in the culture shock literature include alienation, bewilderment and anxiety. These reflect the ways in which people adapt to culture shock and how they are changed by it. Reactions that are regarded as normal include confusion, stress, and a sense of loss and rejection when unable to understand and predict another's behaviour (Byram *et al.* 2002b: 165 - 6). Kim concurs that many studies in this area focus on strangers' negative, initial-phase reactions, and suggests:

> culture shock is a manifestation of the generic process that occurs whenever the capabilities of a living system are not sufficiently adequate to the demands of an unfamiliar cultural environment
>
> (1988: 57).

It is this unfamiliar environment that provides the setting for considerable research on this theme. The literature characteristically describes responses when moving from one culture to another, usually as a traveller or foreign visitor (Ward *et al.* 2001). In a useful review,

Onwumechili *et al.* (2003) cite studies where culture shock has been regarded as a central part of acculturation (Adler 1987; Ward 1996; Ward *et al.* 2001). Additionally, they suggest it is now generally regarded as a useful trigger in motivating people to adjust to a host culture (Kim 2001; Ting-Toomey 1999).

These dual perspectives on culture shock are endorsed by Miyamoto and Kuhlman (2001), who describe two phases in the culture shock literature. In the first, there is a focus on difficulties and reactions, and perhaps the unpleasant or threatening nature of such experience (Fraga 1999: 1). The use of the U-curve (Lysgaard 1955), and later the W-curve (Gullahorn and Gullahorn 1963) hypotheses, aim to organize experiences and describe both culture shock and the re-entry shock that occurs on repatriation. In contrast, interest in the role of intrapersonal variables has led to a second phase of more recent work that considers ideas of culture learning, adaptation or adjustment (Furnham and Bochner 1986; Pedersen 1995; Ward *et al.* 2001). Miyamoto and Kuhlman (2001: 25) suggest that this phase is concerned with investigating variables causing culture shock symptoms, identifying how these can vary between cultural groups, and analyzing skills that promote smoother transition. If any of the culture shock literature is relevant to this research, it will most likely be the premises explored in this second phase. Significantly, Miyamoto and Kuhlman (*op. cit.*) establish a link between interculturally competent individuals and their ability to handle stressful situations, citing research investigating intercultural communication competence (Redmond and

Bunyi 1993; Taylor 1994) and cultural sensitivity (Bhawuk and Brislin 1992).

A particular relationship between stress and change is suggested by Powell, in writing on the mobility of international school teachers:

> Culture shock is actually a misnomer. It is not about being shocked by a new or different culture. Culture shock is about the stress we experience when we undergo change, particularly a change in where we live
>
> (2001: 20).

Powell then provides a further link to cognition, advocating that the states of mind described by Costa and Gorman's (1994) work on 'Cognitive Coaching' can have a bi-directional effect on relocation stress, i.e. each can mitigate or influence the other. These states of mind are efficacy, craftsmanship, flexibility, consciousness and interdependence (*op. cit.*). Powell goes on to make two useful points. Firstly, as illustrated by elite athletes, states of mind can influence performance and 'confidence can improve competence'. Secondly, these states of mind can also 'provide challenges and opportunities', and identifying (and presumably, acting upon) these can serve as a 'profound shock absorber' (*op. cit.*: 22 - 23).

Being mindful of the dearth of studies specifically on expatriate children, it is prudent to consider the relevance of the culture shock literature to this research. Basically, the literature may be useful because of its emphasis on response to new situations involving change. However, the young people in this study live in an environment where not only is the individual moving around, conditions are constantly changing. Therefore, the

concept of moving into a relatively stable situation with one dominant group may be inapt. Although the literature deals primarily with international mobility and culture shock, this is only one context for encountering another culture. Culture shock, can, conceivably also occur when someone moves *within* their country, or when those with another culture move *in*.

Additionally, Craig reminds us that socioeconomic factors are also important and generally, intercultural experiences are perceived more positively by those who are economically and socially stable (1984: 169). Internationally mobile young people and their families are, by and large, 'a highly select socioeconomic and motivational group' (Werkman *et al.*1981: 247). Furthermore, these young people's perceptions of culture shock may be potentially complicated by the multiple cultural experiences and accompanying stresses of many of their families, often in relatively short time frames. It is important to take these factors into account when reflecting on the theoretical base.

2.4.2 Acculturation, deculturation and communication

When an individual becomes immersed in a new, foreign and dominant culture, the duality of stranger and strangeness comes into play. One may be regarded as a stranger, and also have to deal with those who are unfamiliar. The concept of the stranger was first used by Simmel, and

portrayed as a wanderer who enters a boundary or group, fundamentally affected by a lack of initial membership in that situation, and bringing qualities that are not indigenous to it (1908/1971: 143). Kim uses the term 'stranger' to describe immigrants, refugees and sojourners who resettle for various lengths of time, as well as ethnic group members who cross subcultural boundaries (1995: 174). A stranger needs to communicate in order to interact with a new environment, and therefore mitigate the strangeness, or adapt. In doing this, however, Ruben's work reminds us that two types of communication exist: personal and social (1975). Personal refers to the internal thoughts and responses of an individual. Social is the many types of interface people have with their environment. Adaptation takes place when sufficient overlap of personal and social communication occurs.

The concept of the stranger is central to the theme of acculturation and deculturation, and introduces the necessity for communication and change. Various researchers have grappled with the development the stranger undertakes in trying to communicate successfully. Linton (1960) used the idea of distance to represent the social and psychological change required in order to become more integrated. Byram describes the outsider beginning to become an insider (1989). Kim summarises the processes thus:

> Acculturation describes the learning and acquiring of elements of the host culture, whilst deculturation conveys an unlearning of some cultural patterns or behaviours, partly due to a need for different responses in certain situations
> (1988: 53).

According to Kim, the interplay of acculturation and deculturation causes adaptive transformation in communication systems. As a consequence, individuals may experience stress, adaptation and growth. These dynamics of cross-cultural experiences are in play as a person tries to find a place in the new environment. In taking two steps forward, then one back, an individual begins to make sense of a new culture, and, hopefully, develop an understanding of it. A stranger's transformation may then be noticeable (*op. cit.*).

Kim describes the need to learn and acquire a new, appropriate communication system, and suggests this is based on the necessity to conform. Communication underpins cross-cultural adaptation by allowing strangers to begin to function in a new situation. It does this by, amongst other things, increasing both the control over the environment and access to membership of social groups (*op. cit*: 59). According to Kim, the acquisition of new communication systems is the most important requirement for successfully negotiating relationships (*op. cit*: 52).

Kim's work has an underlying premise that different cultural backgrounds may present a barrier for effective communication. Intercultural communication competence is seen as important in overcoming cultural obstacles, and is defined by Kim as a 'capacity or capability to facilitate the communication process between people of different cultural backgrounds' (1991: 263). Effective intercultural communication is regarded as critical in the establishment and maintenance of intergroup

relations (Dodd 1995; Gudykunst 1986; Kim 1986; Martin 1993).

Spencer-Rodgers and McGovern note several factors that are central to

this competence, including cultural knowledge and awareness,

communication skills, and tolerance for ambiguity (2002: 1).

Intercultural communication competence has received considerable

attention in the literature, with a suggested core set of competences

emerging. In a study of international students attending a U.S. university,

Redmond reviews work by previous researchers (Gudykunst and

Hammer 1988; Imahori and Lanigan 1989; Martin 1987; Ruben 1976),

and summarizes critical competences as social decentring, which

involves considering the feelings and thoughts of others, (host) language

competence, knowledge of the host country culture, adaptation to the

culture, communication effectiveness and social integration (2000: 153).

Others would concur with this proposal, or elements of it. In order to

communicate effectively, Kim suggests there are two essential elements:

'adaptive predisposition', which consists of the sojourner's background,

openness, resilience and preparedness for change, and 'host

environmental conditions', which include receptivity and conformity

pressure (1988: 67). Along with Ruben (1988) and more recently, Kim

has described stranger's communication activities as 'personal' and

'social', following Ruben's (1975) classification. Kim describes 'personal'

communication as involving internal mental activities in preparation for, or

as a reaction to, social situations. 'Social' communication occurs when

two or more individuals interact (2005: 385). Kim has been explicit

regarding the shared responsibilities of communication when describing

cross-cultural adaptation as 'a collaborative effort, in which stranger and

the receiving environment are engaged in a joint venture' (1995: 192).

This emphasises a relevant point about intercultural communication: *both*

the stranger and the environment play important roles in communicative

attempts.

Within new, unfamiliar circumstances, described by Kim as possible

'stressful emotional lows' strangers must endure conflict, and stress is

viewed as 'the internal resistance of the human organism against its own

cultural evolution' (1988: 55). This is not to suggest that these situations

always cease at the point of resistance, as Kim's model also presents a

relevant concept of a 'crisis', in which new situations can present

opportunities to strengthen coping mechanisms, and the potential for

adaptive change. Alternatively, those who strongly resist change risk

making the stress-adaptation-growth cycle extremely difficult by

increasing their stress levels, perhaps to the point of being

unmanageable (*op. cit.* 58). These two possible responses in a

crisis highlight the potential for change to impact adaptation, both

negatively and constructively. In the latter case, change helps to bring

about the adaptation (and further change) that is required in this

process.

In Kim's model, strangers are capable of adaptation, growth and

development. As part of this development, the original cultural identity

may become less defined, and an increasing interculturalness emerges. This intercultural identity is not a product, but a process, whereby the stranger's internal attributes and self-identification changes and transforms (1988: 69). Importantly, Kim notes that intercultural identity equips people for dealing with switching between different cultural groups:

> intercultural identity is likely to have the cognitive, affective and behavioural flexibility to adapt to the situation and to creatively manage or avoid conflicts that could result from inappropriate switching between cultures
>
> (1988: 70).

In summary, the acculturation literature is useful because it stresses some key points concerning how people cope with change within a culturally unfamiliar setting. Communication is seen as essential but potentially difficult, and stress can be expected. Adaptation, growth and development may occur if the needs of both stranger and host environment are successfully negotiated.

However, the limitations of acculturation lie in its explanation for movement either to a new culture or back to an original one. Although the role of intercultural identity (Kim 1988: 69) may have application to other contexts, the literature does not specifically address those who continue to experience multiple and ongoing change in micro-environments where one dominant culture may not exist. Very few studies have considered multiple reacculturations, which Ting-Toomey believes to have long-term identity consequences, some of which may be severe (1999).

2.4.3 Adjustment

Whatever the initial response to an unfamiliar environment, an individual hopefully makes some adjustments, and much of the literature deals with the ways in which people do so. Adjustment, intercultural adjustment and cross-cultural adjustment may all be relevant to this research, and will be considered.

Rogers (1999) suggests that intercultural adjustment involves contact with an unfamiliar environment, and the process of adapting to it. Accordingly, the intercultural adjustment literature deals with the complex adjustment to living within a foreign culture. Ward and Kennedy suggest there are two core elements of intercultural adjustment: psychological and socio-cultural. Psychological adjustment is interwoven with stress and coping processes, and socio-cultural adaptation is concerned with culture learning (1993: 222). Although these are related, they are predicted by different variables. Psychological adjustment is affected by personality, life changes and social support, while sociocultural adaptation is influenced by length of residence, amount of contact with host country nationals, cultural identity and cultural distance (Ward and Kennedy (1992, 1993, 1993a). Given these relationships, research that focuses on particular variables may give an unrealistic interpretation of the bigger picture. It is not surprising that Palthe has noted that research in the area of cross-cultural adjustment has been fairly devoid of a theoretical framework (2004: 39). Additionally, Anderson finds there is variation in

the literature regarding different models and definitions of adaptation, and the subsequent findings and comparability of results (1994: 298).

Nevertheless, within the psychological adjustment literature, attention has been given to factors that contribute to stress. Whilst most studies of expatriates have been undertaken with corporate employees, there has also been some attention given to family. These centre on the strong links between family and expatriate adjustment (Harvey 1985; Parker and McEvoy 1993), and findings that a family's inability to adjust to living in the host country is a major reason for failure of corporate assignments (Caligiuri et al.1998; Tung 1981). In particular, spousal dissatisfaction has been found to be the number one reason for such failures (Tung 1987). Stressors for families include inadequate preparation for moving, parental absence and/or dissatisfaction, and transience of friends (Pollock 1989; Stroh 1990; Stroh and Brett 1990). From a more positive perspective, a study by Ali et al. found that family cohesion, a measure of emotional bonding, and family adaptability, or the extent to which a family is flexible and able to change, have an impact on expatriate spouses' intercultural adjustment (2003: 563).

Prior to 1990, research on the effects of long-distance moves on expatriates and their families was primarily concerned with moving within national boundaries (Nathanson and Marcenko 1995: 414). However, in a study that surveyed 174 Grade 8 students attending international schools in Tokyo, Nathanson and Marcenko found that the most important factor

in a child's well-being was family life, rather than friendship, social

activities, amount of time spent abroad, preparation, or how much they

liked Tokyo (*op. cit*: 420). These findings supported the trends of earlier

within-country studies, and made the following statement:

> children are notoriously conservative and suspicious when it
> comes to change; few embrace it and most resist it
> (*op. cit*: 421).

Models of expatriate family adjustment have been proposed by Caligiuri

et al. (1998) and Parker and McEvoy (1993). Certainly, the emphasis in

the literature is on identifying factors that influence intercultural

adjustment (Matsumoto *et al.* 2004). These include individual-level

measures to assess constructs that are related to intercultural

adjustment, such as the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI)

(Goldstein and Smith 1999; Montagliani and Giacalone 1998), the

Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ) (Moi, Van Oudenhoven

and Van der Zee 2001; Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven 2000; Van

Oudenhoven, Mol and Van der Zee 2003; Van Oudenhoven and Van der

Zee 2002), the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (Hammer 1998;

Hammer *et al.* 2003; Paige *et al.* 2003; Straffon 2003), and the

Intercultural Sensitivity Inventory (ISI) (Bhawuk and Brislin 1992).

Despite the range of instruments available to assess intercultural

adjustment, and the growing body of literature on expatriate training and

selection, Tung notes that little is known about the processes and

mechanisms that are useful when adjusting to life in a new country (1998:

126). The emphasis seems to have been on predicting intercultural

adjustment *potential* by breaking it into a set of desirable factors, and/or on finding these characteristics in individuals, rather than looking at processes employed or utilized by people who have enjoyed successful intercultural adjustment. Nevertheless, a plethora of studies use these instruments. Within the expatriate research, these focus mainly on expatriate business people (Palthe 2004), but there is a growing body of research into spousal adjustment (Ali *et al.* 2003, De Cieri *et al.*1991; Feldman and Tompson 1993; Martin 1997; Thompson 1986), family adjustment (Caligiuri *et al.*1998); and sojourners (Armes and Ward 1989; Oguri and Gudykunst 2002). As yet, the children of expatriates have not become a major research emphasis in this area.

One other perspective has been to consider cross-cultural adjustment as a learning process, involving new skills, cultural norms and appropriate behaviours (Black 1988; Ward *et al.* 2001). In this sense, it relates to the culture learning discussed in Section 2.3 of this chapter.

In summary, much of the adjustment literature is concerned with measuring particular characteristics that are said to influence adjustment and probably reflects the existing focus on business applications. However, it has also begun to recognize the impact that other factors, including family, may have on people's adjustment.

2.4.4 Change in social identity

Social identity theory attempts to explain how individuals see themselves and others in relation to the social context. Tajfel defines social identities as the parts of an individual's self-concept which derive from knowledge of membership in a social group, as well as the significance or value attached to that membership (1978: 63). Although social identity theory is usually applied to large groups, it can be considered when examining how individuals behave in smaller group settings.

At some point, an individual may encounter another culture, i.e. the shared meanings, beliefs and behaviors of a social group (Byram 2002: 1). One's sense of identity is the basis for comparison and the beginning of any adaptive process. Ting-Toomey recognizes the importance of self-image in negotiating identity in intercultural situations (1999: 40). Additionally, Byram notes that an individual's knowledge of how social identities have been acquired and are perceived is the foundation for successful interaction (1997: 36), and a starting point for becoming a member of a group. Here we have both self-understanding and environmental knowledge potentially impacting interaction.

After considerable research on social groups, Tajfel distinguishes between interpersonal behaviour, that involves acting as an individual, and intergroup behaviour, or acting as a group member. Tajfel believes that these exist on a continuum, with the two kinds of behaviour at either

end, and that most behaviour is mixed or in the middle of the continuum (1981). Further to this, Tajfel and Turner (1979) provide insights on what happens to people's identities when they become members of groups. It is apparent that personal and social identities affect each other, but the distinction between them is unclear (Brown 1996: 40).

Extensive research has been undertaken to examine aspects of intergroup behaviour, including Gudykunst's work on 'ingroups' and 'outgroups'. 'Ingroups' are comprised of people who are important to one another, where each member considers and looks out for the other/s (1998: 47 and 71). On the other hand, 'outgroups' are those with whom people are *not* taught to associate, and Gudykunst asserts there is a universal tendency to draw a distinction between the two (*ibid.*). Gudykunst lists consequences of dividing people into ingroups and outgroups. Firstly, there is an expectation that members of ingroups will behave and think in similar ways (Tajfel 1969). Secondly, people compare their own ingroups favourably to outgroups (Brewer 1979). Next, there is less anxiety about interacting with ingroup members than those in outgroups (Stephan and Stephan 1985). Lastly, people tend to be more accurate in predicting the behaviours of ingroup members than those in outgroups (Gudykunst 1995).

However, identity is often treated in quite conventional terms in the literature. The use of ethnicity, nationality, sojourner and migrant status are some common classifications. Whilst these provide insights into those

populations, they neglect the reality of individuals and social groups that cannot be described by conventional labels. They also overlook the experiences of those who may enter a new setting that is not dominated by one cultural group. Closer examination of such samples, as will be the focus of following chapters, can provide further insights regarding identity and group behaviour.

<p style="text-align:center">*   *   *   *   *</p>

Chapter 2 Summary:

This chapter has reflected on four areas in the current literature that might impact on this research. The first two, *Change and Mobility* and *International Schools*, analyzed some of the conditions under which these young people live and learn. The remaining sections, *Culture, Interculturalism and Being Intercultural* and *Coping with Change*, considered how people respond to, and cope with, change.

We can safely say that the young people in the present study live in a changeable and culturally diverse setting, where they may be faced with challenges and opportunities. This research will analyze the ways in which young people perceive and deal with such possibilities, and consider how this relates to consider the existing literature.

CHAPTER 3:   RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   Rationale

I had spent ten years living and working away from home, mostly in international schools in South East Asia. These experiences led to an interest in the perceptions international school students have of their own lives and lifestyles, and the ways in which they adapt to new settings.

As the decision to study these young people's perceptions arose from my curiosity, the research began with very few preconceived ideas. The investigation explored young people's insights on a broad range of issues within an educational and social context. It then gradually focused on matters that were central to both the young people and the research questions.

Wiersma suggests that naturalistic research studies phenomena from the perspectives of those experiencing it. He notes the implications for researchers: they should avoid prior assumptions, take a holistic view of reality, use data collection procedures that have minimum influence on the phenomena, be open to alternative explanations, and, most importantly, any theory should emerge as grounded theory rather than pre-conceived (1995: 250 - 251). In this situation, I felt there was an obvious fit between the research intentions, context, setting and qualitative methodology.

It was decided that the study would use questionnaires for biodata

collection, and semi-structured interviews with young people. Burns notes

the importance of interviews as a source of information that is reported

and interpreted from the interviewees' perspectives, and the use of open

or semi-structured interviews as a means of generating 'informants' rather

than 'respondents' (1997: 372). Cohen *et al.* suggest that interviews

'enable participants to discuss their interpretation of the world in which

they live and to express how they regard situations from their own point of

view' (2003: 267). Interviews were probably the most effective way to

encourage young people to make explicit their awareness and cognitions,

providing they felt comfortable in the interview environment.

3.2 Research questions

As detailed in Chapter One, the aim of this study was to make explicit the

perceptions of young people in regard to their own experiences in

unfamiliar and culturally diverse settings. The research began with a

broad and general question that identified the phenomenon to be studied

(Strauss and Corbin 1998: 41): *how do young people understand and*

explain being international and intercultural? As Strauss and Corbin

suggest, this became progressively narrowed and focused as the study

developed (*op. cit.*) and two sub-questions became critical:

    i.   which aspects of being international and intercultural are

         important to these young people? and

ii.   how do young people initiate, establish and maintain

relationships (with peers) in an international and

intercultural setting?

3.3   Grounded theory

This chapter will outline in some detail the ways in which grounded

theory was used in this study. Although it might seem relevant to include

this in the analysis chapters, the process was far less tidy and

compartmentalized than those chapters suggest. I jumped back and forth

between different themes and research questions. For the sake of

clarifying how I used the process it will, therefore, be described here.

As I wanted to establish the implicit and unarticulated theories of the

young people, the research methodology had to be able to raise key

themes and illuminate student behaviours and cognition. Grounded

theory stresses discovery and theory development (Glaser and Strauss

1967; Strauss and Corbin 1997). Tesch notes its purpose is:

> to arrive at abstract categories that constitute concepts
> which facilitate our understanding of a phenomenon
> (1990: 140).

I thought this approach would support my exploratory intentions, and was

'true' to the problem at hand (Strauss and Corbin 1998: 40). In essence, it

could facilitate new understandings in this area.

Social phenomena are complex. I needed to present broad concepts and allow the young people to attach focus and importance. Grounded theory could capture the data's complexity through intensive examination, raising generative questions and making and verifying linkages (*op. cit.* 10 - 17). Fundamentally, grounded theory could allow articulation of the underlying theory by generating a rich conceptual system (Hammersley 1993: 27).

A brief discussion of how this approach was used is warranted. Strauss points out diverse social settings demand the need for guidelines and rules of thumb, but not set methodological rules (1987: 7). I referred often to the qualitative analysis literature, including Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003), Glaser and Strauss (1967), Hammersley (1993), Kvale (1996), Lincoln and Guba (1985), Miles and Huberman (1994) and Tesch (1990). In particular, I was guided by Strauss and Corbin (1998) and Strauss (1987). My summary of the analysis process is based on the extensive memos, notes and reflections I kept in my research diaries.

I transcribed the interviews as soon as possible after they occurred. This was followed by a complex process that included open, axial and selective coding, categorization and theory building (Strauss 1987). Systematic and ongoing coding and analysis allowed me to play with the data, reorganizing, regrouping and finding new patterns. There was movement beyond initial impressions to more complex meanings. Diagrams and charts were drawn to aid this process, make connections

between categories, and lend some structure to the mire of information. The process of relating, reducing, discarding and refining based on line by line coding led to conceptualizing, categorizing and eventually theories, being developed (Strauss and Corbin 1998: 66). This analysis is described in more detail in 3.12.3.

3.4   The setting

The setting was a large international school in South-east Asia, which met Langford's criteria for international schools (1999). The school caters for co-educational students of more than fifty different nationalities. It has no religious or political affiliation. One admission requirement is the young people's ability to meet the school's proficiency standards in English, as well as school-determined educational standards.

The school was selected because of its emphasis on international and intercultural learning. This was the focus of a previous unpublished paper I had written, in which accepted characteristics of international and intercultural learning were used as criteria for school analysis. These have been detailed in Chapter 2. It was anticipated that young people in such a setting would be able to discuss being international and intercultural, and this was the case.

3.5   <u>The sample</u>

Hammersley reminds us that the naturalistic paradigm is characterized by, among other things, the representation of reality from the perspective of participants. Importance is attached to viewing the meaning of experience and behaviour in context and in its full complexity (1993: 16). I aimed to capture these perspectives within their relevant contexts. It was important, therefore, to interview young people who could articulate their understandings.

The young people were volunteers aged 13 and 14 years and enrolled in Grade 8. They had attended the school for at least one term. This age group was selected because I believed the young people would be able to communicate their own experiences, and relate these to their various life contexts.

Kvale suggests the number of interviews undertaken should incorporate as many people as are needed to gain the desired information (1996: 33). After discussion with research professionals, I decided that interviews with between 12 and 20 young people would provide sufficient quality data for the study.

3.6 Access and consent

I requested consent for the research from the Head of the School by letter. Agreement was immediate. I then worked with the Principal of the Middle School and the Grade 8 coordinators to gain access to the young people. Grade 8 tutors allowed me to speak to the student population regarding the study.

Parents of those interested were then required to sign a consent form, and young people also signed their agreement before participating, as per the University of Durham Ethics procedures.

3.7 The participants

Six boys and eleven girls (a total of seventeen) participated. It is difficult to profile the young people's nationalities. Although the biodata questionnaire asked for this information, some young people had several passports and some had two home countries. Of the seventeen young people, eight had parents who were not of the same nationality or passport country as each other. Even at interview, some of these young people found it impossible to nominate one nationality or home country for themselves.

Most of the participants had lived in up to six different countries. They had attended up to seven schools (including pre-school or kindergarten). On the other hand, there were three young people who had lived in this city all their lives. However, they had all moved schools at least once. Only one parent held a host-country passport, but was married to someone who did not. In summary, the interviewees represented a full spectrum of those who were internationally mobile, and/or closely affected by peers who were.

All young people spoke more than one and up to five languages. Ten young people spoke more than one language at home.

3.8   Selection of participants

There were several hundred Grade 8 students at the school, allocated to heterogeneous tutor groups, each with 21 - 23 young people. Five tutor groups were approached to take part and selected as follows.

Grade 8 students all attend an international camp during the term the research took place. The year group is divided into three organizational groups for this purpose. Together with the Middle School Principal, I selected tutor groups based on their accessibility due to the dates they would be on camp.

Group X was the first approached, comprising three tutor groups. I arranged to visit these tutor groups once to introduce myself and briefly talk about the study. This presentation included the purpose of the research, how the young people would contribute to that purpose, the length and type of interviews, and ethical considerations. Young people were also told to expect a letter home in the following days.

As well as demystifying the research and introducing myself, this presentation ensured all potential interviewees would have some background knowledge of the study before discussions with their tutors, friends and parents. The visit was organized by liaising with the Grade 8 coordinators and tutors, and took place during the daily tutor group session. Its duration was ten to fifteen minutes and young people were given the opportunity to ask questions.

In the following days, the young people received a letter by mail at their homes, requesting volunteers. This letter again explained the research and contained a consent form to be signed by parents, along with a biodata questionnaire. A stamped and addressed envelope was included for returning these documents.

When I received these responses, young people were contacted and interview dates were arranged.

After completing this process with the Group X young people, I still needed more young people. Those in Group Y were approached in the same way. After speaking with five tutor groups, I felt there were enough volunteers for the study. All young people who volunteered to take part were interviewed.

3.9   Ethical considerations

The young people and their parents were assured of the confidentiality of the interviews. Their names and any distinctive characteristics were altered to prevent identification in the transcripts. In accordance with the University of Durham Ethics procedures, they were told the interviews would be tape-recorded and that they could withdraw from the study at any time and without giving reasons for doing so. Recordings of interviews were to be destroyed at the conclusion of the research. This information was relayed in the initial tutor group visit, the letter to parents, and face to face with the young people before the interview took place. The consent form signed by the young people acknowledged their understanding of this. In addition, school anonymity was promoted by referring to this school as a 'South-east Asian' international school, rather than identifying the host country.

3.10   Methods of data collection

3.10.1 Biodata questionnaires:

Young people were asked to complete a two-page questionnaire with
their parents. This provided background biodata, including
nationality/passport countries of parents, languages spoken, schools
attended and places where the student had lived (Appendix 1). According
to Morgan, it is important to take into account the personal contexts used
by participants in generating their responses (1997: 54). As well as
providing some background information regarding the young people's
personal contexts and experiences, the biodata questionnaire also
allowed detailed description of the sample.

3.10.2 Pilot interviews:

I spent considerable time developing the interview questions. Ideas
emanated from the themes, concepts and issues raised in readings and
other research. These are detailed in Chapter 2. I had kept a list of
possible question themes in a notebook as I read the literature. These
were reduced to key word phrases before being expanded to full
questions and fine-tuned to suit this context.

Interview questions were trialled during two pilot interviews and minimal
changes were made. The pilots also tested the suitability of the interview

room and tape recording equipment. The pilot interviews were conducted with two young people who were an opportunity sample, but belonged to the same age group and attended the same school.

3.10.3 Semi-structured interviews:

Two group interviews took place. Group composition was based firstly on gender, as it was considered that 13 and 14 year old young people would be more comfortable discussing issues with same-sex peers. After gender, groups were composed purely on the basis of the days young people were available for interview. Some young people expressed a wish to be interviewed either as an individual or in a group, and these requests were met. Due to the combination of these various constraints, both group interviews were with females only.

As anticipated by Morgan, the groups generated a high level of spontaneous student involvement, and were useful for orientating myself, generating ideas for the individual interviews and developing interview schedules (1997: 11 - 18). However, they proved difficult to organize and did not produce responses that warranted further use of this approach beyond the afore-mentioned purposes. Additionally, in one group where the young people were very familiar with each other, peer effect was apparent several times during discussion. I thought one young person was being influenced on a certain question by the conflicting view of a peer. In order to avoid possible influence on the data, the remaining

young people were interviewed individually.

I initially thought that group interviews might better reveal the cognitions of teenage young people through informal interactions. However, these types of exchanges also occurred frequently in the relaxed atmosphere of the individual interviews, so any concerns in this area were unwarranted. There were eight basic questions used to initiate discussion with the participants.

The introductory question asked young people about themselves, where they had lived and something they enjoyed doing. Its purpose was both to open up the topic and relax the young people. There were then five questions concerning different aspects of being international and intercultural. The last two questions asked young people to synthesize some of their understandings and highlight areas of importance (Appendix 2). They were then given the opportunity to make a final statement or contribution.

It is important to note that these were not formal question and answer sessions. The questions provided a semi-structured basis for the interviews, which were more like conversations and explored young people's ideas on a range of topics.

3.11 Procedures for data collection

3.11.1 Biodata questionnaire:

After completion by young people and their parents, the questionnaire was returned by mail for perusal prior to interviews being arranged. All were received.

Although these data were not allowed to contaminate the interviews, there were some instances where student experiences necessitated minor question adaptations. For example, if a student had moved *countries* many years previously, which made it difficult to recall details, the interview would focus on (more recently) moving *schools*. My awareness of these factors allowed maximum use to be made of the interview time, without asking young people about issues they couldn't remember.

3.11.2 Semi-structured interviews:

The seventeen young people were interviewed between September 2002 and February 2003. All interviews were held immediately after school from 3:30 p.m. and completed by 5:00 p.m., in the same quiet and comfortable room at the school. As well as being convenient for the young people, this also allowed me to be as close as possible to the

research context, i.e. the school setting. However, I was aware that there would be natural variations between interviews, simply because they are 'social encounters' (Cohen *et al.* 2003). Individual interviews typically lasted 35 - 45 minutes each, and group interviews up to 60 minutes.

The young people all remembered me from the tutor group information sessions and this probably helped reduce potential nervousness. They were given something to drink and time to settle into the interview situation. An initial chat was followed by a brief orientation to the research. This was a virtual repetition of the presentation given to tutor groups. It was intended to help orientate the young people to the interview situation, and refresh the memories of those who had perhaps forgotten the interview purpose and focus. In addition, it relayed some information to the interviewee regarding ensuing interview procedures and the need to be open and relaxed. The young people were able to ask questions and signed their consent forms following this opportunity.

I had the questions on cards, which allowed easy reorganization if young people initiated discussion on a particular issue before being asked about it. Additionally, I had a list of prompts and probes alongside the questions, in case I needed these (Appendix 2). Prompts could enable clarification, and probes would be used to ask the young people to elaborate, extend or provide additional details (Morrison 1993).

The young people were found to be confident, articulate and most willing

to discuss aspects of their own lives in detail. Many of them made spontaneous comments at the conclusion of the interview expressing their enjoyment of the experience and gratitude at being able to take part. This might be related to the 'pedagogical function of interviews' where people learn something about themselves by being interviewed (Byram 1996a).

Minor difficulties were encountered in trying to arrange interviews for those who had hectic schedules. Additionally, some young people were either ill or forgot to attend interviews on their designated days. In all cases, these problems were overcome by patience and rescheduling. All young people who volunteered were eventually interviewed.

3.12 Data recording, treatment and analysis

3.12.1 Data recording:

All interviews were recorded and I made notes concerning non-verbal behaviour. This was a surprisingly effortless task, probably because of the participants' willingness to talk freely and at length. The young people were comfortable with the tape recorder and microphone, probably because they were both very small and unobtrusive.

I tape-recorded my perceptions of each interview and interviewee

immediately following the interview session. I also kept a journal in which comments and responses were kept. These were both an important source of information and a record of my thoughts on the interviews and the young people's demeanor throughout the study.

3.12.2 Data treatment:

I listened to the tapes and noted some reflections. It became apparent that my skill improved in later interviews, but not to the degree that data were significantly affected.

I transcribed the interviews. Although their content was fascinating, this task was found to be tedious and protracted. On reflection though, I became very familiar with the data because of this prolonged exposure to it.

My journal was kept at close hand during analysis. Reflection both informed, and was informed by, the process. Most importantly, as Powney and Watts also found, regular reading of the journal continually reoriented me to the entire database, not just the interview transcripts (1987: 143).

3.12.3 Data analysis:

Strauss and Corbin emphasize the importance of interpreting data *throughout* the research (1997: 39). In this study, analysis began early, as I was questioning potential meanings and how young people could be encouraged to make these more explicit.

Familiarisation with the interview data was essential. Spradley writes:

> before you impose your theories on the people you study, find out how those people define the world
>
> (1979: 11).

With this in mind, the transcripts were read several times to gain a sense of their holistic scope and nature. I reviewed my post-interview comments and notes. The relatively small number of interviewees meant I could easily put a face to each transcript and recall the personas of the young people as they discussed their own lives. This plethora of information allowed me to recall the interviewees in the context of the personal world they described. The ensuing analysis would emanate from as holistic a base as possible. Additionally, my metacognitive use of a journal, as well as notes and recordings, continued throughout the study.

Krueger writes that analysis is jeopardized by delay (1998: 12), so informal analysis began almost immediately when data was collected. I transcribed interviews verbatim. However, I found it difficult to apply written punctuation to spoken language. I decided to capture all the words

that were spoken and used a simplified punctuation code, where long

pauses were indicated by a dash, but other conventional punctuation was

mostly ignored. Line numbers were added to help locate comments, and

are included in the transcript excerpts in this thesis. To preserve

anonymity, when the young people refer to their present host country, I

used the symbol [HC]; and reference to their passport or home country

was signified by [home country].

Some preliminary ideas regarding coding became apparent, and after the

first few interviews were transcribed, coding began. As the interviews

continued, transcribing, coding, recoding and analysis of some data was

occurring. This created conditions for what Lincoln and Guba call

'continual unfolding':

> what is at issue is the best means to 'make sense' of the
> data in ways that will facilitate the continual unfolding of the
> enquiry, and second, lead to a maximal understanding (in
> the sense of Verstehen) of the phenomena being studied
> (1985: 224).

In order to clarify the processes used, I will detail these forthwith. After

getting a sense of the whole interview, 'open coding' began (Strauss

1987: 28). I went through the data line-by-line, underlining and circling

parts of the text in order to identify concepts. Initially, these consisted of

simple but descriptive labels such as *friendship*, but I quickly realized the

need to think more analytically. On reflection, I think I was more

concerned initially with what the students were *saying* than what this may

have meant. I was not concerned with the mere frequency of certain

responses. Rather, there was interest in the importance attached by young people to different matters, the commonality of issues, and approximations that gave variations on common and important topics. As I was interviewing, transcribing and coding throughout a period of five months, theoretical reflection occurred quite early in the study, the lack of which has been criticized by Bulmer as a weakness of grounded theory (1979: 22).

Analysis both within and between transcripts led to coding and recoding several times, using the comparison method (Glaser and Strauss 1967). I used comparative analysis to investigate the similarities and differences between instances, cases and concepts, a process Hammersley notes as vital to ensure exploration of the full diversity and complexity of the data (1993: 22).

I kept impressions of emerging themes that could lead me to categories. In December 2002 there were five of these, but coding and recoding resulted in some ideas being discarded and others evolving.

Relationships emerged as a major theme. I used Strauss's coding paradigm to check data for conditions, interactions, strategies and tactics, and consequences (1987: 27). This attached more organization to the mass of codes and allowed further interpretation. It then became clear that these codes were socially situated and I needed to define the process in which they existed. This was relatively straightforward, as the

young people had been very articulate concerning the social processes used in this setting.

Before long I had too many unworkable codes. I returned to the research questions and devised three codes for relationships ('initiation', 'establishment' and 'maintenance'). These were used along with Strauss's coding paradigm to look for qualities and dimensions in the data. I questioned what could help clarification, how data were connected and which concepts were developing (Strauss and Corbin 1998: 78). At this point, patterns and variations began to emerge and yet another revised list of nine codes was established. A sample of a coded transcript is included in Appendix 4.

Triangulation was employed as I compared the focus questions, data, my interpretations of the data and existing literature and theory (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Strauss and Corbin 1998). It was necessary to differentiate between the strategies the young people described using, and their concepts of being intercultural. I found it effective to compile all the relevant comments from one code, as this allowed me to consider the variations in, and range of, data.

Once I had the revised list of nine codes and had identified examples of each from the transcripts, it was obvious that two main categories were emerging. I called these 'young people's experiences' (personal) and 'circumstances' (institutional), and defined them. Questioning how these

were connected focused me on the seemingly obvious category of 'change'. When these three categories were identified, the analysis began to click and very quickly made sense. 'Axial coding' (Strauss 1987: 32) concentrated on each category and checking the transcripts for comparative instances.

At this point, I began selective coding, integrating and refining the categories to establish theory (Strauss and Corbin 1998: 143). My memos made an obvious shift to being about theory. Rather than having one 'core category' (Strauss 1987: 34), I had a triangular diagram to which I often referred with the three categories at each point. I wrote many thoughts based on the connections between the three categories. Logan (1984) validates this approach and comments that analyzing patterns and meanings in the data creates an environment in which theories emerge from what participants say and do.

Now that I was connecting data, codes and categories, it was an obvious time to deconstruct the categories and search for dimensions and properties that would show a range of variability within each. Additionally, I highlighted 'in-vivo codes' (Strauss 1987: 30), which helped to explain how the young people process particular events or problems. For example, the term *it happens* was used by the young people. By using the 'flip-flop technique' (Strauss and Corbin 1998: 94) I realized this term often described situations where school structural elements provided

opportunities to establish relationships. This illuminated a connection between the categories.

I also tested emerging trends with the last few interviewees by asking them to respond to categories and interpretations. The young people were able to provide additional perceptions in key areas and identify dimensions of some categories. Strauss acknowledges that these successive evolving interpretations help to capture the complexity of the data (1967: 10).

I can confidently say I arrived at a certain juncture which signaled the data were saturated and the analysis made sense. However, that does not mean the data are exhausted, and may contain other useful and fascinating information concerning the participants in this study.

3.12.4 Writing up the analysis:

Powney and Watts note that analysed data should faithfully represent the responses made in interviews. This is achieved by imposing the coded structure on the data and filtering through the researcher's own perspectives (1987: 10-11). Writing up is the final filtering.

Analysed data are of limited use unless they can be presented to a wider audience. In writing up the analysis, my purpose is to share and explain

the meanings drawn from the young people's perceptions. This involves not only the interview responses, but also other data, including my insights.

The writing up in this study had two phases. The initial phase occurred in tandem with the analysis. It was an informal jotting of diagrams and notes without any particular structure. These began as reflections, and led to (sometimes rambling) interpretations and propositions.

Then followed a more formal phase, where I could hone all the available information to convey the meaning and sense of the study. The analysis fell logically into two chapters. These were based on the critical research questions outlined in 3.2 (above).

Chapter 4 is titled *What intercultural competences do these young people use?* It identifies and classifies the skills, knowledge and attitudes of the young people. Chapter 5, *Social processes and intercultural competence*, describes the social processes used by the young people and presents a model devised to represent these.

I had numerous examples from the transcripts and, although this was a positive indication of the data's richness, I set aside many. The remaining excerpts were chosen because they highlight similarities and variations. As such, they expose the diversity and complexity of the data and also convey confidence in the analysis and resulting theory. This formal phase

was prolonged, as many changes were made, until the writing up could faithfully represent the analysed data.

With the competences and social processes outlined, it was possible to consider ways in which the data analysis and the research questions relate to existing literature and current theory. Finally, I returned to the data to validate my analysis.

3.13 Advantages and limitations of the research methodology:

I anticipated that qualitative methodology incorporating interviews would be a successful method of engaging young people in discussions. Analysis of the data would then be undertaken using a grounded theory approach. It was likely this methodology could provide a holistic view of the phenomena under investigation (Bogdan and Taylor 1975; Patton 1980). I could get close to context, probe deeply if needed, and get a sense of world of the young people.

However, the qualitative method also has limitations. I needed to remain mindful of the research question, so as not to allow discussion to digress from the purpose of the study. I considered my own perceptions, as I was also an expatriate who could identify with some of the young people's comments. Although possible cause and effect factors might be identified,

the research was unable to investigate causality between different phenomena. Initially, I found this frustrating.

There were also limitations in regard to these participants and the school. Volunteers are likely to be those who are interested in the research and feel they have something to say. However, we can never know if there were young people with other perceptions who declined to be interviewed. Additionally, the young people could choose to tell some particular stories and ignore others.

This was a very busy term at the school, with several major school events taking place. This may have affected some young people's availability for interviews. As well, some heavily committed young people forgot their interviews. I instituted reminder calls the night before scheduled interviews to prevent these situations.

Young people who had been at the school for one term or less were not invited to participate, as I thought they might have insufficient knowledge of the school and host country. However, as the research later became partially focused on the settling in process, these young people may have been able to add some insights in this area. It is worth noting that these newcomers would have only been partly able to describe the relationship process they employed at this school, as the research showed this process to take longer than one term.

Authenticity of the data can also be an issue with this methodology. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that qualitative researchers should establish 'trustworthiness' of their work. Techniques for doing so include 'transferability' that involves thick description of the study, providing the widest possible range of information for inclusion. 'Establishing credibility' was achieved by prolonged engagement, persistent observation and triangulation. I referred to the literature across several fields of knowledge to deliberate about dimensions and properties of the data. 'Dependabilty' was realized by the use of 'auditors', or critical friends who reviewed the data and analysis. 'Confirmability' can be determined by examining trails of data, analysis, synthesis, personal and process notes (including reflections and memos) and instrument development. Finally, to ensure conclusions can be traced from the data, the reflexive journal is considered essential (1985: 301 - 330). I believe I have met all of these criteria, and these are described in this thesis.

Chapter 3 Summary:

I am satisfied that the process and results are authentic, and I experienced the thrill of theory arising from the data quite late in the research. In particular, when I reread the analysis chapters, I feel the young people's perceptions have been faithfully represented. Although this approach may result in extensive data and compel researchers to

undertake lengthy analysis, the richness that it can capture is one critical

reason to consider its further use.

CHAPTER 4: Analysis Part i.

What intercultural competences do these young people use?

How do young people understand and explain being intercultural in an international school? To answer this question, this thesis addresses both the competences used by the young people and their perceptions of the social processes that underlie this context. These two factors are the basis of the research questions, and each is dealt with in a separate chapter. Most importantly, the intention is to understand the young people's perspectives of, and theories about, a social phenomenon: being intercultural in an international school.

This chapter addresses the first major research question: what intercultural competences do these young people use? In clarifying the term 'intercultural competence', I will draw on the work of Hammer *et al.* (2003) and Byram (1997). In the context of this thesis, intercultural competence will be defined as comprising of sets of skills, attitudes and/or knowledge that demonstrate the ability to think and act in interculturally appropriate ways.

Two possible limitations exist in outlining the young people's competences. Firstly, the research assumes their ability and willingness to communicate their perceptions in an interview situation. Secondly, it also takes for granted a level of cognition and consciousness in identifying and understanding their thoughts and feelings. It is recognized

that the competences analysed forthwith are a snapshot of responses in a given context and time. It is expected these young people may also have other competences that were not uncovered in this research.

This study is one of very few looking at young people in an international educational environment. In order to determine their intercultural competences, the analysis identified themes in the data. Each young person's comments were examined, compared and contrasted with those of the other young people, as explained in Chapter 3.

As a consequence of the analysis process, the competences used by the young people were abstracted and identified as underlying concepts. They were then labeled as *change management*, *perspective taking* and *fitting in*. Chapter 5 will examine the social processes, experienced and utilized by the young people, which frame these competences.

This chapter addresses the competences separately. It introduces each with a general statement. The subsequent knowledge, attitudes and/or behaviours are elements that are consequences of the analysis. Each of these has been raised by the young people, in either explicit or implicit terms. Examples from the interview transcripts are provided to support this analysis. Finally, links are made between the young people's competences and theories thereof, and current relevant literature.

4.1   Change management

The young people live in an environment that is change-laden. As students at an international school, they experience the repercussions of being internationally mobile, and/or having friends in the same situation (Jalongo 1985; Ledman 2001). For these young people, change is both a process and a condition. On a regular basis, they are faced with the separation, adjustment and disruptions described by Akram:

> First, there is the separation from those left behind in the child's last location. Second, there is the separation from friends made in the new location as these friends move away. Third, there is a lesser, yet strongly perceived and felt separation from friends made in the new location by the redivision of classes as the children advance in grade level. Moreover, there are collateral, developmental changes related to their stage of child development which heighten the importance of children's transition from isolation and anxiety to a sense of well being
>
> (1995: 41).

The research data reflects that they are highly aware of this changeability, the potential effects it has on their lives and the need to be able to manage it. In terms of competence, the young people's comments reflect their knowledge and attitudes. The behavioural aspects of change management will be addressed in the following chapter, where they are enmeshed within complex social processes. However, as we will see in Chapter 5, the young people are aware of how to deal with and manipulate circumstances involving change.

This section, therefore, analyses the young people's comments on managing change. It deals primarily with their understandings of, and attitudes towards, living in a change-laden environment.

4.1.1 Change management: knowledge components

The young people know that:

i. change is inevitable;

ii. people's change experiences are varied and often productive;

iii. change has some predictable elements;

iv. change will impact, and be impacted by, their relationships with peers;

v. the change process can be facilitated by using resources, including social capital; and

vi. change impacts their ways of thinking about other people and the world.

Now let's look more closely at these.

i. change is inevitable:

The young people know that change is an inevitable part of their lives. They talk about the effects of change in two arenas; firstly, the mobility of people (including themselves), and secondly, change within their

immediate environment - in this case, the school. It is the mobility of people that receives most of their attention.

Linda accepts that her peers are likely to become mobile, and expresses this in the contrasting couplet *staying or leaving*:

> I suppose what I have in common is that - we all understand that nobody is gonna be there forever, you know, and often questions are asked, I mean not straight away, you always get asked 'oh, are you staying here until Grade 12?' or 'are you leaving at Christmas?'
>
> (207 - 211)

This acceptance of mobility is similarly articulated by James, who seems surprised when he realizes he *still* has some of the same friends he had two years previously:

> I remember - ooh - I remember - I still have the same friends I've had since grade six - yeah - they haven't moved away - same four, well four of us, three of them - there used to be five but he left in grade six - he wasn't really a good friend
>
> (52 - 56)

Linda acknowledges that the mobility of friends creates, or is accompanied by, further change as others replace them at school. As she puts it, *nothing is usually permanent*:

> I mean, nothing is usually permanent - that can be good and bad - I mean, you always have friends but they can change every year cause at the end of the year each one is moving, or another person will come and you decide to be friends with them, then friends have a fight so you go with a new friend and blah blah blah
>
> (189 - 194)

Given the reality in which the young people live, it is not surprising that they are matter-of-fact about this sense of a lack of permanence. Put simply, they have no real choice. However, as we shall see, they do choose to prepare for such events, and Linda's comments seem to convey the resilience and preparedness for change that characterise 'adaptive predisposition' (Kim 1988).

ii.   people's change experiences are varied and often productive:

Although change is regarded as inevitable, the young people understand that experiences of change are varied. Charles concludes that, quite simply, different experiences *affect* people, and build different understandings:

> Charles   if you go to - uhh - ummm- well, I guess I've had different experience and - you've got kids from different places and those cultures have affected them and you've got different experience - it's just that you don't have the same experience that they have
>
> R   so there's not that common experience?
>
> Charles   yeah
>
> (469 - 477)

Rather than assuming that change is problematic, the young people view change as productive. Taking this to its extreme, Terri considers that not moving as often as her friends has created a deficiency in her knowledge of the world. She *still* has things she doesn't understand:

> mm - one thing is that I've moved school *twice* but I haven't moved countries as *much* as some of my friends cause some of my friends have moved from Japan to Korea and

England and Hong Kong and now here so um - compared to them I've still been to one country and lived most of my life *here* so I still have things that I *don't* understand I think *(laughs)*

(420 - 425)

This is an important and positive perspective on change, that it can *promote* understanding and knowledge of the world. It may also indicate the young people's understandings that change events can be manipulated, and we shall return to this later and in Chapter 5.

iii.   change has some predictable elements:

Despite the inevitability of change, and the different personal experiences involved, the young people agreed that change has some predictable elements. According to Rohan, the more one experiences it, the *easier* change becomes:

R   if you had to move again, if mum or dad came home tonight and said we're moving would it be easier or harder than the last time?

Rohan   easier, because I've already moved - I know what to expect - I know not to be that nervous

(196 - 214)

Knowing *what to expect* is also commented on by Nell, who describes this as counterbalancing some of the difficulties of moving:

I think it's both - both easy and hard - harder on the friendships but easier you know more what to expect - moving I'm not nervous *at all* it will take me maybe a *week* but I'm just gonna spend the time with the friends that I have and I know I'll be back here cause my family's here so I'm not *as* nervous so

(397 - 401)

Although change (in this case, again, the mobility of people) may be expected to affect them significantly, the young people can take a step back and sort out the ways in which they will think about and respond to it. Once more, we are reminded that these young people are open, resilient and prepared for change, or as Kim puts it, have an 'adaptive predisposition' (1988).

iv.   change will impact, and be impacted by, their
       relationships with peers:

Nell has raised an important understanding concerning the effect of change on relationships. The young people believe that change will impact, and be impacted by, their relationships with peers. In this respect, they consider change from two different perspectives. They are as concerned about their peers' mobility as moving themselves. Matt makes this simple comment regarding people moving *out* of his environment:

> R   is there anything else about going to an
> international school that you think has had an impact on
> your life?
>
> Matt   umm - I don't like for anyone to leave this
> school -
>
>   (507 - 510)

As Matt seems to imply, the young people noted differences in the types of relationships they experience, as a result of their lifestyles. Firstly, they comment on the *length* of their friendships, many of which are interrupted by people moving:

R   a few kids have mentioned that to me, that they're different from their friends because the friends move a lot, or more often than them - can you think of ways in which that difference might be noticeable?

Rohan umm - that our friendship is *shorter*

                (284 - 289)

As well as having concerns on the duration of friendships, Rohan

understands the depth of friendships may be affected *because*

everyone's always moving around:

> Rohan umm - I guess - it would - it would, not that it would be *boring*, I think it would be fun [living in one place all the time] because you'd get to know everyone and everything much better and - yeah
>
> R   you think you'd know them better than you would in the situation here?
>
> Rohan yeah, than where you're moving around
>
> R   what is it that prevents you from knowing everything and everyone as well
>
> Rohan because everyone's always moving around - like your close friends move away and stuff
>
>   (160 - 173)

Interestingly though, there were some young people who linked the depth

of relationships to other factors, such as age. Consider Adele's

comments:

> yeah but it's also sometimes the *age* you know, like when you're younger you would make friends much *faster* but you wouldn't be that *close* to them but *older* you wouldn't make friends *that* fast but you'd be get *closer* to them
>
>   (472 - 475)

This idea is addressed by other young people who consider the complex links between friendships, change and age. For Hetti, the situation is problematical because her friends now *matter more*:

> R   do you think it gets easier or harder to move around as you get older?
>
> Hetti   it gets harder - probably because as you get older it gets harder because your friendships *matter more* and when you're younger basically your friends are just someone you play with but now, your friends are who you spend *all* your time with - if you didn't have your group of friends you would feel *really really* alone
>
> (376 - 380)

Such comments reflect an increasing reliance on interpersonal relationships (Werkman *et al.* 1981), as well as an awareness of the need to be able to manage these. Charles reflects on how making friends becomes *harder* as other people not only become older, but more discriminating in how they *judge* and *choose*:

> R   how does it feel to move around like that?
>
> Charles   when I'm small I don't care I guess (laughs)
>
> R   just go wherever your parents take you?
>
> Charles   yeah - but now, when it gets bigger, it gets kinda *harder* to make - well, for example, I live in [HC] for two years its like - get really used to it - then kinda it becomes *harder* to live - to adapt to other countries when you're bigger cause when you have friends and kids that live around you and - the place is …[trails off]
>
> R   it's harder to make friends as you get older?
>
> Charles   when you're little kids you know - its not so - I don't know - its like *judging* people's character and they seem to pick - they pick - they *choose* their other friends -

> when you're a little kid you don't care, you just play (laughs)
> and - there you go - don't know how to explain it

> (189 - 206)

As they grow older, the young people sense that friendships become increasingly important, intense and difficult to establish. Additionally, they understand that change can further complicate relationships. However, these difficulties are partly offset by the young people's mounting knowledge of resources that can be used in this process, as we shall see.

v.   the change process can be facilitated by using resources, including social capital:

Despite the impact of change on relationships, there are some resources that help. The young people know that social capital (Bourdieu 1997) can support them when moving. Although their comments in this area were largely confined to moving schools, they still demonstrate this awareness. Lily gives us an account of how she *expected* certain things, after speaking to her contacts:

> maybe but I - was expecting all this because before I joined
> the school I was speaking to quite a few people who I knew
> before so - I was expecting all the things that I see here
> (123 - 125)

John tells us he was relatively unconcerned about his transition because he knew *so many* people:

> R   how did you feel about moving schools?

John   I was really fine with it because I knew so many people here

(45 - 46)

Adele goes into more detail, and describes how knowing one person socially has eased her adjustment, giving her some space to get *used* to the new school:

> yeah to *start* with, people from the same class - but then by about the second week I knew this girl who I had met at a lot of dinner parties and stuff and I *knew* her because she was just like - a *friend's* friend - so I knew her and I started hanging around with her on the second week and she was - she became naturally like one of my best friends in the school but - and it's just that she - I don't know, it's just like - simil - people I *know*, I mean I *can* adjust to new places but it takes me awhile - like as in it would take me a week to adjust to something as in a new - environment if I get moved into a new school, it would take me a week to get *used* to stuff...

(195 - 204)

The young people use resources to gather information that can prepare them before moving. Additionally, they use social capital such as acquaintances to help ease their introduction into the new setting. Bourdieu suggests that 'for families that have moved often, the social relations that constitute social capital are broken at each move' (1997: 90). However, we can see that these young people can create or extend networks that restore elements of social capital for use as a resource, and this may be a particular consequence of their experience. There may be an argument for reconsidering Bourdieu's assertion and its generalisability.

vi.   change impacts their ways of thinking about other
people and the world:

The young people are aware that being immersed in a change-laden

environment affects them. However, as well as their *knowledge* of people

and cultures, the young people talk explicitly about their ways of thinking

about the world. Charles tells us how he thinks he has been *affected* and

learned to *accept*:

> Charles   well if I lived here all my life I - well when you
> live here ... all my life well - it'd just be like nor - I'd say
> *normal* - like the other kids would have a normal life but -
> when you move around a lot you just think you're kinda -
> different - because they're like *affected* by different kinds of
> *cultures* and religion - because in Asia there are most like
> religion and different kinds of culture is experienced more
> different kinds of things
>
> R   and do they affect you as a person?
>
> Charles   well yes - they they kinda make you more -
> open minded and I can accept other cultures - think like I've
> lived here all my life
>
> (333 - 346)

Nell agrees with Charles, and gives us an example where she compares

her thinking *now* to her perception of what it *might* be if she were still

living in her home country.

> ...and so I think living overseas away from home has - not
> affected - it's *affected* sort of the way I *think* about
> everything - I think I'd be the same person *same personality*
> but I think the way I'd *think* would be - *different*
>
> (63 - 73)

The young people believe their experiences have impacted the way they

view the world. Additionally, it is apparent that they consider their own

cognition; they are metacognitive about their ways of thinking. These

perspective taking components will be further discussed later in this chapter.

* * * *

In summary, the young people have certain beliefs that encapsulate their theory of change. Although change is regarded as inevitable, they can be resilient and prepared for it. They understand change may have benefits as well as challenges, and are able to consider their possible responses to it. The young people can use resources, including social capital, to negotiate increasingly complex relationships. They seem able to create networks to restore elements of social capital that may have been lost in moving. Furthermore, they are metacognitive about change, and know it can enrich and create new ways of thinking.

This concept of change influences their attitudes, so let's go on to look at this component.

4.1.2 Change management: attitude components

The young people are:

    i.   tolerant of living in a change-laden environment and aware of both advantages and disadvantages in their lifestyles;

ii.   expecting and anticipating more change;

iii.   anxious and excited.

Now let's consider these in more detail.

i.   tolerant of living in a change-laden environment

and aware of both advantages and disadvantages in

their lifestyles:

According to Charles, change is something to which one becomes

accustomed:

> because I'm moving a lot - OK I live in [HC] - before I live in
> [HC] I live in [another country] - then when I was about four
> years old I live in [HC] - then I went to [another country]
> after four years of living in [HC] that's about - two months or
> half a year, not so sure - then I went to [another country]
> and then I went back here again so yeah! - you get more
> *used* to to live around like that
>
> (174 - 185)

However, the young people constantly compared their own mobility to

others, often realizing how difficult it was to find commonalities with

peers, or relatives in other countries. Lisa seems to feel disadvantaged

that she has *only* lived in two countries:

> I'm Lisa and I'm from [home country]! - I've *only* lived in
> [home country]! and [HC] my *whole* life and I'm - most of it
> was in [home country]!
>
> (7 - 8)

Most young people, though, could see both advantages and

disadvantages in their lifestyles. Shane alternates between these in this

comment:

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my life is *extraordinary* - my life is, because they just live in one place, they've not moved around, for 7, 8 years they've just lived there and I've, every two years I've been moving around so it's like two years, here we go, two years, here we go, so we're never really *settled*, but now [HC] cause we've lived here six years, not as six years *together* but on and off, so it's getting - we've settled down here - cause in [another country] we stayed for *one year*, it's not *long enough* to settle down

(183 - 190)

Although they express tolerance of change, the young people also recognize the advantages and disadvantages of their lifestyle. Comparison with others may be their way of juxtaposing their situation and confirming it is satisfactory, in the least.

ii.   expecting and anticipating change:

Lily comments on how *expecting change* prepared her mentally:

I was kind of expecting the change for quite some time so I I - I got used to the school pretty well on the first day and the education I just loved it all and - it was kind of different it was nothing

(54 - 57)

Even when the prospect of change is unconfirmed, Eva tells us that she is still anticipating it:

yeah but it's like I'm new cause I like the class I'm in now, I get along really *well* with everyone so I wouldn't *want* to be in any other group, I didn't want to move cause people were *so great* - people maybe wanted to move cause of *me* I don't know - I want to say this - I don't *wanna* move - I don't want my dad to *move* now I want him to stay

(176 - 181)

The young people think about change constantly. They use this anticipation to prepare themselves for future upheaval, and seem to understand that preparation will aid a smooth transition.

iii.   anxious or excited about some aspects of change:

The young people expressed anxiety about their new schools in terms of being *nervous* or *scared*, both before arrival and on the first day.

Greta   well it was really scary but - umm, I made friends really quickly cause everyone's really *warm* here

R   so you remember being scared on the first day?

Greta   yeah, on the first day and *before* I came I felt like that

(36 - 42)

John attributes this nervousness to being unsure what he would find there:

John   I was a bit nervous - at the beginning I wasn't - but as it got closer to the first day I was a bit more nervous except then I was fine after the first - especially when I stepped in class I was fine

R   what do you think you were nervous about?

John   just what it was like - it was a big school- lots of people - I wasn't sure what it would be like

(80 - 88)

However, most comments were related to whether they would be accepted by their new peers, as Shane tells us:

Shane   yeah I felt really nervous, whenever I move to a new school I feel really nervous on the first day - first day is - my mum always come in with me just - to drop me off

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R   what is it that makes you feel nervous?

Shane   just all the people, I don't even know them, first time they're gonna meet me, I don't know if they're gonna like me or not

(27 - 35)

Nevertheless, the young people were excited about moving somewhere unknown. Charles considers himself *lucky* in comparison to his cousins:

Charles   well - I think I'm more lucky to move around and have more experience and more stuff

(169 - 170)

Rohan draws together the seemingly disparate attitudes of being both *nervous* and *excited* about his *new* experiences:

R   do you remember how you felt about moving to a new school?

Rohan   kind of nervous, a bit excited

R   what was it that made you nervous?

Rohan   whether I was going to make friends and fit in, stuff like that [and] .. just the school in general and studies and stuff like that

R   you also said you were excited, what was exciting?

Rohan   to be in a new place, to make friends and stuff like that

(16 - 42)

In being excited about moving, the young people describe the thrill of being *new* in a place and how fortunate (or *lucky*) they are to have these experiences. However, in considering disadvantages, they appear more anxious and use terms such as *nervous* and *scary*.

To summarize attitudes to change, these young people are ambivalent.

They anticipate and expect change with a range of emotions. This

contrast of being both nervous and excited allows the young people to

express their concerns and aspirations, effectively balancing some

negative and positive aspects of moving schools.

Matt has the final word on change and its pervasiveness. He believes that

even if he were living in a less changeable environment, he would still be

impacted by change, but perhaps in a different way:

> Matt   I guess it's a bit more *useful* staying in one place also cause you don't need to always get used to stuff and you can stay put and not make the changes but the changes come to *you*
>
> R   what do you mean by that?
>
> Matt   like the time changes, school changes, everything changes, you don't have to *fit in* again - you just stay there and it gradually picks up and the changes aren't *done*
>
> R   they happen
>
> Matt   yeah they happen *around* you
>
> R   and that's different from - you said *fitting in*? (yeah) How?
>
> Matt   *you* have to act instead of like - changes around you, you don't have to *do* much - it's a bit more *work* (laughs)
>
> R   that's a good way of putting it - it's a bit more work! (both laugh) are you more conscious of having to fit in than you would be if

Matt   yeah yeah if they happen around you

R   I guess you're right - some people might think that if they stay in one place things stay the same - but you're saying they don't?

Matt   yeah

(216 - 247)

*   *   *   *   *

Summary: Change management

The young people have a theory of change, and can articulate these aspects of their knowledge and attitudes. They appear to constantly think about change and how to manage it. This is apparently preparing them for the inevitable - another change in their lives. They are conscious that they need to be able to cope with such situations, and develop processes and resources that assist them. The change management components described above may reflect the young people's understanding of society and willingness to analyse it and thus act as sociologists.

Change management is also a pre-condition for operating two further competences: perspective taking and fitting in. Let's now examine perspective taking.

4.2   Perspective taking

The young people are constantly negotiating the realities of their own environment. As we have seen, this is one in which relationships with their multinational and multicultural peers are diverse and changeable. The young people are aware of these conditions, but they also develop knowledge about how cultural groups work. At this point, they become more like social-psychologists.

The young people acknowledge that cultural differences exist between people, and are mindful of the importance of knowing and understanding others' cultures. They describe how they actively seek this information and use it to inform their perceptions of any situation. Ultimately, they can develop their own multiple and flexible viewpoints, and describe what they know, do and feel. This competence was conceptualized in the analysis as *perspective taking*.

4.2.1 Perspective taking: knowledge components

The young people know that:

i.   cultural groups have different values and ways of thinking;

ii.   there are opportunities to learn about and use these within social contexts; and

iii.   this knowledge can be used to view and understand

         issues from multiple perspectives.

We can now explore these.

i.   cultural groups have different values and ways of

       thinking:

Many of the young people provided examples of this knowledge.

However, we will examine Terri's transcript, which provides an explicit

account of this knowledge based on her experiences.

Terri has moved from a national to an international school relatively

recently, and makes some insightful comments. She knows that her

culture has its own morés and that she needs to *mix* with those who

share that knowledge in order to really know and use it. She talks firstly

about national schooling.

> R   so when your mother wanted you to learn
> [home language] do you mean the language or other things
> as well?
>
> Terri   yeah the culture the history of [home country]
> all the things
>
> R   and she thought it was important to send you
> to [home country] school to learn those things? (Terri: yeah)
> she wouldn't just teach you those things at home?
>
> Terri   because I should mix with my [home country]
> friends if I'm with only with my mother I don't really know
> how to be in a place where there's all [home country people]
>   (299 - 310)

When Terri says she should mix with certain (home-country) people to learn about culture, she is describing an understanding of the need to learn culture-specific aspects of belonging to a social group - in this case a national group and national identity (Brislin and Yoshida 1994).

ii.   there are opportunities to learn about these cultural

groups, and use this knowledge, within social contexts:

Terri continues on, highlighting the differences in the personal narratives, or *stories,* to which she has access in an international school:

> because um - if your friends you have friends from England, friends from Thailand, friends from Indonesia they will tell you stories from their country you will pick up more - they have their own culture which you will know if you are with them yeah
>
> (359 - 363)

Terri knows that telling stories is a social interaction in which she can learn about her friends' ways of thinking, and that this impacts her culture-learning. She understands culture can be learned by noticing and reflecting on others' behaviours whilst being immersed in their environments - *if* you are with them (Fennes and Hapgood 1997; Liddicoat 2002; Paige *et al.* 1999).

This explicit connection between context and culture learning demonstrates that Terri understands the process involved in intercultural communication, and the functions of establishing relationships and interacting with others (Byram 1997).

iii.   this knowledge can be used to view and understand

issues from multiple perspectives:

Having described the importance of knowing her home culture, Terri also

talks about a different kind of knowledge that she thinks *can't* be learned

in the national school

> ... if we were in China or India and only in your school
> mostly everyone speaks Chinese or Tamil or Hindi or
> whatever but uh you only know uh - you only have Chinese
> friends or Indian friends or you won't be able to - uh -
> understand what is it like to have friends from all sort of
> countries
>
> (347 - 352)

In comparing national and international school social settings, Terri is

talking about the culture-specific elements that are particular to each

(Brislin and Yoshida 1994). She can also identify the communication

practices between members of different cultural communities (Ting-

Toomey 1999) and extract what is important. Significantly, Terri tells us

that being *outside* countries and mixing with people from different cultural

groups increased her understanding of *the world*, or relationships

between countries, not only *about* each country. She is thus illustrating

the importance of decentring which is facilitated by comparative analysis

(Byram 1997).

*   *   *   *   *

The young people know the importance of culture-learning, and undertake this by attending to culture-specific aspects, particularly communication. The understandings they gain are used to inform their skills of establishing relationships and interacting. Through understanding communication practices and relationships between culturally diverse individuals and groups, they develop intercultural competences. These include expressing, and being able to explain, their multiple and flexible viewpoints.

Now we can contemplate perspective taking attitudes.

4.2.2 Perspective taking: attitude components

The young people believe that:

    i.   certain attitudes are essential for integration into an international setting;

    ii.   these attitudes can be cultivated; and

    iii.   context or environment plays a role in their development.

Let's now consider these attitudes.

    i.   certain attitudes are essential for integration into an international setting:

In particular, the young people describe the need to be consciously open-

minded, tolerant, empathetic, mindful of the importance of others' values, and curious but not invasive. The young people recognize these traits in themselves. Charles provides this summary of what is needed to make a successful transition to this school:

> mmm - um - uh - to (thinking) - to be open minded to accept different people and cultures and the way of thinking - something like that (laughs)
>
> (386 - 388)

These are attitudes he feels he *needs* to use to fit in with others. Shane agrees and talks about how his way of thinking is becoming more open by using the terms *broadly thinking* and *expanding*:

> yep - well, basically, broadly thinking, expanding your thoughts on people and lives
>
> (479 - 480)

Byram notes savoir être, or relativising self and valuing other, as a critical factor in intercultural communication, and specifically identifies 'curiosity' and 'openness' (1997). If a person has these attitudes, skills of discovery and interaction are less difficult and less likely to involve psychological stress (Byram *ibid*: 35). Additionally, openness is one of the characteristics of Kim's 'adaptive predisposition' (1988), which is essential for effective communication in a culturally complex setting.

However, it is one thing to *say* you should have these attitudes, but is there evidence of their existence? The young people do make explicit the beliefs that attitudes are cultivated, and that context or environment play

a role in their development. As we examine the transcripts, these beliefs become apparent.

ii.   attitudes can be cultivated:

In the following comments about cultivating tolerance, two young people describe a shift in their way of thinking, in relation to a continuum of development in attitudes. They talk about either moving *more* towards a particular mind-set, or having *acquired* an appropriate outlook.

Lisa describes having become *more* tolerant and gives us a glimpse of what her previous thinking may have been.

> um - not really no - but now I'm more - tolerant of people - I don't think oh no she has pale skin I don't like her!
>
> (454 - 455)

Linda talks about others becoming open-minded, and the need to *accept* that - for now:

> well - it depends on the person really cause if someone ... comes along and this is their first ever trip and they're the same culture as you and they talk about why do you hang out with them? they're a different culture - it's just a shock - you're not meant to say things like that - you have to be like this - you just accept it and not think about it - it might be hard for them
>
> (346 - 357)

She goes on to describe how this attitude develops at first, with *conscious effort,* but notes that in time, *it'll just come naturally:*

> well, maybe in the beginning - suddenly you come to the school and you haven't been to any other international schools - you might have to make a conscious effort when

> you realize people don't accept it but after a while it'll just
> come naturally
>
> (366 - 370)

This point about the others' responses will be taken up later in this chapter.

In fact, the young people seem to portray a progressive development of attitudes associated with experiences with those who are culturally different. This mirrors the belief of Bennet *et al.* (1999) that learners' intercultural competence develops from an ethnocentric standpoint towards greater levels of ethnorelativism, as experience of cultural difference becomes more complex and sophisticated. The young people are, therefore, effectively describing the development of intercultural competence. The importance of certain attitudes and attitude development within this process is conceptualized in the models of intercultural competence and by researchers writing in this field (Bennett 1999; Byram and Zarate 1994; Fennes and Hapgood 1997; Liddicoat 2002; Paige *et al.* 1999).

iii.   context or environment plays a role in development of
        attitudes:

Being curious is necessary in order to learn about the new social culture, but being invasive may be detrimental. The young people, including Linda (above), have made the connection between context (in this case, the

147

school social setting) and attitude development. In fact, their change in

attitude is often distinguished by their use of the terms 'insider' and

'outsider' to effectively describe moving from outside the social group to

inside it. Simmel (1908/1971) was one of the first to discuss the

significance of the outsider or 'stranger' and this concept has been

explored in the literature by others, including Byram (1989), Kim (1995)

and Linton (1960).

Eva reiterates the point that attitudes are not static, as she remembers

her first encounter with someone different. In hindsight, she associates

her own experience as an *outsider* with changing her attitudes:

> actually I - when I first came to this school I was noticing all
> the different people cause normally I'm used to having all
> [home country] around me and there was only one English
> person in my (previous) school and I was really good friends
> with her even though she was two grades lower than me I
> used to look at her and think oh my God if that was me how
> would I feel? so when I came here I felt like the outsider and
> I was - actually it helped me be like - interested in different
> cultures
>
> (491 - 498)

The outsider analogy is used by other young people as they discuss

moving between outsider and insider status. James describes being

powerless as an outsider trying to fit in:

> umm - I don't think there's much that the person moving can
> do about it - it's more how the people that they're moving to
> think about you
>
> (536 - 538)

Here James articulates his belief that movement from outsider to insider is dependent on the acceptance of others in the group to which he is seeking admission. This is characteristic of 'other ascription', described by Barth (1969). James, along with the other young people, is acknowledging the existence of a boundary that defines a particular social group. These students understand that movement from outsider to insider status is dependent not only on *their* understandings of the complex social organization, but also the identification by *others* that they are 'playing the same game' (Barth 1969: 15).

*   *   *   *   *

In summary, the young people believe that positive and tolerant attitudes are essential, and that these are dynamic. Importantly, being in the position of an outsider is a creative factor in changing attitudes. Stier refers to a similar characteristic as 'perspective alteration', or 'the student's empathetic ability to put him- or herself in the position of the other - to alternate between the "inside" and "outside" positions' (2003: 84). The young people believe that by being curious or open-minded, they can enhance their potential as a group member, provided they do not become invasive. In attending to their attitudes, the young people are using what Stier calls 'processual competencies' and this term encompasses the dynamic nature of the attitudes discussed by the young people:

> The term processual competencies refers to the dynamic
> character of intercultural competence. Processual
> competencies must be understood within an interactional
> context (Hall, 1976). They relate to unique cultural
> peculiarities, situational conditions and to the people
> involved. The 'knowing how' aspect of intercultural
> competence encompasses intrapersonal and interpersonal
> competencies
>
> (2003: 85).

Stier also notes the existence of 'content competencies' (knowledge about cultures and their people). However, it is possible that in the 'processual competencies' there may lie the potential to become *more* skilled, or *better* at navigating the process of becoming intercultural.

What is perhaps surprising, though, is the level of conscious awareness of these factors by these young people. Liddicoat (2002) believes that the noticing of, and reflection on, different cultural elements creates a potentially continuous cycle of acquisition of intercultural competence. We can confidently say that these young people demonstrate the reflection that is necessary for the acquisition of intercultural competence. Furthermore, these kinds of interactions influence, and may shape, their international attitudes (Gellar 1993; Hayden and Thompson 1995b; Hayden *et al.* 2000; Waterson and Hayden 1999).

Now that we have seen evidence of perspective taking attitudes, let us consider their behaviours.

4.2.3 Perspective taking: behaviour components

The young people describe the following behaviours and skills,
incorporating the knowledge and attitudes described above. They can:

    i.   use opportunities in social settings to exchange cultural
            knowledge;

    ii.   minimize the importance of cultural differences;

    iii.   reflect on others' cultures;

    iv.   reflect on and relativise their own culture; and

    v.   demonstrate an awareness of, or subscribe to, an
            international or world view.

Let us look at these in more detail.

    i.   use opportunities in social settings to exchange cultural
            knowledge;

In order to develop different perspectives of the world, it is necessary to
first acquire a knowledge base that can inform multiple views. The young
people do this by using opportunities presented by living in unfamiliar
places to become *more* familiar with other ways of life. Shane describes
having the opportunity to *mix*:

> umm, like experience of different cultures, different
> countries, different feelings, different people - like in France
> if you go to school there you don't really find Australians,
> Indians, anyone, you just find French - but here the
> international school is different because all cultures are -
> mixing in one school

                                          (198 - 202)

Shane realizes that those around him have different backgrounds, and

that the school offers opportunities for them to interact. This arrangement,

though, is not a contrived one. Nell, in comparing her life to a friend's,

acknowledges the potential to gain authentic, or as she puts it, *real life*

accounts from these types of interactions:

> I think we - just moving around, going to different countries I
> think you get to know about different cultures what they're
> like in real life not just what you learn about cause
> sometimes what you're taught isn't accurate so um - I think I
> sort of know more about the world than she would even
> though she's educated about the same and everything
>
> (359 - 364)

In talking about getting to *know* different cultures *just* by moving around,

Nell understands her own role is one of an active and reflective novice,

immersed in this authentic learning environment.

ii.   minimize the importance of cultural differences:

However, being proactive in a diverse environment is not always easy.

The young people recognize cultural differences between people, but

minimize their importance. Hetti and Nell discuss this in a matter-of-fact

way.

> Hetti   I think it's better going to an
> international school because you learn so much more about
> people from different parts of the world
>
> Nell   and you learn that your country isn't the only
> thing in the world (all laughing and talking) yeah you don't -
> you have to accept people for the way they look or the way
> they are, how they're different
>
> (680 - 686)

Nell reiterates that the responsibility to *accept* lies with the individual. It is not the disparities between people that matter, but, rather, the importance one places on them. Nell seems to be trying to minimize the impact of insider - outsider differences.

Nell and Hetti have provided an example of how many of the young people act as ethnographers. Their behaviours reveal their willingness to discover, interpret and relate. These are characteristics of the accepted models of intercultural competence (Byram 1997; Paige and Stringer 1997). Additionally, the young people can reflect on their experiences, as we shall now see.

iii.   reflect on others' cultures:

The ability to reflect on others' beliefs and practices is widespread amongst the young people. Matt gives the following example of something he has witnessed at a friend's house.

R   how are you different from your friends?

Matt   umm - different lifestyles I guess - some of my friends are way more richer than I am - and sometimes the different, like, way their parent teaches them - I find that a bit noticeable sometimes

R   how?

Matt   like sometimes it's a good way, sometimes in a bad way - or I guess a bad way for me cause of my point of view - might be a good way for them or the way...

R   can you think of an example that's happened?

Matt   well - my friend, his brother and him got into a
fight and the parent was like - oh, did you really do it? to his
friend cause he messed up a thing on the computer of his
work - well did you really do it? if you really did it then he
gets to mess up something back of yours and I found that a
bit shocking

(368 - 385)

Matt has held onto this experience, using it to generalize about the

different viewpoints. He conveys the flexibility he feels towards deciding

on ways to address an issue, relating it back to different viewpoints: good

for them, but not necessarily for him. This may reflect an understanding of

the relativity of cultures, or that behaviours are culturally variable.

Kohlberg *et al.* (1983) and Byram (1997) refer to being able to 'decentre',

or suspend belief in one's own meanings and behaviours and understand

another's perspective. Kramsch (1993) believes this relates to the

development of 'a third place', which involves intermediate and

intercultural practices that are not completely from either of the cultural

mindsets involved in such communications.

The 'third place' perspective is exemplified by Adele. As Kramsch

suggests, it involves relating to different cultures as well as reflecting on

perceptions of them (1993: 205). Adele describes how she has become

less ethnocentric and more empathetic, and has difficulty explaining

where this perspective sits, trying to use terms like *more* and *most* in

defining this 'place':

in an international school it kind of makes you - you know
some people say oh that stupid American person and I go
no *hello*! they're not stupid and I'm more - I'm more - I look
out for other countries but more of course my country I look
out for the most but if people are saying oh that *stupid*

American and stuff like that, I mean that's not really right I mean so you just - like you might have been a bit racist so that's totally completely gone

In recognizing and responding to different cultural viewpoints, we can see an example of 'intercultural sensitivity' and 'intercultural competence' (Hammer *et al.* 2003) being exhibited by Matt and Adele. In these cases, the young people are clarifying their own ideological perspective by comparing it consciously with another (Byram 1997: 101). These are classic examples of Byram's '*savoir s'engager:* knowing how to commit oneself', which involves the development of critical and political awareness. They can also be seen to relate to Byram's '*savoir comprendre:* knowing how to understand' and '*savoir être:* attitudes about one's own and other cultures' (1997).

iv.   reflect on and relativise their own culture:

This ability to contemplate is extended to the young person's own culture as well. Greta is able to stand back from her own culture and reflect on the importance of some cultural knowledge:

Greta   well I'm not really American, my passport says I'm American and my birth certificate says I'm American but I think I've lived away from there for so long that I'm not really part of any country - I'm just part of the world

R   is that a good thing or a bad thing?

Greta   I think it's a good thing because - if you're from the US if you have friends, mainly all of them are from the US, you kind of stay in your own little nationality group - but I think basically being from nowhere (laughs) you don't -

it doesn't really make any difference because you can't
really say where you're from but a lot of other people can't
really say where they're from either

R   you chose not to go to the American school
here?

Greta   well - my dad doesn't like the American
system, he thinks I should learn about the world instead of
just one country so I've never really been to an American
school

R   so you don't know about Johnny Appleseed?

Greta   and I can't name all the American presidents
                                                (350 - 378)

Greta demonstrates critical cultural awareness, which Byram defines as

'an ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria cultural

perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and

countries' (1997: 53). Furthermore, excerpts such as this further

exemplify the young people's ability to 'decentre' that is fundamental to

understanding other cultures (Melde 1987, cf. Byram *et al.* 1994: 20 - 24).

Similarly, Matt can reflect on the socio-political issues in his home

country, and conveys some implicit understandings about *news*, or mass

media communications there:

R   so you've missed some of the [home country]
culture, the reading and writing and knowing the country - is
there any other way that living away from [home country]
has affected your life?

Matt   umm - I could tell the state of [home country],
as a third world country and some of the major differences,
like the government - it's not quite good there cause it's
taken by military and I get different views from that

R   that would probably be different if you had to live there? (Matt: yeah) are there any positive effects on your life because you live away from [home country]?

Matt   in [home country] you don't get much - outside news from different countries and when you're here you do, and you also get more news, more news about the other country instead of living there

R   so in some ways you know more about it by being out of it?

Matt   yeah (both laugh)

(457 - 478)

So we know the young people can reflect on their own and others' cultures. Now let's consider their views of the world.

v.   demonstrate an awareness of, or subscribe to, an

international or world view:

As well as an awareness of different cultures, the young people

demonstrate a consciousness of, or subscribe to, an international or

world view. This may be because they can link this concept to certain

contexts or situations. Terri tries to convey what this means to her, and

the importance of being *outside* national boundaries:

and if you are *outside* of these countries and in an international school then - you will understand more about the *world*

(348 - 350)

Greta can further explain the difference between this and a national or
monocultural viewpoint.

> different - I guess I know more about the world in general
> now because topics don't centre on one country - it's like,
> how this country interacts with this country and what
> happens to the entire world because of those relationships
> (406 - 409)

A comparable perspective is noted by Hayden and Thompson (1995:19),

who describe 'worldmindedness', and cite Sampson and Smith's (1957)

definition of this which opens minds and encourages the exchange of

ideas. Similar concepts are expressed in other literature (Gudykunst and

Kim 1984; Roberts 2003; Schaetti and Ramsey 2003; Shafer 1998a;

Sylvester 2000). These are most often discussed in relation to curriculum,

or student attitudes. However, it seems these young people have a

complex personal perspective or value that can be called *world view* and

it is expressed not only as an attitude, but also behaviour. As suggested

by Waterson and Hayden (1999), these kinds of student values require

further research.

<p style="text-align:center">*   *   *   *   *</p>

Summary: Perspective taking

In summary, the young people can identify and reflect on elements of

their own and others' cultures, and are conscious of their own critical

cultural awareness. They are mindful of how they think, how they behave

and the skills they have and need to develop. They seem able and willing

to decentre, and conceptualize their understandings and perceptions in a

similar way to the 'third place' described by Kramsch (1993). Their

perspective taking behaviours demonstrate Byram's *'savoir s'engager:*

knowing how to commit oneself', *'savoir comprendre:* knowing how to

understand' and *'savoir être:* attitudes about one's own and other

cultures' (1997). Significantly, they are aware that this perspective taking

competence affects their view of the world, and they can discuss this

'world view' by relating it to specific contexts.

4.3   Fitting in

The young people describe integration into social groups in terms of

distinct stages and these will be examined fully in Chapter 5. Within the

scope of these, they believe *fitting in* is the most fundamental

competence to which they must attend, as Eva tells us:

> I didn't even *think* about *where* I lived, just mainly schools - I
> mean - more than like my *education* or my *house* my *friends*
> matter - not where you are - I'm a friends person
>
> (79 - 81)

Fitting in is the competence used to find a place within social groups.

James *et al.* defines this as 'social adjustment, the ability to "fit in" or

negotiate interactive aspects of the host culture' (2004: 112). The young

people talk about it as moving from an unknown status to that of acceptance as a new group member. Here the young people utilize their knowledge of key informants and work as ethnographers or participant observers. Through observation, reflection and action, they can begin to negotiate the complexities of their new environment.

4.3.1 Fitting in: knowledge components

The young people know that:

i. fitting in is a crucial competence, with consequences for longer-term social integration;

ii. fitting in has both social and academic components;

iii. in addition to their own endeavor, both the school and social networks can offer useful resources and opportunities for fitting in; and

iv. fitting in has benefits as an ongoing strategy.

We will see that fitting in has critical implications for the young people.

i. fitting in is a crucial competence, with consequences for longer-term social integration:

Fitting in is crucial because it provides the young people with opportunities to build relationships from encounters. Linda talks about

how *you have to* initiate this complex process, and the positive

ramifications of doing so:

> well - you really have to - when you first get there - you
> have to make friends at first so it doesn't matter - you're not
> gonna *stay* with those friends because - you have to, just
> make sure you have friends at first so you get to know who
> everyone else is and decide who you like and - if you don't
> like those friends you can change friends, hopefully, you
> know, so basically, you make friends with someone in your
> class and you hang around with them and their friends from
> last year maybe - and, if you don't like them - then, you'll
> probably meet other people *through* those people and then
> you can go sort of distance yourself from those people
>
> (54 - 61)

Linda has learned that initial successful contact affects the potential to

launch and develop friendships. In this sense she is describing the

importance of finding gatekeepers or key informants as ethnographers

have to do in the early stages of their work; such as that described by

Whyte in *Street Corner Society* (1993).

However, fitting in has dimensions which extend beyond initial schoolyard

social interactions. Let's look at these.

ii.   fitting in has both social and academic components:

The young people have concerns about fitting in to two different but

connected arenas: socially and academically. Tina draws together the

importance of both aspects in one response, as there's *no point* in being

competent in only one of them:

Tina   I think its good to be an all rounder

R   Can you explain that a bit more?

Tina   I just think its better if - I mean there's no point
if you're really clever and everything but you don't *talk* to
anyone or have any friends - on the other hand its no good
if you're friends but you're *bad* at everything
(923 - 930)

Significantly, the young people believe they need to be seen to identify

with existing group behaviours both *inside* and *outside* the classroom.

Shane believes it is *easier* to adjust if you fit in with the class:

if you fit in with the rest of the class it makes it easier cause
sometimes the rest of the class is not *that* smart or
whatever - like I'm *not saying* that I'm very smart... they
were quite confusing really
(55 - 77)

In regard to fitting in academically, the young people address specific

issues, including school standards, curriculum and pedagogy, classroom

behaviour and even systemic learning styles. Whilst we won't go into

these in detail, Eva provides a wonderful example of the cognition

involved in sorting out such issues. In her case, it concerns learning how

to behave in class:

uh - like *just* for one day I came in just to see the teacher -
so I said hi my name's Eva, so she asked me to sit down
but in [home country] you always have to *stand up* to say
the answer to the teacher so *every* time - it took me the
whole of fourth grade and half of fifth grade to get *used* to
sitting *down* to talk to the teacher and - cause every time I'd
stand up they'd go *Eva sit down (laughs),* so I'd go OK - and
um - everyone was so *relaxed* I was so *surprised,* like
normally you don't just put your *leg* up and everyone was
doing that and I'm just sitting properly - and *now* - I *can't* go
back to the [home country] system and sit up straight and
stuff - I *don't* want to move there
(122 - 132)

The young people are trying to come to terms with what the school (teachers) and their fellow young people expect of them in class, as well as socially. In addition to recognizing the importance these students place on education and achievement, it seems they are commenting once again about their awareness of ascription in fitting in. It appears the young people may understand the importance of the hidden curriculum that links the network of relationships in school with peer expectations of themselves and others (Galloway 1991). In high-context societies (Hall 1976), where communication style involves less verbal interactions (Gudykunst and Kim 1997), this may be particularly relevant. In relation to this, Pearce has noted the largely affective component of the teacher-student relationship in such situations, where both feel the need to win the interest of the other in order for learning to take place (1998: 46).

It is unclear whether the young people see academic fitting in as a pre-condition for social integration, but in the least both are considered important. It seems that becoming a member of the 'class' group has probable implications for their social identity, and, accordingly, they attach significance to this association (Tajfel 1978). Within the given examples of intergroup behaviour (Tajfel *ibid.*), the 'class' group can be seen as an ingroup (Gudykunst 1998). Achieving membership can reduce the young people's anxiety by providing opportunities to interact with other ingroup members (Stephan and Stephan 1985). Alternatively, they could be demonstrating a consciousness of Kim's (1988) 'host environmental conditions', which include receptivity and conformity pressure.

The young people negotiate the process of fitting in quite effectively, but not single-handedly. Let's now consider the resources available to them.

| iii. | in addition to their own endeavor, both the school and social networks can offer useful resources and opportunities for fitting in: |

Both before and after moving schools, the young people were willing to utilize resources to help them navigate the process of fitting in. These include their parents and other social contacts, and opportunities provided by the school. Although these are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, let's briefly consider the young people's understandings of them.

It is worth mentioning the existence of a strong expatriate group in this setting, with relatively close proximity to each other's housing and the school. This factor in itself affords opportunities to these young people.

Firstly, the young people know they must make use of personal resources and social capital, as pointed out in the analysis of their knowledge of change management. We have seen in Chapter 4.1.1 that the young people are able to draw on social contacts to aid transition. As we noted, some of these are people they have met outside of school, or students

from previous schools. Regardless of the social link, Vit typifies the young

people's comments when she tells us she *already knew* someone:

> Vit   My friend was here already so I knew
> someone in my class
>
> (52 - 53)

Shane took advantage of some known social contacts, if only as an initial

measure:

> yeah - actually on my first day I had *one friend* in my class
> because he came to my house, my building once for a party
> and I met him and he said I'm at (this school) so I was
> gonna move there but I didn't tell him so I moved then I sat
> with him cause he was the only guy I knew - and I knew
> another boy, his name was C - he was my dad's friend's
> son
>
> (79 - 84)

Here, the young people are developing social capital, and understand

that this is linked to membership of a group (Bourdieu 1997).

As well as social contacts and capital, the young people know about and

value the opportunities presented in their daily environment, both in the

formal and hidden curriculum. It is worth distinguishing between these in

this analysis, as they demonstrate the young people's ability to engage

with both intended aspects of the curriculum, and opportunities that may

have been unintentional.

Decisions made by the school in regard to everyday structural issues

have ramifications on the resources available for young people to fit in.

These include an initial buddy system, orientation program, extra-

curricular activities, time-tabling, school size and physical layout, and class composition. Although these are discussed further in Chapter 5, let's consider young people's comments about dealing with one of these conditions, the school's buddy system for new students.

Regardless of the intentions or consequences of these arrangements, the young people are certainly appreciative of them. Lisa knows that the school has made initial contact with peers more *instant*:

> Lisa   each new kid gets assigned somebody to help them around like buddies and - um they showed you around
>
> R   was that useful?
>
> Lisa   it was OK cause it's like *instant friend* so you don't have to (laughs)
>
> (80 - 86)

Lily implies that these *forced* arrangements of buddies alleviate some pressure:

> Lily   oh it was wonderful - we were kind of *forced* to be together so we got to *know* each other better
>
> R   when you say you were forced to be together what do you mean?
>
> Lily   well - we were kind of - our teacher *told* us to be together so we didn't exactly go and *meet* each other and say *hi* do you want to be friends it just - I said fine as I'm new over here I'll just tag along with you so yeah - and *gradually* we got to know each other and like each other
>
> (90 - 100)

Additionally, Lisa acknowledges the increased choice she had in making decisions about potential friends, as she is able to draw on her social contacts *and* the buddy system:

um - I knew some people from (previous school) who came
here so I was still friends with them and then after- I could
pick both people - and I had my buddy to hang out with
(100 - 102)

It seems this one aspect of the school organization allows the young

people to relax and take time to develop friends. Without some of the

expected pressure, they can attend to the process rather than the anxiety

produced by it. Giroux notes the growth of social capital through

'uncontrolled' interactions such as these, which may be part of the hidden

curriculum (1977: 42). Importantly, the young people are also aware of

the dual roles of social capital: that it acts as a *bridge*, for developing

connections or networks, as well as a *bond* that attaches people to

groups (Putnam 2000), and they are willing to explore both of these

avenues.

iv.   fitting in has benefits as an ongoing strategy:

Finally, the young people know that there are strategic benefits in using

their fitting in competences in an ongoing way. Rather than just

establishing one group of friends, the young people seem to be mindful of

the need to develop wider networks. Rohan calls these his *other* friends:

well I have a small group of my really *close* friends, but I
also have a group of *other* friends who aren't really close to
me but they're still my friends
(230 - 232)

The young people appear to be conscious that change is likely to impact their friendships on an ongoing basis, and they cultivate a pool of potential friends. In this sense, fitting in is a pre-condition for change management. We will return to this in the following section, and in Chapter 5, but note here some deviance from the existing literature on ingroups and outgroups. The young people fail to draw a clear distinction between ingroups and outgroups in this setting (Gudykunst 1998), or make comparisons between their own and other groups that are favourable towards their group (Brewer 1979). In particular, the way in which these young people either define or compare ingroups and outgroups may be influenced by their highly mobile environment. Further examples of this will be highlighted in the following attitudes section.

*   *   *   *   *

So it seems the young people have extensive knowledge about fitting in. They know what it is and why it has strategic importance to their inclusion in both initial and longer-term social groups. They acknowledge the social and academic components of fitting in at school, and understand the role of the hidden curriculum. They know how to go about fitting in by utilizing social capital, as well as environmental (school) opportunities. Significantly, the ways in which they think about their peers may differ from the accepted ingroup/outgroup model, probably because of the nature of their experience.

What then, are their attitudes in relation to this competence?

4.3.2 Fitting in: attitude components

The dominant theme in student attitudes is the importance of being, and being seen by peers as being, positive, as John summarizes:

> just anytime, its better if you're changing schools and everything to like - try and be more positive rather than [saying] I don't like it after the first day and stuff
>
> (426 - 428)

Accordingly, the young people:

i.   appear to take an outwardly positive view of themselves and their situation;

ii.   take a positive attitude towards their own group; and

iii.   prefer to take a positive attitude towards other groups.

Let's examine this positive approach.

i.   appear to take an outwardly positive view of themselves and their situation:

Many of the young people are experienced at moving into new social situations. They anticipate there will probably be difficulties, and seem to regard these almost as a rite of passage. Adele summarizes that despite being in this unenviable position, they need to appear to be *friendly* towards others and *ready* to pursue relationships:

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they just need to be - they just need to be *able* to make new friends, meet new people they *should* be like, *ready* for - because people generally *know* what they're gonna, you might not, well most of the time you don't really *know* what you're gonna what's gonna happen but what's gonna be there or stuff but you *should* be like, *ready* for it - you shouldn't be *scared* to meet new people, you shouldn't be *antisocial* but you shouldn't be *so* social that you're missing - you just need to be *friendly* - you just need to be friendly and nice and not *too overboard* as in *too nice* but you should just be *friendly* and and just be ready to meet new challenges and people

(638 - 648)

In talking about the need to be *ready* for their new situation, the young people convey a positive attitude. Despite the initial difficulties, they want to be seen as willing and even keen newcomers. Along similar lines, Rohan stresses the need to *open up*:

don't be like *closed* with yourself - open up to other people - talk to other people - because if you don't then people will just ignore you and leave you alone

(356 - 358)

Both Rowan and Adele want to be seen to appear to be positive; as Rowan says, the consequences of not exhibiting this attitude may be that one is left alone. In overcoming obstacles, they know that outwardly positive and patient attitudes will help *them* feel more optimistic, especially if it takes some time for their new peers to accept them. Nell describes how, despite wanting to *appear* upbeat, the young people endure anxiety and uncertainty during this adjustment period:

Nell   I think depending on *who* you are the longer it would take to adjust

R   so you're expecting there to be an adjustment period when you move somewhere - you don't expect it to be OK straight away?

> Nell   I don't think anyone *expects* it to be OK
> straight away in case they're *really* disappointed I think
> you've got to go into a new school with your mind
> *completely* open anything could happen to you you could
> say be bullied, you could make friends really easily you
> could be completely put down
>
> (570 - 581)

This uncertainty is echoed by Hetti, but she apparently understands that

adjustment may take time and there is a need to be patient:

> you can't expect people to adjust just like that just give it a
> little time sometimes it won't take that long but sometimes it
> will take a little bit of time
>
> (566 - 568)

The young people's ways of thinking at this time help sustain them

through a difficult period and they appear to successfully manage their

own, and others', expectations. It appears that they are fully aware of the

self and other ascription that will need to take place before they are

accepted as members of their new groups (Barth 1969), and personal

identity begins to give way to social identity (Tajfel and Turner 1979). It

seems they are conscious of the importance of self-image in negotiating

identity in intercultural situations (Ting-Toomey 1999). In essence, the

young people's attitudes need to convey to others that they are patient

and positive to others, despite being in a climate of absolute uncertainty.

ii.   take a positive attitude towards their own group:

The young people have a positive view of their own diverse social groups.

Despite acknowledging the differences between themselves and their

peers, especially regarding cultural backgrounds, the young people are

vague about these variations. Clarifying disparities is one of the few

themes that the young people appeared reluctant to articulate. In every

interview, the young people preferred to refer to commonalities, however

obscure and difficult to articulate they might be. Consider Lisa's nebulous

comments about her *pretty similar* friends, as she deflects her response

about differences:

> R how do you think you're different from your friends in [HC]?
>
> Lisa our nationalities and - our - I - I don't know (laughs) I guess we're - I don't know in what way we're different, cause we're pretty similar but - not very, if you know what I mean - yeah
>
> (303 - 308)

Similarly, Linda can even cleverly find a commonality within a difference:

> R you said that the background is something that makes you different from your friends, but a couple of minutes ago you said that your backgrounds are similar in that you're (Linda interrupts)
>
> Linda well, different parts of those backgrounds, I mean, it's the backgrounds that make us all different but then we're all - part of our background is that we've all been brought together you know so.... so that's one thing we do have in common
>
> (288 - 299)

On the other hand, Adele notices the differences, but focuses on an

optimistic view of the *opportunity* afforded by being with a culturally

diverse group:

> I do get along with multicultural, people from other countries because I think it's just so cool, such a great opportunity, take advantage of it don't miss out but then a lot of people like to only speak to English because they feel comfortable - but I mean you come out of [home country] to meet people from other countries, you don't come to meet only your

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fellow friends - I mean it's nice to have some [compatriot] friends otherwise you feel kind of homesick but in class you should also mix around - in class I don't have any other Indians but also I just hang around my friend who's Korean, so I always end up hanging around Koreans and there's my other friend - my two good friends in class - T's part Spanish, Filipino, Korean & American and she's got some Italian blood in her so she looks really cultural so she's one of my really good friends and - so basically, that's how we are

(539 - 553)

It is not surprising that the young people take a positive view of their social group. Even in this diverse setting, they may begin to develop intergroup behaviours by ignoring individual differences (Turner 1982).

iii.   prefer to take a positive attitude towards other groups:

However, it is unusual to note the positive attitudes expressed by young people towards *other* groups. Whilst they exaggerated the similarities between themselves and their own groups, they minimized the differences between their own and other groups. Linda can *ignore* any differences:

R   so what is it about people talking about difference that annoys you?

Linda   it's just that, you know, we're trying to ignore it - but stop pushing it in our faces - because we've learned to accept it, so you should be happy with that

(504 - 509)

On the other hand, Lisa can attribute difference to interests or personality clashes, rather than significant group differences:

R   think about your group of friends - then think
about other groups in your class and in Grade 8 - (mm)
how's your group different to some of the other groups?

Lisa   different interests and that's why people split
into groups cause like, soccer people over there, skater
people over there

R   OK, so you think the groups are based on
their interests?

Lisa   their hobbies, yeah

R   any other differences between your group and
others?

Lisa   no not really

Lisa   is your group similar in any ways to those
other groups?

Lisa   um - I don't know we're - just kids at the same
school and sometimes we have - like same interests as
other groups but sometimes we just don't like the people -
like sometimes they're annoying or they get on your nerves
without like doing meaning to - yeah

(327 - 352)

These preferences for interest based social groups echo Willis' (1992)

findings that international school students tend to socialize by interests

rather than ethnicity or language. Given the diversity in this particular

school, this seems a logical choice.

Even when the young people aren't familiar with some of their peers, they

are generous towards them. James plays down the differences between

his own and other groups, and makes light of these, because he doesn't

know them very well:

R   what is it about your group of friends that's
different to the other groups?

James   we're not very - loud - louder and extreme and stuff - we just - play with ourselves -pack of cards, tennis balls, cricket ball - that's the same as the other groups but they like to play football also

R   but some of them are loud?

James   yeah

R   have you deliberately tried to avoid those kinds of people

James   I don't really mind, it's just - I don't really know them very well - I guess if I knew them better I wouldn't mind

(378 - 394)

It seems that not only do the young people *minimize* differences, they are also reluctant to make appraisals of others based on either surface differences or similarities. Linda talks about how one incorporates new understandings about a person into an expanding body of knowledge, and the need to accept differences in a non-judgmental way, develop open-mindedness and be mindful of other's values:

Linda   they just need to - well - you need to not be - you can't *really* help being sheltered, you know? but you just need to get over that

R   what do you mean by sheltered?

Linda   I mean, as in wrapped in blankets in your own culture and not having to worry about other people's customs - and you don't *ignore* what other people say, like, 'Oh gosh, you know what I got for Hari Raya?' and you go 'Hari Raya?' you don't ignore it but you just listen and go oh yeah, that's different from me but you don't really - consciously think - Oh! She's THIS person! - you don't *separate* people when you see them - I mean - you might start to gradually - but *don't separate* them!

(463 - 477)

Linda doesn't see the need to classify others based on differences from her. She can learn about new customs, and then set these aside under the label of culture and search for commonalities.

As we have seen, the young people separate groups perceptually. However, because they minimize differences, it seems they do *not* separate groups judgmentally. This seems to be counter evidence to Tajfel's (1981) social categorization theory. There are at least two possible explanations for this. If, as Tajfel says, the definition of a group only makes sense when other groups exist (1978: 66), the young people may perceive the school social setting as having oneness as a total peer group. Or, perhaps these behaviours are a result of the particular nature of the experience. Later in this chapter, we shall see that these young people are conscious of the expected mobility of themselves and/or their friends, and this factor may relate to their generous treatment of others.

*   *   *   *   *

In summary, the young people have a positive attitude towards themselves, their situation, their own peer group and the other social groupings in their school. Kim suggests that being open and positive are essential for adaptation (2005). It appears they are conscious of the self and other ascription that occurs in establishing social identities. However, even though they are aware of differences, the young people look for

commonalities in others. They minimize or ignore differences in their own and other groups and avoid being judgemental. This minimization in regard to other groups is significant, as it seems to be at variance with current literature on group identity (Tajfel 1981).

4.3.3 Fitting in: behaviour components

The young people assume there will be challenges or barriers to forming relationships. To deal with these, they focus on both personal assimilation behaviours, and their management of others' perceptions.

The young people:

    i.   consciously adapt and adjust to a group;

    ii.   are aware of the role of others in their adjustment;

    iii.   search for commonalities with others;

    iv.   tend to maintain marginality in some culturally challenging situations;

    v.   try to maintain access to other groups and individuals in the social pool.

Let's consider how they manage these behaviours.

    i.   consciously adapt and adjust to a group:

The young people are conscious of the need to adapt to a new situation, as Nell comments:

> not everyone in the world is gonna be *just* like you and so
> you have to be able to *adapt*
>
> (686 - 688)

She understands the need to accept the new and diverse situation as it is, and begin to adjust *to* it. In making personal adjustments, the young people may attend to both superficial and situational adaptation.

Superficial adjustments comprise attending to markers such as uniforms, accents and general appearance. Eva talks about how she consciously adapts to the group, turning her accent off and on as needed:

> I think it came from - I don't know, my parents, because I came at the end of fourth grade and I had a really *plain* accent so I started talking like this so I think I kinda - I don't know how but it just varied, at home I'd be normal and here I'd be like this - I just adapt like that
>
> (23 - 26)

However, the young people realize these superficial changes are not enough. To make some initial connections in the new situation, they need to be outgoing or appear confident. Terri takes up this theme:

> um you need to um - be *outstanding* - you can't be like um s*ome* people when they move schools or something they just don't *wanna* mix with them they can't they think they *really* can't mix so they will just be *by themselves* but um you need to be *outstanding* go up to people talk to them mix around with more people
>
> (392 - 397)

The young people try to look and act appropriately. They describe their concern with self-ascription as they adapt more superficial behaviours,

such as accents, and make moderate personality adaptations (Barth 1969).

ii.   are aware of the role of others in their adjustment:

On the other hand, they also understand the significant role of other individuals. The underlying theme here is the importance of others' perceptions. The new student modifies his/her behaviour in order to present oneself in the best possible way, and smooth the road ahead. Despite doing this, Hetti talks about being *self-conscious*:

> R   think back to those first few weeks - were
> there any things that you really had to work at when you
> arrived?
>
> Hetti   some people think oh well I don't know but a
> lot of people think they have to look really good so people
> don't go oh my God she's so something so - I was *really*
> self-*conscious*

(127 - 132)

Ascription by others is, therefore, understood by the young people, and is important in determining their behaviours (Barth *op. cit.*). We shall see more examples of this in Chapter 5. The young people seem to know that a gentle easing into their new social setting is best.

iii.   search for commonalities with others:

We have seen that the young people have a positive attitude towards others. Although they may have widely varying backgrounds, they make a conscious effort to set aside differences and get along with their new

peers. These endeavors are complicated by their acknowledgement that they have limited shared interests. Rohan makes this attempt to describe his group of friends:

> R   what do you have in common with your friends in [HC]?
>
> Rohan   umm - we're all international - its not like my friends are all one race - they're all international
>
> R   what do you mean by that?
>
> Rohan   that they all come from different countries and - they've been *around*
>
> R   so you have that in common - anything else
>
> Rohan   no
>
> (237 - 253)

When asked what they have in common with their friends, most young people gave responses that were broad and often vague. It seems that the driving need to make friends overcomes any lack of multiple common interests. Young people revert to more universal matters as a basis for conversation, as revealed in this conversation with Hetti and Nell:

> R   and how about you Hetti - was making friends an issue or not?
>
> Hetti   not really - I didn't really have that much in common with them but I still made friends with them
>
> R   how do you make friends with people you don't have anything in common with?
>
> Nell   I don't know you just *talk*
>
> Hetti   yeah you just talk if - even like say we listen to different types of music we still like *talk* about it and stuff so - if we didn't have the same type of expensive clothes or whatever we still talk about clothes
>
> (203 - 216)

These comments expose a determination to develop relationships, often

by drawing interactions back to very general themes. Alternatively, some

young people set aside disparate backgrounds and lifestyles, and

genuinely take an interest in peers as people, appreciating elements of

their personalities. Adele sums up the situation beautifully:

> sometimes we - you know how they say opposites attract? a
> lot of us don't have much in common but we like hang out
> with each other because we like each other as friends, good
> friends
>
> (503 - 506)

Others form relationships that have a basis in commonalities within the

school environment. Charles, for example, characterizes his friends in

terms of their shared work ethic:

> Charles   well I don't mean we're more hardworking, but
> we're just more - well - focused
>
> R   you're trying to find a nice way to say it, but
> just say what you think...
>
> Charles   well we're much more like - we're just kids that
> like to study and not nerds or anything but umm but how to
> say? we're not as playful as other kids are
>
> (270 - 278)

Charles prefers to restrict his comments to mutual threads that bind his

group. However, a number of young people were explicit about how they

embrace some aspects of their friends and set aside others. Terri

provides us with this wonderful example of quite abstract common

understandings:

> Terri   uh - I think because um uh um we like the
> same thing uh - some of my friends are half like me so we
> know how to be Chinese and how to be not Chinese

R   that sounds interesting - can you tell me more about that?

Terri   um - my very best friend she's half Chinese and half Korean and she's been to another school before as well before so when we talk about school and stuff we have the same thoughts about being in the (other) community and being in an international school so we understand the same relations

R   so do you have similar backgrounds (Terri: yeah) is your daily life similar as well?

Terri   mm - not sure we don't talk about that
                                                  (231 - 247)

Terri may be suggesting a reluctance to talk about possible differences in daily life. Yet she also exemplifies the ways in which the young people will use any available frameworks, however nebulous, for finding similarities with their peers. The vagueness with which they define their ingroup may also reflect more flexible and, possibly, more inclusive definitions of social groups (both ingroups and outgroups). In doing this, they undertake culture-learning as they search for culture-general and ignore culture-specific aspects (Brislin and Yoshida 1994). Once again, this may indicate firstly the diverse composition of the social group and, secondly, the desire to pursue group membership and social identification (Tajfel 1981) despite a lack of obvious, or more widely shared, commonalities. It may also reveal the young people's ability to act as intercultural speakers, considering and using the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to communicate with diverse individuals in real time (Byram 1997: 53).

iv.   tend to maintain marginality in some culturally

challenging situations:

We have seen how the young people make conscious and deliberate

efforts to set aside differences and pursue friendships. There seems to be

a quite straightforward strategy underlying their behaviours: if differences

might cause a problem, ignore the differences! Lisa responds

accordingly:

> R   do you notice the difference in (friends')
> nationalities in day to day things?
>
> Lisa   not really, no
>
> (322 - 325)

Lisa's comment seems to support Gudykunst and Kim's assertion that if

relationships become friendships, the culture of the stranger is less

important (1997: 333). However, another young person, Lily, explains this

is simple for her, but acknowledges it is not universal:

> and I mean isn't it *weird* that we have the opportunity to see
> that people are the same after all it doesn't matter about the
> nationality or the race - some people don't realize it some
> people look at you differently and that - that - sometimes
> you look at oh come on they're being *silly* that's what my
> mum tells me she says that you shouldn't do that but if other
> people do it just say that's fine they don't realize they're
> doing it but sometimes you're just not *able* to just *leave* it
> like that
>
> (619 - 626)

Given Lily's observation that responses to differences will sometimes be

presented, it seems inevitable that there will be confronting or culturally

challenging situations. The young people describe some of these and

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how they deal with them. In such circumstances, the young people mull over their thoughts and, if necessary, choose to maintain marginality.

These young people don't want to be seen as superior or inferior to other groups or individuals. Being marginal serves a purpose in these exchanges - it prevents disharmony, promotes tolerance, and may encourage cultural understanding. Interestingly, it may also allow movement between intergroups. From a group perspective, Tajfel addresses groups which are marginally defined, and suggests their individuals are presented with difficulties in defining their place in a social system (1981: 277). However, in noting the dynamic nature of social identity, Tajfel suggests that passing from one group to another, and acquiring social identity as a consequence of this, is contingent on the extent of the superior or inferior nature of each group (Tajfel *ibid.*). If the young people do not perceive others as either inferior or superior, this perception may allow transfer of individuals between groups. As we shall see in Chapter 5, this does occur regularly.

From an individual, rather than a group, perspective, Bennett (1993) suggests that marginality is an individual response to growing up overseas. One can choose to remain marginal and isolated (*encapsulated marginality*) or develop a sense of self and relate to different types of people (*constructive marginality*). Schaetti (1996) and Fail *et al.* (2004) have utilized this concept to discuss identity and belonging. Schaetti proposes that those who are *constructive marginals*

can negotiate cultural traditions with ease and develop a strong sense of

who they are (1996: 2). Greta relates a particular example of this:

> Greta   we still have a few general interests but otherwise, I like rock climbing, one of my friends likes [home country] dancing, my other friend likes horse riding, stuff like that - and we *definitely* have *very* different cultural backgrounds and stuff like that
>
> R   do you notice that in everyday things or
>
> Greta   well mm - once in a while it kinds of comes forward like - my best friends, one of my friends can't go to a sleepover because she has to go do her [home country] dancing thing and she *has* to do that cause it's what her father and mother say that she *has* to do cause her *mother* did it and her *grandmother* did it and ...
>
> R   you understand that?
>
> Greta   yeah kind of - not all of it - but in a way
>
>   (282 - 297)

Greta places herself in a situation where she appears neither superior

nor inferior. In fact, she provides an example of how she can 'decentre',

or suspend her own beliefs in this situation (Byram 1997: 3). Being

marginal does not necessarily imply understanding, but it does relate to

being able to consider multiple perspectives. Greta is able to act as an

'intercultural speaker', describing her ability to mediate and manage

dysfunctions while establishing relationships (Byram 1997: 38).

In the same way, Charles is experienced in negotiating cultures and can

synthesize these experiences:

> R   so if you move to a new place and a new culture, you don't accept everything?

Charles   well, I'd say that - for all my living in different countries and then - seems that sometimes I agree with and sometimes I agree with - but I agree with the ones that really make sense to me and don't really agree to - well, I don't say I don't agree with that, for example when it comes to India and the temples - I agree with that - all the Gods and stuff but I want to respect the cultures and at least in my mind, sometimes I accept it and some makes sense and some - doesn't make sense to me

R   so you're weighing them up?

Charles   yeah

R   and how do you decide if they're acceptable or not acceptable - what makes up your mind?

Charles   well - mmm (thinking) - my mother taught me how to do this sort of thing - umm just think that it happens in everyday life and mm - just the things that really make sense to me and maybe show me that I'm - in reality

(406 - 436)

It should also be noted that Charles and, earlier, Greta and Lily, have mentioned mothers as they talk about cultural understandings. This is a clear indication of the influence of parents and a reminder that some of these understandings may be passed on rather than being totally formed in response to the young people's experiences.

iv.   try to maintain access to other groups and individuals in the social pool:

Most interestingly, the young people seem to refer to the other groups at school as a *potential* pool of friends. We have seen that, rather than considering their peers in terms of ingroup/outgroup, they separate the cohort into *friends* and *people I don't really know yet*. There is a clear

distinction between these. Unlike outgroup members, *people I don't really know yet* may become friends. The reasons for this are, once again, probably due to the unstable nature of the social setting.

In particular, we can see how some of the young people prepare for any possible changes in friendships. Greta subscribes to the idea of having a number of *best friends*:

> R   so do you have a *best* friend?
>
> Greta   I have a few best friends
>
> (335 - 337)

Linda doesn't have several best friends simultaneously, but she does overlap her friendships. She describes the behaviours she employs when someone's leaving. Although she doesn't want to *panic*, it is vital not to become a *loner*:

> you don't panic and you don't, like, stop the friendship
> straight away - you're still friends with them
> but you're also ...trying to make other friends as well
> because when they're gone you don't want to be a loner or
> anything, even if you do have other friends
>
> (219 - 223)

The young people do not seem to be associating with only one group and ignoring others. Rather, they are constantly aware of the relationships between and among groups. There is a connection between this and the previous discussion on maintaining a position which is neither superior nor inferior. As well as attending to potential change, the young people

are creating and maintaining social capital through these networks (Bourdieu 1997).

*   *   *   *   *

Summary: Fitting in

The young people are adept at fitting in. They can describe ways in which they practise culture-learning, searching for culture-general and ignoring culture-specific elements. They are prepared to transfer between social groups and maintain a social climate that will permit this movement. In doing so, they build social capital. They are proficient as intercultural speakers, practising skills of discovery and interaction that will be useful in a multitude of interactions.

In being able to develop and utilize these behaviours, we should also note they are developing knowledge about culture and people, and intrapersonal and interpersonal competences, such as interpersonal sensitivity, communication competence and situational sensitivity. Stier has called these 'content competencies' and 'processual competencies' (2003).

*   *   *   *   *

Chapter 4 Summary:

This chapter has addressed the first of two major research questions: what intercultural competences do these young people use? It has outlined some skills, attitudes and/or knowledge components that demonstrate the young people's ability to think and act in interculturally appropriate ways (Hammer *et al.* 2003; Byram 1997). A summary of these can be found in Appendix 5.

In undertaking this task, the intention has been to capture the *young people's perspectives* of their situation. Whilst exploring these, it was found that the young people were metacognitive about their thoughts and feelings, reflective, articulate and willing to discuss skills, attitudes and knowledge that have importance *to them*.

This chapter can be summarized in the following three points:

1.   **The young people demonstrate intercultural competences:**

The competences described by the young people were abstracted and labelled, and it appears they have theories about each of these. In *change management*, they reflect their understanding of society and how to act as sociologists, thinking about ways to manage their highly mobile environment and the changes within it. In *perspective taking,* they act more as social-psychologists, revealing how they contemplate situations and events from multiple and flexible viewpoints, and

understanding that these affect their view of cultural groups and the world. Additionally, acting as ethnographers, they attend to *fitting in* as a crucial competence; both in launching relationships, and as a long term strategy for establishing and maintaining social identity.

Two critical themes pervade the young people's comments. Firstly, they are overwhelmingly concerned with their social integration. In response to this, they undertake complex and continuous planning and reflection, in order to establish and maintain their place in the social setting. Significantly, this planning is complicated by the other theme, that of ongoing change. In this incredibly dynamic setting, it seems that managing change is a pre-condition for establishing relationships.

The young people deal with social integration and change by developing and implementing the competences of fitting in and change management. They are cognizant that, in an environment where they have minimal control, there are some factors they can manipulate and some situations in which they can have influence. Effectively, they stage-manage some of the schooling aspects of their lives, becoming proficient at anticipating, resourcing and reflecting on their experiences, in which successful peer relationships are regarded as imperative.

Additionally, the role played by perspective-taking must be considered. In a setting where flexibility is critical, perspective-taking is an important lens through which the young people can modify their expectations and

understandings of themselves and others. As well as advancing the process of 'ascription' (Barth 1969) such flexible adaptation can prevent further barriers to communication.

2.   These competences have some similarities with existing models of intercultural competence:

The young people's understandings of being intercultural share similarities with existing models of intercultural competence:

- They describe the importance of a social context (Bennet et al. 1999; Byram 1997; Liddicoat 2002; Paige et al. 1999).

- In talking about their understandings, they include elements of skills, attitudes and behaviours (Bennet et al. 1999; Byram 1997; Paige and Stringer 1997; Paige et al. 1999).

- They discuss culture-specific and culture-general elements (Bennet et al. 1999; Byram 1997; Byram 1999; Crozet 1996; Crozet et al. 1999; Liddicoat et al. 1997; Liddicoat et al.1999; Paige et al. 1999; Paige and Stringer 1997).

- They depict a development in intercultural competence. It contains elements of Bennet et al.'s (1999) DMIS model, such as moving from ethnocentrism towards greater levels of ethnorelativism after being exposed to, and reflecting on, cultural differences. It also portrays Liddicoat 's (2002) continuous cycle of acquisition, involving the noticing of, and reflection on, different cultural elements.

o   There appears to be a similarity between perspective taking and the ability to 'decentre'. Byram suggests that the ability to decentre and take up another's perspective is critical in the successful exchange of information (1997: 3). In this setting decentring allows the young people not only to consider perspectives, but to minimize barriers that may reduce communication and impact their social integration. Their perspective taking behaviours demonstrate Byram's '*savoir s'engager:* knowing how to commit oneself', '*savoir comprendre:* knowing how to understand' and '*savoir être:* attitudes about one's own and other cultures' (1997). However, they are also aware that they situate themselves in a place which is not wholly confined within one culture and is similar to Kramsch's (1993) 'third place'.

3.   **Some elements of these competences are not reflected in the existing literature:**

o   The young people are able to recreate or restore elements of social capital that Bourdieu (1997) suggests are broken when families move.

o   The young people describe a complex personal perspective or value that can be called *world view.* In contrast to the treatment of similar concepts in the literature it is expressed not only as an attitude, but also behaviour.

o   The young people's view of others is sometimes at variance with current social identity theory that suggests people will behave in

certain ways in group situations. As we have seen, the young people tend to separate groups perceptually but not judgmentally. Rather than drawing clear distinctions between groups (Gudykunst 1998; Tajfel 1981), they choose to maintain a more marginal stance that ensures access to a pool of potential friends. They temper their views of 'others' so that they may create bridges to new individuals and groups if required. These behaviours may also be due to the anticipated, ongoing social change that seems to characterise the young people's experience. However, it appears they are aware that in order to establish and maintain relationships in a dynamic intercultural setting, social groupings may need to be more flexible and inclusive. This area may require further investigation.

<center>*   *   *   *   *</center>

This chapter has identified and described the young people's intercultural competences. However, they do not work in isolation. The critical role of these competences, and the relationship between them, can be more clearly understood by considering their functions within the setting in which they are applied. This consideration is undertaken with an awareness that other factors (such as parents' influence) may also contribute to the young people's development and use of appropriate strategies. However, the young people emphasize the processes and

context of their social integration when discussing their intercultural

competences.

Accordingly, Chapter 5 will situate these competences within the social

processes utilized by the young people.

CHAPTER 5:   Analysis Part ii.

Social processes and intercultural competence

The development of social relationships was nominated by all the young people as the most important issue in living in an international environment. Chapter 4 examined the intercultural competences used by the young people in this setting. This chapter analyses their perceptions of the social processes that underlie this context, and the relationship of those processes with the competences of change management, perspective taking and fitting in. In particular, it will:

   i.   consider the young people's understandings about how relationships are formed in this setting, and show how they analyse and categorize relationships; and

   ii.   present the researcher's model of these processes, inferred from what the young people say.

5.3   The young people's understandings about how relationships are formed in this setting, and how they analyse and categorize relationships

All of the young people expressed almost identical understandings about how relationships are initiated, established and maintained in this setting. In describing this process, they organized and discussed their understandings using two core frameworks:

1.   stages of the process, that were marked by clear

        categories of events or situations; and

2.   an important chronological order that they believe

        underpins these stages.

These are represented by the following framework, Diagram 5.1.

```
        ┌─────────────────────┐
        │     pre-moving      │
        └─────────────────────┘
                   │
                   ▼
        ┌─────────────────────┐
        │      initiation     │
        └─────────────────────┘
                   │
                   ▼
        ┌─────────────────────┐
        │     friendship      │
        └─────────────────────┘
                   │
                   ▼
        ┌─────────────────────┐
        │      belonging      │
        └─────────────────────┘
```
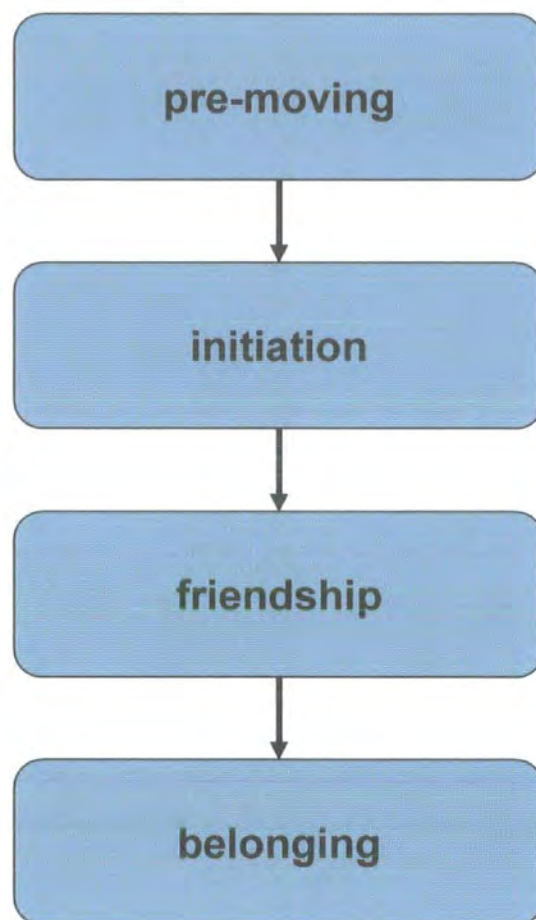
Diagram 5.1: **An overview of the young people's understandings as to how relationships develop in an international setting**

Each box represents a category of events or situations as described by the young people, although the labels are the researcher's. Note that the diagram represents their beliefs that the process of social integration develops in a linear manner and categories are quite clearly defined. Overcoming the challenges of one stage is often considered as a pre-requisite for subsequent stages. All of the participants had experience of each of these circumstances.

5.1.1 Pre-moving

This is the preparatory stage of moving, prior to any meetings or contact within the new setting. It typically occurs for up to six months before actually moving, and is classified as mental preparation, marked by excitement, trepidation, sadness and a reliance on family. Linda draws attention to the increasing concern about making new friends as one gets older:

> ... as you get older I think - you get more worried about, like making friends and if you're gonna make new friends there and stuff
>
> (20 - 22)

Being *worried* seems to be an aspect of this stage as the young people prepare to leave the familiar for the unfamiliar. Although they are becoming more knowledgeable about how to initiate friends, they are also more aware of potential problems. Adele is specific about her concerns. She can *relate* to her home country peers, but knows that cultural

differences can complicate the arena of social relationships:

> R   do you remember how you felt about moving
> to a new country?
>
> Adele   yeah - I wasn't really happy because when I
> was in [home country] I got I made a lot of friends, very
> close friends and this isn't being racist or anything but
> everyone over there's [culturally similar] so when you come
> here there's a difference because in [home country] you can
> *relate* to things because its all [culturally similar] and things -
> everybody is just the same, nobody is like oh some people
> come from this country and some people come from that
> country that's why it's not exactly - oh that country's poor
> and stuff - there's not much of *that*, not much of racism
> either so it's like - [home country] I really liked it and I -
> wanted to stay on cause I made a lot of good friends and
> my family lived there - but then - um - I was really sad when
> we had to move but I guess um, I could've stayed back but
> then I didn't want to because it's fun to move also and you
> might make a new best friend and also might find
> something, someplace you've never been to and stuff like
> that so - it was - *Ok* - it wasn't *that* bad
>
> (14 - 33)

This trepidation in regard to leaving friends and finding new ones was a common theme amongst the young people. The mental preparation that marks this stage utilizes their change management competences. They express their tolerance of change and excited but anxious attitudes towards it. A developing resilience and preparedness for change typify Kim's (1988) 'adaptive predisposition'. Additionally, the young people are expressing an increasing reliance on interpersonal relationships (Werkman *et al.* 1981). This dependence may compel them to develop and apply successful change management strategies.

The concern about friendships continues when the young person arrives at the new school. However, the mental preparation of pre-moving gives

way to dealing with the reality of being there as the young person enters the initiation stage.

5.1.2 Initiation

This term describes the period immediately before and after moving into the setting, when the young people make initial contact with their new school and peers. During initiation, each young person gathers acquaintances who might become friends, or provide important connections to others. The young people feel concerned or worried, but try to veil this. Initiation is, therefore, marked by positive - negative mood swings, concealment of true thoughts and feelings, a desire to get this over with and make real friends, and eventually, a more calm and rational attitude to the process. During this time, they begin to utilize their perspective taking competences. The young people cultivate the attitudes that will allow them to make friends. They listen and learn in social situations, use opportunities to exchange important cultural information and, most importantly, reflect on themselves and others.

Although the young people expect that successful initiation will result in them feeling *accepted* as a new group member, they believe the onus to accept the new person lies primarily with others. As a result of this conviction, young people may be guarded about being too open to others,

and more concerned with presenting the right impression than presenting

their true selves.

Linda describes this as pressure, and believes it emanates from others:

> Linda   you just have to make sure that you don't
> make any wrong moves, like because - if - can I say - when
> you're new, you don't want to get everyone to not like you
> *straight away*, you know, you want them - so you don't want
> to do anything *wrong* - it's like, a lot of pressure cause you
> don't want to do anything wrong - cause you don't want to
> like, start off on like, a *bad* - what do you call it? a bad -
>
> R   footing?
>
> Linda   a bad footing, yeah, from the start and then,
> like have to spend the rest of the time you're here trying to
> like, make that up
>
> R   so where's that pressure coming from?
>
> Linda   it's what people think of you ...
>
> (70 - 85)

These comments regarding the perceived importance of others are

characteristic of this initial period, and illustrate the use of perspective-

taking competences. The young people convey the importance attached

to other ascription (Barth 1969), and their understanding of the shared

responsibilities of themselves and others in advancing social integration

(Kim 1995). When Linda uses terms such as 'pressure' in relation to the

perceived influence of her peers, she seems to be aware of a momentary

lack of control. Personal identity is now less significant than social identity

(Tajfel and Turner 1979).

At this time, the young people begin to activate their fitting in

competences. For example, John draws on his social networks and the

opportunities provided by the *helpful* reception he received:

> John   because everyone was so helpful when I
> moved into the new school and I made more friends that I
> didn't actually know within the first few periods
>
> R   that sounds like it was easy
>
> John   yeah it was easy cause I had friends I already
> knew except I also met a few others
>
> R   so even though you already knew people, you
> made other friends quite quickly as well?
>
> John   yeah
>
> (63 - 75)

John was able to use existing networks to help him at this time. However,

the circumstances of Terri's initiation were quite different, because she

was placed in an English as a Second Language class with other

recently-enrolled students. Although she had teacher support, Terri's

peers were also new to the school, leaving them very little alternative but

to *stick* together:

> Terri   uh it was I was in ESL a very *small* class
> ...and one of the girl I knew her from when she was in the
> same *condominium* as me so I just *stick* with her *(laughs)*
> and then um there was only five girls so we all stayed
> together because we all of us in the class were new ....

She goes on:

> R   what about things like finding your way around
> the school, if you were all new together?
>
> Terri   um at the orientation day the teachers showed
> us around and we remembered the rooms where we had to
> go and it was really big ....
>
> (53 - 67)

Despite the difference in Terri's initial situation, she still draws on the same kinds of social and school resources used by other young people.

The key terms used by the young people in this stage include 'worry', 'pressure from others' and being 'nervous'. However, unlike the symptoms described in the culture shock literature, this sense of being initially overwhelmed is short-lived as the task of settling in is underway. Rather than being overwhelmed and disoriented, the young people begin to access and use resources that will help them move into the next stage. Powell has noted that identifying and acting upon such challenges and opportunities can serve as a 'profound shock absorber' (2001: 22 - 23). It seems the young people effectively demonstrate their ability to handle stressful situations, a factor Miyamoto and Kuhlman (2001) suggest is linked to interculturally competent individuals.

The initiation stage sees the young person make initial contact with peers, but more importantly, it is about making connections - fitting in. Some of these may become friendships.

5.1.3 Friendship

Friendship is an expected consequence of the initiation period. The lack of situational control and reliance on others changes as young people move into relationships where they feel valued *both* as individuals and

members of the group. Worry and concern is diminished as, in friendship, the emphasis is on the young person's sense of well-being and feeling *comfortable* in a group. Adele describes pre-moving, orientation and friendship in terms of moving from being *scared* to *settled*:

> so when I heard I was like oh wow I'm moving to (this school) -... but when I moved I was kind of scared cause I didn't know people and I was leaving my best friend - she moved here as well but she stayed an extra year at (previous school) but when I got in here I was just thinking oh I really miss all the old people at (previous school) I wonder what they're doing at the same time - it was really different and kind of scary on the first day but um - like Grade seven wasn't that good - first year *is always* a little hard - so I didn't settle in that well but this year I have a lot of friends and stuff
>
> (95 - 108)

Adele is cognizant of her fitting in competences. She goes on to describe how she consciously adapts and adjusts to her new social group, and the complex thinking behind making friends, from making acquaintances to finding the *right people*:

> last year I got to *know* people I didn't get to know them better than what I wanted to and this year I got put with some people with my last year's class that I *never* thought I'd be with and now they're my best friends - and when I was in their class last year I thought no - I don't wanna be *their* friends and now they're my best friends - so I guess the first year was just like - getting - trying to find the right *people* and you're just looking around who are the people you wouldn't want around, who are the people who are affectionate, they're friendly they are - like not racist - I don't really like people who are racist, well I don't mind them but I just think that they should change - and also people who are very - who pay attention in class - my parents have told me that a lot of times - please do not go hanging around people who skive and don't go to class - so I'm not with them I don't hang around with those people - I do have friends who don't concentrate in class but everyone doesn't concentrate, you can't give 100% *all* the time - so they do slack off

> sometimes but otherwise, people are just similar to me in
> that they - we're almost the same age so
>
> (133 -152)

Adele is aware of how crucial fitting in is, and is being more proactive in

the process than may have been the case during the initiation period. She

has spent the first year getting to *know* people, sorting out those with

whom she feels comfortable and shares some commonalities.

Like Adele, other young people also talk in terms of *knowing* others and

being *known*. In contrast to initiation, friendships involve more intense

and close relationships, and the young people feel they have more

freedom to be themselves. James gives us this example of being at ease

within his group, and the mutual respect individuals hold for each other,

even if their views differ:

> because I think you're very comfortable with them and you'd
> like to know their opinion and then if it's not the same as
> yours you go no way! (laughs)
>
> (357 - 359)

During initiation, the young people approach initial contacts sensitively,

and feel a strong emphasis is on *others* to welcome *them*. In contrast,

friendship is about finding a mutual fit with peers. The young people know

they must adjust to the setting, and they also remain mindful that others

play an important role in their adjustment.

Mindfulness is a concept that recurs throughout the young people's

comments. Langer (1989) suggests that mindfulness is an intercultural

concept with three criteria: the creation of new categories, openness to new information and awareness of more than one perspective. Langer proposes that those who 'create new categories' are able to see the world in new ways. They are able to live between the borders and boundaries of different cultures, rather than subscribing to one defined culture.

Gudykunst notes that being mindful is positively associated with intercultural communication competence (1992) and is the single most important skill in communicating with strangers (1998). According to Ting-Toomey and Kurogi, mindfulness involves 'attending to one's internal assumptions, cognitions, and emotions and simultaneously attuning attentively to the other's assumptions, cognitions, and emotions while focusing the five senses' (1998: 203). Ting-Toomey has further explored this concept in work on multiple reacculturations among transients, and suggests mindful intercultural communication allows dissimilar individuals to negotiate shared meanings and achieve desired outcomes through appropriate and effective behaviors in an intercultural situation (1999: 50). Langer notes the more effective communication that emanates from being mindful and making conscious, considered choices (1997).

It does seem that the young people are mindful of their own and others' thinking and needs during this time, and this mindfulness may promote the successful development of social relationships.

On reflection, young people often thought their fears during pre-moving and orientation were exaggerated. Rohan has learned that others will not only accept him, but *want* and *try* to be his friend:

> Rohan   ... because I've already moved - I know what to expect - I know not to be that nervous
>
> R   and what do you expect when you move?
>
> Rohan   that people will *want* to be my friend and *try* to be my friend
>
> R   and you didn't think that before?
>
> Rohan   well I was kinda scared
>
> (200 - 210)

In terms of Ward and Kennedy's (1993) core elements of intercultural adjustment, it appears the young people are more concerned with their socio-cultural adaptation (or culture learning) than their psychological adjustment (stress and coping processes). Getting to *know* people is a primary objective. Consequently, we see them begin to use their knowledge of social identity acquisition as the foundation for successful interaction and access to social groups (Byram 1997: 36).

All the interviewees considered themselves as having friends with whom they felt comfortable. However, this sense of place within a peer group, described in the key terms of 'comfort' and being with 'the right people' is different from the final category, belonging.

5.1.4 Belonging

This is seen as a much more complex concept, in which both young people and significant others in their community share mutual acceptance of each other and *put up with* both the good and the bad. A distinction is made here between the kind of belonging that is family-specific and contained and the young people's use of the term in a wider context.

None of the young people considered themselves as belonging in their current situation. It was talked about as either something that had been previously experienced, and/or something that might occur in the future. Discussions about belonging raised two recurring themes, having a *place* and being in it for a long *time*.

Some young people reflected on having had a *place* that was always there and, seemingly, non-negotiable. Linda recalls how she felt in her home country, where things *didn't change*:

> [sigh] the basic - the life - if I look at it now, it seems pretty boring - yeah - I started preschool - that was like, the highlight of my life for that whole five years and, well, it was, you had a place - and you had to stay in that place really, and that didn't change
>
> (150 - 154)

Linda seems to regard that *place* as having been relinquished. The apparent lack of a sense of ownership of either the host or passport country is a trait of internationally mobile young people (Schaetti 1995). Surprisingly, even young people who had not had similar experiences

talked about belonging as something to desire. Charles also yearns for *a place*, despite never having experienced one:

> well - if you live in a country forever you just feel that - one of the people in the country and you're - not - an alien, kinda alien to them - you have a place, you have a real home to live in - a place where you're born and a place where you live
>
> (486 - 490)

Even young people who had lived in this city for most of their lives had issues with belonging, not because *they* were moving around, but because their relationships with others were often short. Rohan makes several comments about this, and concludes:

> ...over time, like your *whole life*, if you know someone its different than just for six months
>
> (186 - 187)

Rohan has linked the issue of belonging to relationships, and this is a significant comment. Walker (1998) has explored this concept in relation to children's literature, and suggests a sense of belonging can be attached to either a place *or* significant relationships. Fail's (1995) work with adult TCK's (Third Culture Kids) found that people's sense of belonging was three times stronger to relationships than to a particular country. It appears these young people understand these two forms of attachments, but, because of short relationships and constant mobility, have relatively limited experience of them.

Although the young people do not discuss belonging in detail, they do use their perspective taking competences to comment about it. They reflect

on the relationships between people and their cultural groups, understand the role of environment - 'a place' - and can appreciate the common core that binds cultural groups together. It is clear that the young people regard belonging as a high-status concept. They distinguish between belonging and the fitting in they described in the friendship stage. This understanding differs from that of Brislin and Yoshida (1994), who group together 'belonging and related concepts', and discuss fitting in and belonging in interchangeable terms (*op cit.:* 117).

The research did not delve further into belonging. It is clear, though, that the young people want to belong somewhere, and that belonging has connotations that reach beyond the spheres of school and friends.

*   *   *   *

In summary, the young people conceptualise the process of forming relationships in terms of four stages: pre-moving, initiation, friendship and belonging. They describe a chronological and hierarchical relationship between these components, and believe that being successful in pre-moving and, particularly, initiation will allow them to make lasting friendships. Their expectation is that they will be successful in both initiation and friendships.

Intercultural competences are used in at least three of these stages.

During pre-moving, change management competences are critical. Initiation draws on perspective taking competences, firstly to cope with the challenges, and then to help activate fitting in competences that will enable movement to the next stage. Throughout the friendship stage, fitting in competences are paramount. Additionally, mindfulness is a useful tool that allows the young people to reflect on, and see new ways, of looking at the world (and social relationships).

However, belonging is more complex and involves not only peers, but also family and community relationships. The research did not investigate this dimension, preferring to focus on the South-east Asian international school setting.

5.2   The researcher's model of the social processes used by the young people in this setting

The young people's understandings of how relationships are developed were based on quite clearly defined categories of events or situations. I used both their comments and inferences drawn from these to produce a model of the social processes. There were four main phases in the development of social relationships. I called these *readiness, casual enforcement, selective opportunism* and *social integration*. Diagram 5.2 (below) summarises this analysis.

social
integration

selective
opportunism

casual
enforcement

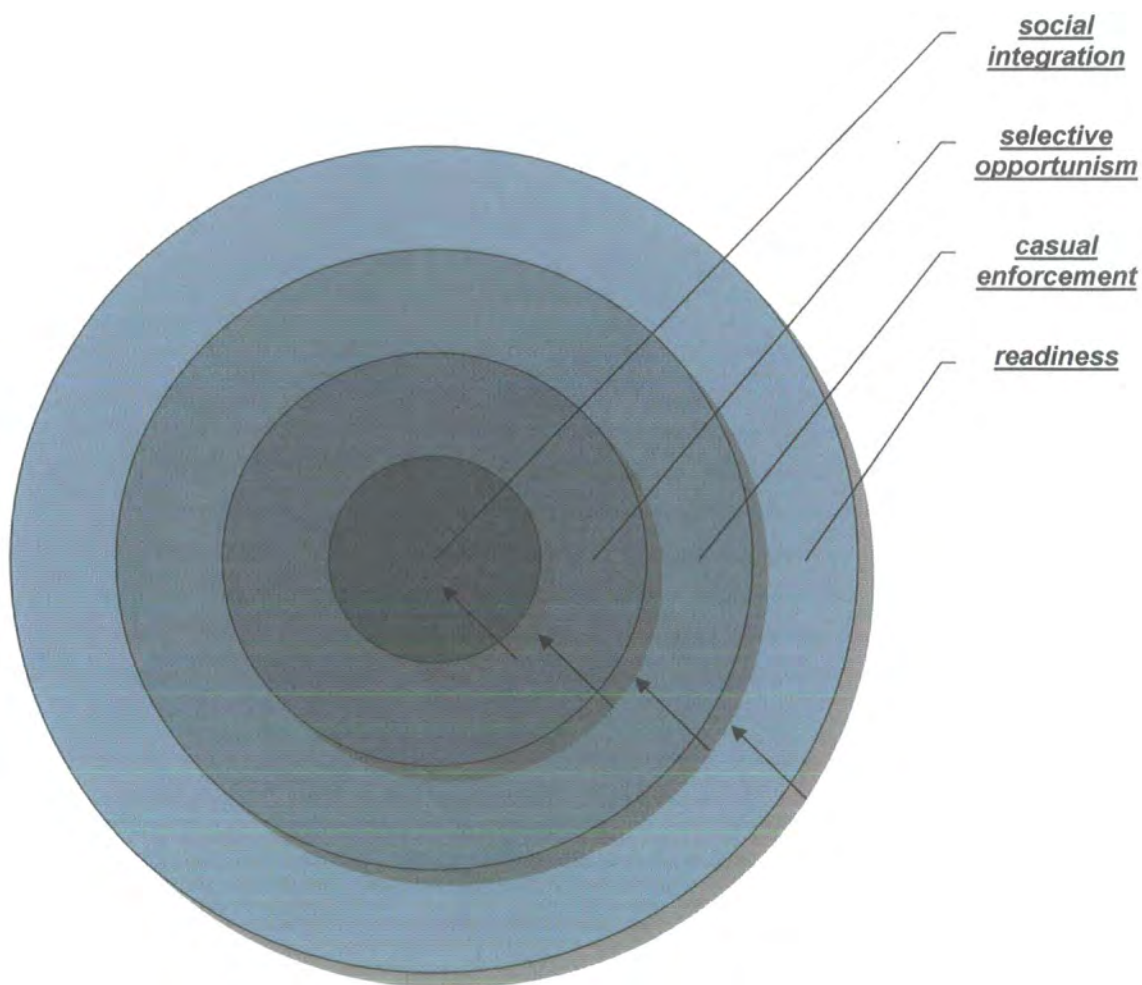*readiness*

Diagram 5.2: *A model of social integration in a South-east Asian*

international school

Essentially, the process of forming relationships is institutionalized and

the young people feel compelled to engage in it. A target diagram is used

because the young people's behaviours are goal-oriented. In this case,

the goal at the centre of the diagram is **social integration.**

One definition of social integration includes the following:

> Social integration is the ability of different groups in society to live together in productive and cooperative harmony and to accommodate differences within a framework of common interest to the benefit of all. Social integration implies justice for the individual and different social groups
>
> (World Bank 2004: 1).

Although this definition appears to have an underlying social justice agenda, it nevertheless describes a situation to which these young people aspire. In terms of their personal emphasis, it is probably true that (at this time) their focus in terms of social integration is more on the standing of an individual - themselves - than on wider social harmony. Primarily, their concern is whether and how they will become socially integrated.

The ways in which individuals become members of new groups through 'passing' and adopting their boundary markers has been explored by (amongst others) Barth (1969), Hall (1976), Kim (2005, 1995b) and Ting-Toomey (2005). In contrast, Simmel (1908/1971) does not think the stranger integrates but takes a special place. However, as we shall see, these young people want to share a common place.

Consequently, they are conscious of the process and how they are functioning within it. In order to become socially integrated, the young people proceed through three successive gateways: *readiness, casual enforcement* and *selective opportunism*. Although Diagram 5.2

represents this movement as uni-directional, there will be times when the young people return to a previous phase. This occurs, significantly, because of the forces activated by social and/or environmental change within the setting, or due to the mobility of people into or out of the setting. Moreover, it is apparent that, as the young people move towards the goal of social integration, there are changes in both the nature of their social relationships, and their subsequent levels of control and engagement.

The model is fundamentally one that focuses on social processes, with a social goal as its objective. Now let's look more closely at the four phases.

5.2.1 Social integration

The ultimate goal for the young people is social integration, a term used here to denote a state where individuals blend into their social setting, i.e. with peers, family and the wider community. Whilst the young people made it clear that social integration was their objective, they did not discuss this condition in detail. We do know from their comments that they desire *a place*. For some reason, Charles feels alien in his current environment, despite being very comfortable with his peers. He talks about the unconditional *acceptance* that he believes accompanies absolute integration. This need to belong in a total sense is, as he

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puts it, *in the back of my mind*:

> Charles   yeah yeah in the back of your mind you just feel that - well -its not your real *home* and its just a *place* - it just feels different after you move a couple of times
>
> R   there's something about not having a place that bothers you?
>
> Charles   mmm - well - I'm just think that, trying to think about how people think of you - differently - cause if you live at home in a country that's where you're born you just feel - people there *accepted* you for long time and as - well - people think you're a smart kid or just teenagers and people think they're stuck with you as one group - aahh! (exasperated) it's just how I feel and - it's in the back of my mind
>
> (520 - 523)

Charles talks about the importance of being known and accepted by others over a long period of time. They appear to understand that social integration occurs through the consensus of those involved (Habermas 1987: 186). This raises two issues for the young people. It has been acknowledged that this setting is dynamic and relationships are relatively short. As well as Charles moving on, the 'others' may move on. Furthermore, in this setting, the young people have limited contact with the more stable (host country) community.

Accordingly, some young people distinguish between their relationships at school and those with the host-country nationals. John, in talking about his sporting interests, makes a distinction between the two groups, and comments that he doesn't see the host national friends *as much*:

John   …I wouldn't have met as many people here as like - that friend that I played tennis with, I've met him, he's from Japan and then I've got loads of [host country] friends who play and then lots here as well except more of the better players are local - at school we don't have as many - except for football- most of my team go to this school and a small few go to [another school]

R   you're talking about the local kids as one group and the international school kids as another kind of group - what makes them separate?

John   um - I mean like I don't see my local friends as much because we only have four big tournaments a year and then I meet all my friends then and I see them every now and again in [the city] except I only see them to play tennis mostly four times a year

(202 - 218)

This limited contact with host nationals may be characteristic of some international school settings and has been noted in the literature (Bunnell 2005; Gerner *et al.* 1992; Shafer 1998b).

Although understandings of social integration were not explored in depth within the interviews, Charles' and James' comments are representative of the other young people who touched on this theme. Given the brevity of relationships, and the lack of ongoing contact with 'others' who play an important role in social integration, it is not surprising that the young people made few comments in this area.

The young people's perspectives on social integration may also relate to the 'integration' stage in Bennett *et al.*'s (1999) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). Liddicoat *et al.* suggest that the learner may no longer feel centred in any one culture, but on the margins of a

combination of cultures. This marginality will have benefits as it enables

the person to move fluidly through a range of cultural contexts (2003: 23).

Similarly, Hammer *et al.* describe the experience of self being 'expanded

to include the movement in and out of different cultural worldviews' and

suggest Bennet *et al.*'s 'integration' stage 'is descriptive of a growing

number of people, including many members of non-dominant cultures,

long-term expatriates, and global nomads' (2003: 425 - 6).

Even though the young people articulate a desire to become socially

integrated, it appears to be something of which they have had limited

experience. However, they did reflect on the phases preceding social

integration, and it is possible to discuss these in more detail.

5.2.2 Readiness

Readiness coincides with the events the young people describe in the

pre-moving phase. The focus at this time is the mental preparation for

change, or, as Adele tells us, ensuring one is *ready* for what will transpire:

> R   OK - so what do you think a person needs to
> be able to adjust to living in another country?
>
> Adele   they just need to be - they just need to be *able*
> to make new friends, meet new people they *should* be like,
> *ready* for - because people generally *know* what they're
> gonna, you might not, well most of the time you don't really
> *know* what you're gonna what's gonna happen but what's
> gonna be there or stuff but you *should* be like, *ready* for it -
> you shouldn't be *scared* to meet new people, you shouldn't
> be *antisocial* but you shouldn't be *so* social that you're
> missing - you just need to be *friendly* - you just need to be

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friendly and nice and not *too overboard* as in *too nice* but you should just be *friendly* and and just be ready to meet new challenges and people

(635 - 648)

During this time, the young person is withdrawing from one social setting and preparing for another. They are quite powerless, anticipating a loss of control over the events that are about to change their lives. They begin to draw on, or activate, their change management competences.

Linda clearly illustrates the way in which the young people can convey their understandings about how change impacts, and is impacted by, their peer relationships. In particular, certain ceremonies are important during this transition period, and Linda describes both her excitement at leaving her previous home, and the sadness of not achieving the closure she needed:

> Linda   mmm - I was a bit upset because I had to leave my friends with almost like *no* notice, you know - umm, I was excited at first but then when I didn't get to say goodbye to my friends *properly* ...
>
> R   and what upset you about having to leave them without saying goodbye?
>
> Linda   because - it - it wasn't a very nice way to leave - it's better to - it wasn't like *final* enough
>
> R   so when you leave, you have to have something very final happen?
>
> Linda   well not very final, but at least like a goodbye and not sort of a general trailing off thing, not like that
>
> (32 - 48)

However, the young people also believe the experience of repeated mobility results in familiarity with the process. Matt describes the way that expecting and anticipating change is made *easier* with practice:

> it gets easier cause when you move a lot you know what you're gonna *expect* - like a new environment, a new house - but you're not physically used to it, mentally you're used to it a bit more
>
> (269 - 272)

This was a common theme amongst the young people. Although the process may be difficult, navigating it becomes easier with subsequent experiences. The thinking aspect may become more familiar, and the process more automated.

The desire for ceremonies that signal the end of life in one setting, and the anticipation that follows, reveal the young people's awareness that different behaviours may be required. Kim believes that strangers undergo deculturation, which conveys an unlearning of some cultural patterns or behaviours, partly due to a need for different responses in certain situations (1988: 53). The implication is that 'old' cultural knowledge may be unneeded in the new situation. However, it is also possible these young people, aware of the potential for further change, may not *unlearn* cultural practices, but merely put them into storage for later use if required. Given the central importance of cultural knowledge in their perspective taking and fitting in competences, it is possible that they mentally gather cultural knowledge, expecting they may need to draw on it.

Being able to anticipate change and readying oneself mentally shows the young people are activating change management competences. These are important preparations for the next phase, where change will become a reality. At this juncture the young people feel in control, but in the next phase the locus of control seems to be lost albeit for a short time.

5.2.3 Casual enforcement

Casual enforcement encapsulates the period when the young person is about to come into, or has recently entered, the new setting. This term has been used to denote a period where many interactions that seem to happen by chance (or are *casual*) are actually orchestrated (or *enforced*) by agents, such as teachers and peers. Essentially, the process controls the young person, and they see themselves as having limited power, control and choices.

Control becomes a significant issue to the young people now. Their comments begin to include reference to locus of control, that is, the perceived source of control over their behaviour. People with an internal locus of control, 'internals', believe they control their own destiny, whereas those with an external locus of control, 'externals', believe in fate, luck or other external circumstances (Rotter 1966).

Locus of control is concerned with underlying cognitive processes and

their effects on behaviour (Leo and Galloway 1996). As a useful tool of social learning theory, locus of control allows interpretation of people's remarks (Lefcourt 1982). As we examine *casual enforcement*, it will become apparent that locus of control is an appropriate construct for helping to explain some of the young people's comments at this time, particularly in relation to their perceived control over choices and opportunities.

During casual enforcement, agents, such as teachers and other peers, appear to take control of aspects of the social environment. The young people understand the role of those acting as agents, and, because they have faith in the process, play a more passive role. The young people know this period will be unavoidable, but relatively short. Within this situation, perspective taking competences will play a crucial role, and pave the way for the young people to begin to engage their fitting in competences.

The casual enforcement phase is marked by increasing nervousness, reliance on family for support, and sometimes, fear and/or elation that accompany an awareness of the potential brevity of initial relationships. Agents organize and/or participate in important school events, including orientation days, camps and buddy allocation, and the young person uses these to connect with new peers. James tells of his change of attitude from when he didn't *want* to go to school, and describes the support given by his father and the fleeting nature of those first new connections:

R   so you were nervous before you actually arrived?

James   not really, because my dad gave me lots of encouragement and then after he told me all the facilities and everything I went wow!

R   had you visited the school?

James   only once, for orientation day and ooh umm - because I didn't *want* to go, *he* wanted *me* to go because he told me all the facilities are nice so I, OK fine, I'll go ....

R   so the first day was a little nerve wracking?

James   I'm - not so sure, cause I already made a friend at orientation day, except he wasn't a very good friend (laughs) but I wanted to find him, but I couldn't find him cause I think he was sick - where's R. gone? - then I just found N., then a few days later I found R. again and I made friends

(108 - 119)

The buddy is used as an important social tool at this time. The young people make use of these initial contacts to either extend their relationships with buddies to that person's immediate friends, or find alternative guides to facilitate their social integration. This use of perspective taking competences is described by Lisa, who fully understands the opportunities available for learning about others within the social context, or, in her words, getting to know people *better*:

R   so the buddy helped you get from room to room - and what else did the buddy help you with?

Lisa   usually they - I remember people used to say avoid this teacher and blah blah - *stuff* - they just tell you everything they know about everyone so you just get to know people better

R   so that helped you with making friends? (Lisa: yep) how?

Lisa   because she -she just showed me - these are the people to hang out with here - these are some people I know and then she - introduced me to them and stuff

(104 - 119)

The young people are aware of their diminished control. Whereas, in other situations, they can articulate how they manage certain events, they seem unable to do so at this time. Rohan knows of the social opportunities at school camp, but is *vague* about how his new relationships were facilitated:

R   do you remember those first few weeks of school here?

Rohan   yeah, vaguely - I remember we went to camp the second week and I made a lot of friends there....

R   how did you do that?

Rohan   by being friendly really, or being funny, I don't know

(46 - 54)

The young people have little or no choice as to who will be their buddy, and expect such relationships will be brief. Without a mutual desire for friendship, these bonds are sometimes weak, as Greta indicates by using the term *kind of* twice in this excerpt:

yeah - I had my buddy and my buddy was kind of a buddy for Dell as well, cause we didn't have many girls in our class - so she showed us around the school and we gradually made friends and then, we kind of had (the buddy's) friends as well

(143 - 147)

This weakness may be due to the unequal nature of the relationship. On the other hand, Eva's interpretation of this situation is that she has

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relinquished control to others; a condition she says made her *dependent*:

> I think - you should like - I made this mistake I actually went to see what *others* would *think* if I did this but now I think you should just be yourself so now I just be myself and I've gained *so* much more so - like in my *old* school in India everyone knew who I was - like everyone *knew* I was *this* kind of person I was a person who won't sit around eating my lunch I was a person who just goes and runs about and stuff so - and then [here]I guess I was *nervous,* like will they say this? will they say that? so I was really more dependent on everyone making my life than myself so I don't think you should do it

(512 - 521)

Eva has relatively limited experiences of moving country and is still learning how to deal with this situation. In effect, she describes the ways in which she changed her behaviour in response to a certain condition. Rotter's (1954) social learning theory suggests that personality, and behaviour, is always changeable, through changing either the way a person thinks or the environment.

Furthermore, Rotter (1966) notes that in some situations, 'internals' behave as 'externals' because their learning history has shown them that they have little control over what happens to them in such circumstances. Rotter uses the concept of 'expectancy' to explain this, a term used to denote the probability that certain behaviour will result in a particular outcome, or reinforcer. Most interestingly, expectancy is based on prior experience, and the more certain behaviour has been reinforced in the past, the stronger will be an individual's expectancy that it will result in a similar outcome (*ibid.*). In some of the transcripts below, rather than merely commenting on one recent event, as Eva has above, the young

people generalize prior experiences and link them to a relevant
expectancy.

Matt gives an example of how he has amalgamated the learnings of
previous experiences into an expectancy, indicated by his use of a
recurring phrase - *it happens*:

> it *happens* - you - well- I guess you *talk* to people in your
> class - or sometimes the school gives you a *buddy* - and
> you probably might stick with him a bit more - and then you
> meet *his* friends and his friends like, *expand* a bit more like
> that
>
> (295 - 298)

Matt generalizes about buddy opportunities when he says *sometimes the
school gives you a buddy*. He gives us a clear picture of the orchestration
involved, as well as the early reemergence of control as he *expands* his
friendships. Although the young people talk about not having control, Matt
has described in simple terms that he is perceptive, willing to learn about
his surroundings, and processing the information around him. These are
traits that Lefcourt suggests are more characteristic of 'internals' than
'externals' (1982: 80). They may also indicate that the young people are
controlling some elements of the process; in this case, being mindful
about their own learning.

Until now, perspective taking competences support and sustain the young
people and they try to appear relaxed and easygoing (although this may
not actually be true), while gathering and reflecting on important cultural
cues. This mindfulness is described by Linda, who gives us a synopsis of

her complex thinking about the importance of developing successful social networks during this period, by using the term *'have to'*. Note the generalization of experience, once again, into an expectancy about the process of making friends:

> well - you really have to - when you first get there - you have to make friends at first so it doesn't matter - you're not gonna *stay* with those friends because - you have to, just make sure you have friends at first so you get to know who everyone else is and decide who you like and - if you don't like those friends you can change friends, hopefully, you know, so basically, you make friends with someone in your class and you hang around with them and their friends from last year maybe - and, if you don't like them - then, you'll probably meet other people *through* those people and then you can go sort of distance yourself from those people
>
> (54 - 63)

As well as sharing her thought processes at this time, Linda has related how the young people begin to retake control of their social life after the orchestrated casual enforcement they *have to* accept. She generalizes about how one moves forward by getting on with making connections, and she apparently has an expectancy in regard to this. This also provides an insight into the connection between locus of control and coping behaviour. With limited exceptions (including Manuck *et al.* 1975a, 1975b), locus of control has been found to act as a moderator of stress (Lefcourt 1982). Stress may impact individuals immediately, but internals leave their disappointments behind and move on, whereas externals carry it with them (Lefcourt 1982: 109).

Perspective taking begins to give way to fitting in. The following quote by Vit brings together her use of these crucial competences. She has short

term plans for her buddy to help her to *adjust*, using her perspective

taking competences to identify networks that will ensure access to the

pool of potential friends:

Vit   that was quite scary

R   what do you mean - scary?

Vit   cause I was - I didn't know if that was - the
right class for me - if I would get adjusted to that
environment in my class

R   and do you remember how you went about
adjusting?

Vit   yeah, there was a buddy - she just took me
round the school and I was with her for about a week and I
found friends from other classes

R   so you didn't plan to stay with your buddy for a
longer period of time?

Vit   oh no - no

                                              (101 - 119)

This preparedness to transfer social groups marks the activation of the

use of fitting in competences.

We have seen how, during casual enforcement, the young people draw

on their perspective taking competences. They use opportunities to learn

about and reflect on others' cultures, cultivate attitudes that are essential

for integration, and consider others' perspectives. The young people are

only in the casual enforcement phase for a relatively short time, but

aware that they lack control over significant aspects of their social life. It

appears that perspective taking may allow the young people to take some

measure of internal control by using these competences to adjust their

ways of thinking. Rather than being completely powerless, they identify or

recognize aspects of the situation about which they can learn, adjust to,

or manipulate. Stier describes a similar competence as 'perspective

alteration', and it has a comparable role:

> perspective alteration has to do with the student's
> empathetic ability to put him or herself in the position of the
> other - to alternate between the 'inside' and 'outside
> positions'
>
> (2003: 85)

Alternating between these positions may allow the young people to build

understandings and, armed with this knowledge, they begin to employ

fitting in competences, and are ready to move forward.

There appears to be a relationship between locus of control and the ways

in which the young people manage their experiences. How is this

reflected in the current literature? Paige notes that feeling a lack of

control is one of the most consistent research findings regarding

sojourners' intercultural experiences (1993: 12). Williams lists an internal

locus of control as an important personal strength for successful

intercultural communicators (2003: 2). In the area of cross-cultural

transitions, Ward and Kennedy's (1992) study with New Zealand adults

resident in Singapore found an internal locus of control predicted

psychological well-being.

However, there is limited specific research on locus of control and

adolescents, either in education or cross-cultural adaptation literature.

According to Lefcourt (1982), locus of control studies in education have

focused on achievement related activity; in particular, the efficacy of changing students' perceptions of causality. Similarly, Leo and Galloway note that studies of motivation and locus of control have tended to use different types of questionnaires, and subsequent analysis then concentrates mainly on global measures of achievement. These types of studies offer little explanation of underlying psychological processes, developmental or contextual issues (1996: 37 - 8); the implication here being that this may limit their usefulness.

However, locus of control has been highlighted in other approaches to conceptualizing and studying motivation. Lefcourt (1982) suggests that some social-cognitive research originating from the attribution literature has linked internal characteristics, perceived ability and motivation (Diener and Dweck 1978; Dweck 1975; Dweck and Goetz 1978). This work is based on Dweck's (1986) goal orientation theory that proposes mastery or learning orientated individuals, by definition, are interested in their own learning, and seek challenges that will help them become more competent. In difficult situations, they escalate their efforts or search for more effective strategies. Some of this work has broadened to include not only academic, but also social issues. More recently, in a book on *Self-theories*, Dweck (2000) indicates that an internal locus of control is one characteristic of mastery oriented students. Their responses in social situations are similar to those in achievement tasks (Goetz and Dweck 1980). When students focused on practising and improving social skills, they displayed a more mastery-oriented response (Erdley *et al.* 1997).

Dweck concludes that an approach based on goals is well-suited to successful adjustment in social situations (2000: 147).

At least one researcher has picked up the implications of Dweck's work. A study by Gong introduced the concept of goal orientation to the field of cross-cultural adjustment and concluded that learning goal orientation had a positive impact on both academic and interaction adjustment (2003: 303). One relevant finding is that the impact of learning orientation may be most significant at early stages of sojourning.

Although earlier locus of control research may have failed to effectively situate this construct, it seems that the methodology of the present study has offered opportunities for the young people to raise locus of control issues within a useful context. In the very least, locus of control may affect how an individual sees or interprets an event and appears to play a role in affecting the ways in which people cope with their experiences. In particular, goal-setting, social skills and internal locus of control have an apparent relationship. Yet, although the young people in this study can generalize about events and articulate expectancies that may inform and guide them during the social integration process, researchers appear not to have embraced this area. In particular, the connection between previous, similar intercultural experiences in developing expectancies about behaviour and outcomes may need additional investigation.

James ties together some understandings about goal setting, social skills

and taking control. He is aware of, and can articulate, his generalization

that the most crucial aspect of casual enforcement is its implications for

longer-term social integration. He gives this advice about building a

foundation and trying to make *as many friends as possible*:

> R   OK - you seem to know what it's like moving
> countries and schools - what do you think a person needs to
> be able to adjust to living in another country?
>
> James   a good foundation - like know lots of people or
> get used to the lifestyle quickly or something like that
>
> R   how would you do that?
>
> James   mmm - try and make as many friends as
> possible when you go to wherever you're supposed to go -
> and get to *know* people, I think that's *very* important
>   (489 - 500)

James' expectancy is that this foundation - access to a pool of potential

friends - will carry him into the next phase, selective opportunism.

5.2.4 Selective opportunism

Selective opportunism acknowledges the young person's increasing

control of their personal relationships, and ability to consider and select

options in social situations. As well as being more confident about taking

command of the process, the young people can describe the criteria they

use to assess relationships and the competences they employ.

During selective opportunism, young people make conscious decisions

regarding peer selection criteria, and justify their actions as being

logically-based on these. Fitting in competences are used here, with the young people displaying a positive attitude towards both their own group and others. Charles, in trying to describe what he has in common with his friends, firstly gives a general, positive view of them as people who *accept* him:

> Charles   umm - uh - um (long pause while he thinks) I think maybe - there are kids friends there who accept me for who I am and - well yeah, sorry, that's why I like them
>
> R   they accept you - that's a nice way of putting it
>
> Charles   I like talking to them - I don't know how to put it
>
> (220 - 227)

He goes on to let us know the importance of certain attitudes towards school in his choice of peers. Here he is careful not to let his affirmative categorization of his peers throw a bad light on others. Even in this confidential interview setting, he does not want to *offend someone*:

> Charles   well I think - what we have in common is that - I don't want to be judgmental but - we're much more *focused* in our work than - I can't explain - I don't want to offend someone
>
> R   you're not offending anyone cause no one except me is going to hear this
>
> Charles   well I don't mean we're more hardworking, but we're just more - well - focused
>
> R   you're trying to find a nice way to say it, but just say what you think...
>
> Charles   well we're much more like - we're just kids that like to study and not nerds or anything but umm but how to say? we're not as playful as other kids are
>
> (263 - 278)

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Matt can also classify commonalities with his friends, both in terms of their interests and personalities:

> Matt   we both like the same stuff, like games, we like the same games
>
> R   anything else that you have in common?
>
> Matt   I like the - people who *talk* and are humourous also and not so quiet and - doesn't - *participate* in the conversation - cause it gets pretty boring when there's not much to talk about
>
> R   so you like kids who are chatty (Matt: yeah) - in class or just out of class?
>
> Matt   I guess *in* class as well (both laugh)
>
> (343 - 345)

In the casual enforcement phase, the young people were less discerning about their peer group. In contrast, they now seek others with whom they have something in common, even if that *something* is very broad, such as finding peers who are chatty.

This is the point at which the young people reflect on their peer relationships, and choose to either maintain existing peer groups, or use opportunities at school to change them. A feature of selective opportunism is *waiting* for these opportunities. During casual enforcement, the young person was carried along in events that could facilitate their attempts to make friends. Now they think ahead to anticipate situations, wait for them to present themselves, and make decisions about whether or not to act. Hence, this phase has been called 'selective opportunism'. Moreover, they remain conscious of maintaining access to a pool of friends, and this fitting in competence is also in use.

An example of this is given by Nell, who describes an increasing control of her own relationships as she moves from casual enforcement to selective opportunism. Change management competences are utilized as she reflects on waiting for the right opportunity to switch friends, and using the opportunity afforded by class restructuring to make some changes:

> my mum and my dad were just saying you just have to get out there and find - in a couple of months you'll be in a new class and maybe you'll - but just get to know everybody in the class and then judge who you don't have in common with after but looking back I really didn't have anything in common with those girls - but - after time it got better and it was just the friendship and it didn't really matter if you didn't have - cause we could still talk to each other and stuff and then I got to my Grade 7 class and it was a really good class and we won all the sports days and everything
>
> (190 - 199)

Nell also raises the discrete role of agents at this time. Agents are still operating during selective opportunism, but act less directly on individuals and more on conditions affecting groups. Seemingly insignificant elements of the school structure, and their resulting conditions, can provide opportunities for young people to reflect and/or make changes. Additionally, adjustments to the social environment can create an impetus for change. There were various conditions that young people found useful for facilitating their social integration, by providing opportunities to initiate contact with new peers. These included the school's size and confusing layout, the time allocated for tutor group sessions, changing classes, modifying class composition, planned group activities and teacher interventions. Although we won't examine these in detail, there is an

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apparent connection between retaking control and the conditions

generated by agents during the selective opportunism phase. As

perceived control is positively associated with access to opportunities

(Lefcourt 1982: 31), it seems the provision of these opportunities is

important. The hidden curriculum in this school appears to be supporting

the processes of developing relationships in an indirect but significant

way.

Regardless of the opportunities available for developing relationships, the

dynamic nature of this setting means there is also the prospect of the

young people moving on. This occurs frequently and often with very little

warning. Nevertheless, the young people have a plan for dealing with the

unexpected. This is the time to employ change management and fitting in

competences, and the young people understand the role of these as

components of selective opportunism. Linda describes how she mentally

prepares to transfer friendships by not being as *dependent* on peers who

are leaving:

> Linda: often you *know* when people are leaving and
> um, it's not that big a deal, if you know what I mean?
>
> R   but you're very conscious of it?
>
> Linda   you're conscious of it and, I mean, you're
> conscious of it but you're not, I mean, if you know
> someone's leaving you might not realize it but you're
> actually sort of, just *naturally* not being as dependent on
> them for being your friends
>
> (211 - 219)

By now, the young people feel they are active participants in their social processes, can identify choices and decide whether or not to act. The internal locus of control is apparent. Linda's comments also reiterate the way in which the social integration process has become familiar with repeated experience, or, as Linda says, *it's not that big a deal.* She can talk about how to manage this situation with a matter-of-fact detachment that indicates she knows how to respond. This is another example of an expectancy based on prior experience.

In selective opportunism, we see the young people at their most confident. It seems that an internal locus of control is operating here; the young people appear to be curious and ready to learn more about their surroundings and others. They are, in effect, moving on.

McCombs (1991) suggests that what underlies locus of control is the sense of 'self as agent'. In effect, this describes the young people's understandings at this time. In progressing from casual enforcement to selective opportunism, the young people's sense of self becomes more apparent. McCombs believes 'the degree to which one chooses to be self-determining is a function of one's realization of the source of agency and control' (1991: 7). The young people are mindful of their situation, appear to know what they want, and direct their intercultural competences, along with an internal locus of control, towards achieving this. Dweck advocates that such beliefs in a 'dynamic self'

help individuals to move forward with determination and solve problems (2000: 132). These young people can describe how they have gained knowledge, adapted to situations by taking advantage of opportunities, and learned how to manage the inherent dynamic nature of this setting. However, all of this occurs within a relatively short time, usually around one year.

*   *   *   *

To summarize this model of forming relationships, we can look to Nell, who condenses the entire process of moving through these phases in one statement. We can feel her initial sadness, lack of control, increasing power and, finally, the development of *closer* relationships following a change of class:

> um from my old school I had lots of friends cause I'd been there for like seven nine years and then when I moved to this new school I got in the car and saw people I didn't have *that much* in common with um and after awhile I met a couple of people who I - I found I had more in common with - it was really weird and for the first week I was really sad and I was crying all the time cause I didn't like it but after awhile it got better and I got in a new class and I really liked that class and I made lots of um closer friends in that class
> (18 - 26)

Let's now consider how this might relate to the existing literature in this area.

The model described above reflects ideas found in current meta-systems theory. Wiseman (2001) provides a useful synopsis of these that includes

the following significant and relevant concepts. Systems theory involves:

- o interaction between the communication system and the environment;

- o hierarchical communication, i.e. it consists of subsystems and suprasystems;

- o a striving for balance, where change within the system or the environment creates a drive to restore balance; and

- o systems that are programmed to obtain specific goals.

Importantly, 'one strength of systems meta-theory is that it attempts to focus on a broad range of interactions and relationships within a communication event in order to better understand the event' (2001: 4).

We have seen an embodiment of these concepts within the young people's social world. They recognize that, within this setting, establishing and maintaining relationships (i.e. social communication) is dependent on activating a set of interrelated strategies, understandings and skills, all geared towards achieving one goal - social integration.

In terms of comparison to current theory and other research, the work of Kim (1995), Mezirow (1991) and Taylor (1994) are worthy of discussion.

Kim's (1995) cross-cultural adaptation theory uses a systems approach to describe both the process and structure of cross-cultural adaptation. Adaptation is presented as a product of acculturation and deculturation. Growth is characterized by ups-and-downs, or two steps forwards and

one back, rather than occurring in a straightforward linear manner. In this dynamic process, the role of both internal and external variables is acknowledged. Kim differentiates between the groups involved in the social communication, or the ethnic and host communities. A continuous process of stress-adaptation-growth may result in the stranger becoming increasingly intercultural over a period of time.

Elements of Kim's (1995) model are applicable in this setting. The present study also addresses both products and processes of the young people's social integration and acknowledges the significance of internal (intrapersonal) and external (social/environmental) factors. However, there are some critical differences:

i.   Kim presents intercultural identity as a possible *outcome* of stress-adaptation-growth. In contrast, rather than achieving a particular identity, these young people describe an ongoing process in which they become increasingly intercultural. The identity does not reach a point where it is fixed or achieved, it is continuing to evolve.

ii.   In becoming increasingly intercultural, these young people appear to utilize both the stresses presented and their own developing intercultural competences as tools for achieving growth. In this sense, intercultural competence is not only an outcome, but also an instrument.

iii.   The role of repeated experiences is not dealt with in Kim's model. Significantly, the young people in the present study

think they become better at the process with practice and, as a consequence, develop a set of relevant competences and strategies for employing these efficiently.

iv. Kim's model perceives stress (due to change) as a mechanism that causes the newcomer to react and try to restore balance. However, these young people appear to regard stress and change as an indication of the opportunities that can present in a dynamic environment. Importantly, they expect and await these, and recognize that change creates *potential* for utilizing and developing competences that may help achieve their goals.

v. Kim's model differentiates between two groups, the ethnic and host communities, where the host community is regarded as relatively stable and dominant. It seems that the social groups in the present setting are comparatively unstable, with membership constantly in flux. Additionally, any cultural dominance is not acknowledged by the young people. They see social integration as a two-way process and one where access to multiple social groups is desirable. Locus of control is an important tool for managing this situation.

vi. Kim's model sees adaptation occurring over a relatively lengthy period of time. Kim suggests that, given equal lengths of residence in the host society, rates of adaptation would be expected to vary according to the stranger's disposition and host environmental conditions. In contrast, the young people in

this study describe a very similar process where the first three phases are compacted into one year or less.

Notably, the role of a dynamic and culturally diverse host community is not addressed in Kim's model, but underpins the understandings of the young people in this research.

From the culture-learning arena, Mezirow's theory of perspective transformation has also been used to explain becoming interculturally competent. Mezirow defines learning as 'the process of making a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of an experience which guides subsequent understanding, appreciation and action' (1991: 1). He suggests that transformative learning can occur as a result of a disorienting dilemma in a ten-step, but non-linear process.

Mezirow's theory has been used as a possible explanation for culture-learning (Berwick and Whalley 2000; Taylor 1994). Taylor's study, although using adult participants, suggests that learners acquire the tools to interpret new experience by destabilizing, direct contact with a new culture. Taylor holds that 'becoming interculturally competent consists of changing values, greater self-confidence, and a change in perspective' (1994: 167). This process is characterized by stages and the cycle of moving through these is repeated until perspective transformation occurs (*op cit:* 170).

Mezirow's theory and Taylor's work highlights some points that are applicable to this research:

i.   culture learning is a process that is characterized by recurrence or repetition;

ii.   self-confidence and reflection are important tools in cross-cultural learning;

iii.   readiness for change is crucial to the acceptance of cultural knowledge;

iv.   change (or disorientating dilemma) can positively impact learning; and

v.   repeated experience of, and reflection on, a particular phase of social learning can aid transformation.

However, although the theories put forward by Kim (1995), Mezirow (1991) and Taylor (1994) have some elements that parallel this research, they do not fully explain the social processes and structures, the function of intercultural competences and the critical role of change that is experienced by the young people in this setting. This strongly suggests that some modification is required to these. The theory put forward by this research, which is grounded in the young people's data, can account better for the complex interplay of the social processes and structures, intercultural competences, change and young people in this setting.

*   *   *   *

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The process of becoming integrated in this setting has a particular structure. The young people are focused on both short and longer term goals. In order to achieve these, they develop and employ intercultural competences. It is also evident that they are conscious of their personal strength and influence within each phase of the integration process, and describe their locus of control.

In summary, three of the four steps towards social integration are related to the competences described in Chapter 4, and two can also be explained in terms of the locus of control, as seen in Table 1 below:

Phase	Competences	Locus of control
Readiness	change management	internal
Casual enforcement	perspective taking fitting in	
Selective opportunism	change management fitting in	internal
Social integration	[not determined]	

Table 1: Active components of developing social relationships in an international school

This chapter has examined the young people's understandings of how relationships develop, and the researcher's model of these processes. Additionally, it has noted the ways in which intercultural competences and locus of control are enmeshed and drawn upon in the process. Links to current theory have been explored. This chapter will conclude by making five important statements about social integration and competences in this study:

1. social integration is a long term goal that develops in phases

When the young people change schools or classes in this setting, their goal is social integration. To reach this goal, they progress through three phases, readiness, casual enforcement and selective opportunism. Movement through the phases is marked by feelings of increasing control of, and choice in, the process.

2. the young people *use* intercultural competences during this process

During this process, young people use intercultural competences to help achieve their goal. They are mindful of these competences and understand how change management, perspective taking and fitting in can assist them to become socially integrated.

3.   the young people feel that the social integration

       process becomes more familiar with repeated

       experiences

The young people talk about the social integration process becoming

'mentally easier' with subsequent experience. They expect and anticipate

certain stages and events, and seem prepared for them. Because they

use their intercultural competences, these are practised within this

context.

4.   the young people are conscious of their locus of

       control and its relationship to activating intercultural

       competences

These young people appear to be aware of their locus of control, and

conscious of their ways of thinking. However, they relinquish or obscure

an internal locus of control for a short time during the casual enforcement

phase. The young people seem to understand there is a relationship

between their locus of control and activating the competences they

require to achieve their social goals.

5.   *this setting* provides opportunities for young people to

       use and develop their intercultural competences

Throughout the process of social integration described in this study, both

unexpected events and planned opportunities create conditions for young

people to use these competences. In particular, this international school

supports the processes of becoming and being intercultural by way of

operational conditions that are implemented through the hidden

curriculum. The school allows and encourages young people to become

quickly oriented to the setting and to engage with others. Furthermore,

regular changes in student arrangements facilitate social reflection and

allow appropriate movement between social groups. These operational

conditions support and nurture the 'knowing how' aspects of intercultural

competence.

CHAPTER 6:

Change and the acquisition of intercultural competence

The two previous analysis chapters have examined the young people's responses within the framework of the sub-questions:

    i.   What intercultural competences do these young people use?

    ii.   How do the young people initiate, establish and maintain relationships (with peers) in this setting?

In response to the research questions, the young people's perceptions of their intercultural competences and social integration processes have been made explicit. The competences have been situated within the social processes used by the young people, and their mindfulness and awareness of locus of control have been highlighted.

However, the young people hold some understandings and demonstrate some behaviours that draw together intercultural competence, change and social integration and cannot be fully explained by current theory. This chapter will examine these.

The themes of social integration and change permeate the young people's understandings and explanations of being intercultural. It is apparent that they are overwhelmingly concerned with becoming socially integrated. Their thinking and behaviours are clearly focused on working towards this goal. Furthermore, they are cognizant of the significant and

ongoing role of change in this dynamic setting. Based on the data analysis, it is possible to outline two major findings that can be drawn from this study:

i. Change can create competence; and

ii. Social integration processes may become more predictable, and intercultural competences increasingly embedded, with multiple intercultural experiences.

6.1 Change can create competence

Change presents challenges and opportunities. If the young people recognize, respond to and reflect on these, and are supported by others (family, peers and agents) change can create competence.

We have seen that change operates in at least two ways in this setting:

- as a condition, in which the young people experience the mobility of themselves and/or significant others, change presents *challenges*; and

- as a process, whereby the school's structures and operations create situations that allow young people to modify their social groupings, change presents *opportunities*.

In these ways, change can bring about conditions in which young people *need* and/or *want* to initiate new relationships. These young people know

how to manage such circumstances because of previous similar experiences, and/or acuity in observing and reflecting on the behaviours of others around them. They understand that activating certain attitudes, skills and/or knowledge (i.e. intercultural competences) can promote social integration. Essentially, change can generate a need and desire to use and hone these competences. When the young people choose or are compelled to engage in this process, these competences allow them to manage challenges and take advantage of opportunities.

There is a similarity here between this perspective and Adler's view of culture shock:

> a profound learning experience that leads to a high degree of self-awareness and personal growth....It is an experience in self-understanding and change
>
> (1987: 29).

It is hereby suggested that change can offer this 'profound learning experience', and it may include a heightened sense of self, and some culture shock.

The change and mobility literature is pertinent to this finding. The relevant literature originates from the areas of expatriate (business) mobility and internationally mobile young people. A consideration of existing research can emphasize the limited work on change as a process and its relationship with social integration.

Literature on expatriate mobility deals for the most part with factors that promote family adjustment (Fukuda and Chu 1994; Solomon 1996; Tung 1987) or spousal adjustment (Copeland 2002; Forster 1999) in relation to successful overseas business postings. As such, it deals with change as a condition rather than a process.

Furthermore, there is relatively limited research on change, mobility and young people. Work arising from interest in Third Culture Kids (Useem 2001) and Global Nomads (Schaetti 1993) uses a similar approach to that of the business literature, and predominantly examines the positive characteristics and less-desirable features of young people who have lived in dynamic, and often culturally diverse, international environments. Change is usually treated as a condition that has some association with these attributes.

In terms of social integration, the existing literature typically tries to identify traits that might explain or predict success (Stultz 2003). Consequently, it has raised, amongst other things, the following aspects of individuals' social integration:

i.   attention to the concept of 'belonging' (Fail *et al.* 2004; Hill *et al.* 1976; Pollock and Van Reken 1987);

ii.   feelings of rootlessness and identity with 'home' (Killham1994; Pascoe 2000; Pollock and Van Reken 2001; Storti 2001);

iii.   predictors for repatriation success (Austin 1986; Downie 1976; Gleason 1970; Jordan 1981; Salmon 1987);

iv.   effects of mobility on long term social relationships (Pollock and

Van Reken 2001; Werkman *et al.* 1981).

Consideration of the *process* of change could shed more light on the

development of critical competences and the relationship between

mobility and long term social relationships. Nevertheless, outside of the

culture shock literature that deals with the more immediate effects of a

culturally challenging encounter, very few studies have considered

people's perceptions *as* they are being cultivated. Exceptions to this, that

may have relevance here, include Nathanson and Marcenko (1995),

Werkman *et al.* (1981), Allan (2002) and the immediate-post-relocation

(adult) reflections of Powell (2001). However, even research conducted

during the experience may not address the processes at play, as

deliberation of these will reveal.

Nathanson and Marcenko (1995) studied young people at an international

school in Tokyo, and considered social integration in relation to overall

well-being. They reported high levels of satisfaction with friendships and

concluded that satisfaction did not predict young people's well-being,

although it did relate to how well they like living in Tokyo (1995: 422).

Their research did not address the underlying social processes.

Werkman *et al.* (1981) compared the traits of 96 American teenagers

living in the U.S. with 148 of those who had lived overseas for 2 years or

more. Although this study uses only American adolescents, it did

conclude that the overseas sample regarded their greatest strength as intrapersonal, rather than interpersonal (*ibid*: 655). The study suggests these young people are more inner-directed, less reliant on others and possibly less able to engage in intimate relationships. Despite this, it is noted that the attitudes and coping strategies of these adolescents 'can be seen as highly mature and adaptive for adult life' (*ibid*: 657). Whilst it may be helpful to know some of the critical characteristics of these young people, it might be useful to consider *how* such young people are becoming more intrapersonal, and *how* they are developing highly mature and adaptive strategies.

Allan's more recent (2002) ethnographic study is of 171 young people aged 11-18 in an international school in The Netherlands with a largely mono-cultural school culture. It explored the cross cultural nature of learning and factors underlying it. Using grounded theory, Allan suggests that intercultural learning occurs on the borders between cultures and is more evident in those from minority cultural groups who are adjusting to a majority student culture (2002: 63). As in the present study, Allan finds the students are most concerned about their interactions with their peers (*ibid*: 76). However, Allan's research takes a wider view of the process of intercultural learning and considers six active cultural groups, including school, student, faculty, 'majority student' and 'other student'. Allan suggests a complexity is created where the borders of these groups meet, and might be further complicated if considering the 40 or more cultural groups in an international school (*op. cit*: 79). This assertion is

disputed by the present study, which agrees that the process of becoming intercultural is certainly *different* where there are more cultural groups and the lack of an obviously dominant culture, but that this does not necessarily make intercultural learning more *difficult*. Importantly, the processes used by the young people in dealing with diversity are what is important, not the number of cultural interactions. Allan's work reminds us of the ways that the particular characteristics of international school samples, and the breadth of focus in qualitative research, can impact research results.

Finally, Powell's paper on relocation stress emanates from his own experiences as an international school educator. Although it purports to consider culture shock, it reflects on a relatively long period of approximately eighteen months, and is therefore worthy of discussion. Powell suggests that relocation stress provides challenges and opportunities to learn not only about the new location, but also about self (2001: 32). The paper discusses the use of Costa and Garmston's (1994) work on cognitive coaching to analyse the effects of international relocation on one's states of mind. Powell considers the ability people have to influence the ways in which they think about stressful situations. He discusses the strong internal locus of control in individuals who demonstrate high efficacy. Amongst other traits, efficacious people see complex dilemmas as opportunities, believe they can influence outcomes and accord responsibility to themselves and others (*ibid*: 24). Powell then situates these characteristics within a cyclical 'model of culture shock'

that contains common relocation responses and considers opportunities and challenges. Powell's work also includes some responses during the process that parallel those of the young people in the present study, including anxiety, 'blind faith' in others, suspension of judgment, tolerance, resolution, understanding and companionship (*ibid*: 30). Despite these insights, the explicit nature and importance of the underlying social processes are not explored. Nevertheless, the paper provides an overview of the integration process, and emphasises an awareness of a sense of self as a shock absorber in an international school setting.

Sense of self has been a component of intercultural models (Bennett *et al*. 1999; Byram 1997; Paige and Stringer 1997) and a factor noted in research (Adler 1975; Fail *et al*. 2004; Gellar 1981; Stier 2003). Although Willis *et al*. also touch on the strong sense of self evident in transnational, transcultural young people (1994: 35) their research is limited to defining such traits. One might also speculate there may be a connection between this intrapersonal development, sense of self and the locus of control. Fail *et al*. (2004: 324) suggest that choosing to develop a sense of self and relate to different types of people constitutes Bennett's (1993) 'constructive marginality'. Nevertheless the relationship between learning about self and change remains unexplored.

In contrast, many of the existing studies have considered these experiences retrospectively. It is not surprising, then, that the focus has

been on the longer term *effects* of change. This can moderate the input of factors that occur between the experience and the study. Most importantly, though, it can fail to consider the role of the *process*. The ways in which change affects the *process* of becoming socially integrated continue to beg investigation.

It is apparent that there is very little literature dealing with change as a process, or how it might impact the development of competences and social integration. Herein lays a shortcoming of the current theory in this area. Despite the emphasis on change as a global phenomenon, interest has not yet been extended to examining the process of change *in situ*.

Furthermore, change within schools has been examined principally from the perspective of the formal curriculum. Some literature has identified elements of school operations, such as orientations and buddy programs that are useful in helping students to adjust (Langford 1998; Pearce 1996). It is strongly suggested that there is a need to consider more comprehensively the connection between operational conditions and the process of change.

The contemporary literature on change and mobility has come about as a result of relatively recent global trends. It is proposed that current theory is, as yet, incomplete and a more encompassing theory of change and mobility is required to explain some of the complexities of an increasingly globalized world.

6.2 Social integration processes may become more predictable, and intercultural competences increasingly embedded, with multiple intercultural experiences

The young people describe multiple, ongoing intercultural experiences due to the mobility of themselves and/or significant others. The processes they use to work towards their goal of social integration appear to become more predictable with repeated experiences. Within these processes, the young people use the competences of change management, fitting in and perspective taking. They develop strategies for employing these efficiently.

Although the setting is likely to undergo continued change, familiarisation with the process of social integration, along with continued use of their intercultural competences, seem to be important tools that aid the young people's management of this dynamic environment. Mindfulness and locus of control augment intercultural competences within this context. In Chapter 5, we have seen examples of how previous experiences can help create expectancies about behaviour and outcomes and, in turn, may inform and guide the young people during the social integration process. Significantly, the social processes may become more predictable and the intercultural competences increasingly embedded because of the practice and familiarity that may accompany repeated intercultural experiences.

It is possible to draw some parallels with learning theory here. People learn through transactions with their social and physical environments (Altman 1992). The constructivist viewpoint proposes that learners construct meaning from their experiences and integrate new knowledge with previous understandings in a process of schema development (Piaget 1975). Previous knowledge is used as the principal means of constructing new knowledge and is closely related to the context in which it takes place (Resnick 1989). This process moves learners from novice to more expert understandings (Caine & Caine 1994; Condon *et al.* 1993; Richardson 1997; Vygotsky 1978; Wertsch 1998). Educators are well aware of the significance of repetition (or practice), reflection and articulation in experiences that foster learning (Bruner 1996; Resnick and Klopfer 1989; Vygotsky 1978). Hammer *et al.*, citing Kelly (1963), stress that such experience does not just happen; it is a function of how one construes the events that constitute experience. The more perceptual and conceptual discriminations that can be brought to bear on the event, the more complex will be the construction of the event, and thus the richer will be the experience (2003: 423). Repetitive learning experiences offer multiple opportunities for generating perceptual and conceptual discriminations that contribute to schema development. Essentially, it is proposed that the young people in this research describe moving from novice towards more expert in terms of understanding social processes and becoming interculturally competent. In consideration of this premise, let's now look at the relevant business literature, intercultural models and cross-cultural adaptation theory.

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The business literature contains some research that suggests the value of previous international experience has been associated with uncertainty reduction. Such experiences may provide information that allows more accurate expectations, and positive adjustment, in new settings (Black 1988; McEvoy and Parker 1995; Shaffer and Harrison 1998). However, there are also studies that refute or restrict such claims (Black and Gregersen 1991; Black, Mendenhall and Oddou 1991). Interestingly, Bell and Harrison (1996) note that it is the *process* of having learned another culture, rather than the knowledge of it, that is the most important benefit of previous international experience. It seems that the 'knowing how' aspects of learning (Ryle 1949) in regard to managing new intercultural encounters deserve more attention.

One relevant study by Onwumechili *et al.* comprises a rare consideration of the multiple reacculturations of adult intercultural transients defined as 'travellers who regularly alternate residences between their homeland and a host foreign country' (2003: 41). This work concentrates on how transients negotiate identity, and notes some effects of identity shifting that include mindfulness (Langer 1989), multicultural personhood (Adler 1982; Kim and Ruben 1988), third culture building (Chen and Starosta 1998), and the I-other dialectic that emerges from cultural contracts theory (Jackson 2003). It also notes the effect of network relationships, and cites Boissevain's (1974) work on 'the relationship between personal networks and the social environment [that] are particularly insightful in understanding the process of identity negotiation' (Onwumechili *et al.*

2003: 48). The study concludes there is much work to be done in the area of multiple reacculturation research (*op. cit.:* 57).

With this in mind, and returning to the young people in this research, it appears that the recurring nature of their experiences may generate some predictability in regard to social integration processes. Although the setting and/or the 'others' may change, the process itself becomes more manageable. In fact, these young people are so familiar with this process that they can describe it in detail. If the competences are situated within the process, they may also undergo repeated rehearsal, and become more embedded.

Paige suggests that sojourners with prior intercultural experience may experience less stress, already have coping strategies, be familiar with the cross-cultural process and have intercultural communication skills (1993: 9). However, examination of some current intercultural models (Bennett 1986; Byram 1997; Liddicoat 2002; Paige and Stringer 1997), as well as Kim's (1988) cross cultural adaptation theory, do not consider the effects on, or relationships between, multiple intercultural experiences, culture learning and intercultural competences.

Some models of intercultural competence allude to the effects of repeated experience. Liddicoat (2002) refers to a potentially continuous cycle of acquisition, based on the noticing of, and reflection on, different cultural elements, rather than achieving certain stages of intercultural

competence. Hammer *et al.* suggest that Bennett's (1986 and 1993b) model implies that intercultural competence increases with more complex and sophisticated experiences of cultural difference (2000: 423). Individuals may, therefore, become *more* interculturally competent.

Correspondingly, Byram discusses the context of a 'threshold of intercultural competence' in relation to foreign language learning. A threshold is 'the attainable goal of being a competent intercultural speaker in a given situation' (1997: 107). Byram states that theory has embraced the usefulness of being able to describe levels of competence below a threshold of intercultural competence, as in Bennett's (1986) model. However, identifying such levels beyond these may also be significant (1997: 43).

In these ways, current theory can accommodate possible outcomes of repeated intercultural experiences, but stops short of directly addressing these prospects. The literature notes the role of both experience and reflection in becoming intercultural (Byram 1997; Paige and Stringer 1997), yet it does not make explicit the relationship between *repeated* experience and competence.

The same can be said of Kim's (1988) cross-cultural adaptation model, describing the stress, adaptation and growth that occur as a result of a stranger's new experience. As well as growth, a stranger who resists during this process may suffer increased and, possibly, unmanageable

levels of stress (1988: 53). These two possible responses emphasize the potential for intercultural experiences to impact adaptation, either negatively or constructively.

Kim is aware of the effect of new experiences and cites Schroeder *et al.* (1967) as explaining that 'the level of cognitive complexity in a given content area develops further with new learning experiences' (1988: 98). Furthermore, Kim also favours 'universalization' (1978: 220) as a concept that explains people's ability to better see the 'oneness and unity of humanity' as their intercultural transformation advances (2005: 392). 'Universalization' is a term introduced by Yoshikawa, and 'is born out of an awareness of the relative nature of values and the universal aspect of human nature' (1978: 220). However, none of these discussions of becoming intercultural extend to addressing the impact of multiple intercultural experiences.

There are three elements of Kim's model that may be affected by repeated experiences:

i. the incidence of 'crisis': In Kim's model, a crisis presents individuals with ongoing opportunities to strengthen coping mechanisms, and the potential for adaptive change (1988: 56). Repeated and ongoing experiences with crises may, therefore, impact coping mechanisms significantly.

ii. the 'adaptive predisposition' of the stranger: Kim suggests that culture, race, personality and preparedness for change can

affect adaptive predisposition. This research has noted that repeated experiences can help individuals prepare for change and, as such, these could be a factor that affects adaptive predisposition;

iii. the 'host environmental conditions': these include receptivity and conformity pressure (1988: 67). If significant numbers of the host community are also undergoing, or have recently had, similar experiences of social integration, these may influence the extent to which the environment is receptive toward strangers and expects conformity.

Although each of these elements of Kim's theory could take into account the effects of multiple intercultural experiences, the compounding affect of changes in all three elements (adaptive predisposition, host environmental conditions and crises) also needs to be considered. In contrast to Kim's model, where the stranger encounters the host, dominant culture and may undergo adaptive transformation, these young people are experiencing a lifestyle that is far more dynamic. Both the individual and the 'others' may be undergoing constant transformation.

In summary, an increasingly globalized world is characterized by change (Brown 1999; Held and McGrew 1999). The relevant intercultural and cross-cultural adaptation models recognize that one critical challenge for people in managing change is dealing with other cultures. Multiple intercultural experiences involve situations in which people may be

dealing repeatedly with culturally diverse individuals and groups within

changeable environments. Willis *et al.* describe such people as having

'special insights into and skills for dealing with people and relationships

that others who were not raised in a multicultural setting either do not

have or do not have at such a level of sophistication' (1994: 38).

However, the current theories of intercultural competence and cross-

cultural adaptation fail to incorporate what may be significant implications

of repeated experience. Rather, they address experience as a singular

episode in which the individual may develop intercultural competence. It

appears there is a need to explore, and perhaps modify, existing theory

in order to consider some more dynamic global conditions that now

exist, and be able to explain outcomes that may arise from these

circumstances.

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Chapter 6 Summary:

In addition to the findings in Chapters 4 and 5, this chapter raises two

major findings that link change, social integration and intercultural

competence.

Firstly, change can bring about conditions, and operate as a process, that may create competence under certain circumstances.

Secondly, social integration processes may become more predictable, and intercultural competences increasingly embedded, with multiple intercultural experiences.

These findings suggest modifications may be required to theories of change and mobility, intercultural competence and cross cultural adaptation.

CHAPTER 7:

Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusions and Significance

The purpose of this study was to investigate young people's perceptions of being intercultural and international. Interest in this area arose from my own work in international schools, where I observed many young people move into these settings, make friends and move on again with their expatriate families. It is my assertion that many international schools offer unique settings from which educators and researchers can learn more about how people manage the challenges of an increasingly dynamic world.

This study gathered data from young people in a South-east Asian international school. Analysis provides a comprehensive picture of the perceptions of these young people, and has been detailed in Chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter 4 identified and outlined some skills, attitudes and/or knowledge components that demonstrate their intercultural competences. These were abstracted and labelled as three separate but connected concepts, and it seems the young people hold theories about each of them. Appendix 5 contains a summary of these.

The competences of *fitting in* and *change management* are used to manipulate and/or manage situations and events. *Change management* is regarded as a pre-condition for establishing relationships in this setting. Effectively managing their dynamic environment allows the young people to attend to *fitting in* as a crucial competence for initiating, establishing and maintaining social relationships. The young people also utilize *perspective taking.* This competence acts as an important lens through which they can contemplate and flexibly adjust their expectations and viewpoints of themselves, others and the world. By doing so, the process of becoming socially integrated is made easier.

The young people use their intercultural competences within the complex processes of social integration, and this was the focus of Chapter 5. It analysed the young people's perceptions of the processes they use to initiate and manage social relationships. In doing so, it also revealed the functions and interrelationship of their intercultural competences within this social framework.

The young people understand and explain the process of becoming socially integrated as having a particular structure with certain clear phases. These were represented by Diagram 5.1. My model of this process was presented in Diagram 5.2: *A model of social integration in a South-east Asian international school.*

The young people know how to use their intercultural competences to help progress through the stages towards social integration. Managing this process is perceived as becoming less problematic in consequent experiences, essentially because of increasing familiarity with it.

Moreover, this familiarity is facilitated by aspects of the school's hidden curriculum that create conditions and multiple opportunities for young people to use (and, therefore, practise) their competences within this social context. These conditions provide an important link that promotes the engagement of competences. Subsequently, the young people can reflect on, and make decisions about, their social relationships.

It is also evident that the young people are mindful and conscious of their locus of control within each phase of the integration process. They seem to understand there is a relationship between their locus of control and activating the competences they require to achieve their social goals.

Analysis suggests that three of the four steps towards social integration are related to intercultural competences and two can also be explained in terms of the locus of control. Most significantly, the young people share understandings about which competences are useful during particular phases. They also comprehend that utilizing perspective taking competences can effect their movement out of the casual enforcement stage, although they may appear to have little control during this period.

Following on from the competences and the process in which they are situated, Chapter 6 then details two major findings that encompass the themes of change and intercultural competence. These highlight the main contributions made by this research.

Firstly, change can bring about conditions, and operate as a process, that may create competence under certain circumstances. This finding has significance for educators and the wider community. Change has often been associated with negative implications, such as culture shock and stress. One perspective of change suggests it has been viewed as a threat rather than an opportunity (Whitaker 1992). Yet, despite Nathanson and Marcenko's assertion that children resist change (1995), it appears that these young people accept it as an inevitable part of their lives, and make considerable efforts to prepare for and manage it. The present study suggests that change can be a positive force that, in supportive situations, can create competence.

Secondly, social integration processes may become more predictable, and intercultural competences increasingly embedded, with multiple intercultural experiences. This finding highlights the ways that competences can be developed when situated within important (social) processes, and subjected to repeated practice. It makes connections between learning theory and the development of intercultural competence. Most importantly, it suggests that repeated experiences with

culturally diverse individuals and groups within changeable environments can have benefits, as well as challenges, for people.

7.2   Implications for theory, research, policy and practice

The implications that can be drawn from the study address three areas: existing theory, research methodology, and school policy and practice.

7.2.1 Implications for existing theory:

The present study has illuminated several areas which may need to be reevaluated to determine whether they remain applicable in a more dynamic and rapidly changing world.

Current theories should be able to account fully for data (Popper 1962, 1975). The existing theories of change and mobility, intercultural competence and cross cultural adaptation were unable to fully explain some aspects of this study.

Additionally, in regard to social categorization, the research speculates that existing theory may not fully explain these young people's choices in regards to workable options for managing effective social groupings. A recent article by Galinsky *et al.* may suggest some clues as to this

phenomenon. It offers 'a conceptual model for how the cognitive processes associated with perspective-taking facilitate social coordination and foster social bonds', primarily by decreasing stereotyping of others and increasing stereotypicality of an individual's own behaviour. The resulting self-other overlap has implications when geared towards specific social bonds, and the authors propose it provides a framework for understanding the effects of perspective-taking and its role in social harmony (2005: 109). As the young people in this study demonstrate competence in perspective taking, this may offer suggestions for further research.

7.2.2 Implications for research methodology:

This study incorporated semi structured interviews, analysed by using a grounded theory approach. It allowed the investigation of certain aspects of human behaviour within their particular social contexts and let the young people nominate and discuss aspects of their lives that were important to them. The methodology seems to be an effective way of gathering information about the young people's perceptions and the context in which they are used. Subsequently, it generated extensive data that could be examined to determine both competences and social processes, and explored their interrelationship. It also enabled the discovery of the significant role of change.

In summary, this methodology allows consideration of intercultural competence to be situated and examined within a relevant framework. It permits exploration of the role of social processes, and how they might impact the development of human competences. Furthermore, it highlights the ways in which our knowledge of the functions and interrelationship of behaviours and understandings can be augmented by examining them *as* they are happening.

7.2.3 Implications for practice and policy in schools:

This research has implications for schools and educators. Notably, it recognizes the potential for schools to support young people in managing challenging and difficult circumstances. These young people are able to develop competences because, within the turmoil, there are certain stable predictable structures and processes. An awareness of these can only enhance schools and assist their students.

The present study highlights the ways in which operational conditions can nurture competence, even in dynamic situations. Schools with intentions to promote intercultural development might more fully attend to this area by considering both the formal (intended) and the hidden curriculum.

7.3 Limitations of the study

It is important to recognize the limitations of this research and understand that certain factors may render the results atypical. These include the methodology, the setting and the sample. The findings should be considered in relation to these, and, therefore, limited generalization is warranted.

The interviews provided a holistic view of the phenomenon under investigation. The young people were articulate, good-humored and very willing to discuss their lives, and the research process was enjoyable and, often, entertaining. This did, however, mean that I had to be conscious of keeping discussion within certain parameters in order not to digress from the research questions.

By nature of the process, the young people chose what to discuss. This means there may be other valuable information that, as yet, remains undiscovered.

This was a small-scale study with 17 participants. A larger group would have been extremely difficult to accommodate given the time and resource constraints. However, I was able to familiarize myself with the data and this is one reason to recommend such a small-scale (interview) study again.

Although students were randomly invited to participate, only those who consented were interviewed. There is always the possibility that the particular nature of these young people may be different from those who either declined to be involved or were too busy with other school events to take part. It is also important to consider that, given previously discussed profiles of international school population, the young people may be from privileged families, and the population, therefore, may not be typical.

This school was one that was chosen as it fitted my perceptions of a *pure* international school. However, as such, the curriculum, faculty and students might be expected to differ from other schools, including other international schools.

The participants had been at the school for longer than one term and were familiar with it. As the research unfolded, the theme of social integration was highlighted, and it might be useful to consider the perspective of newcomers within this focus.

During analysis, I utilized critical friends often. This was important, as I am also an expatriate who could identify with some of the young people's comments.

Furthermore, the study identified some possible cause and effect factors. I found it frustrating not to be able to investigate causality between some of the different research phenomena.

Additionally, although the use of grounded theory may be an effective way of illuminating data, it does not necessarily lend itself to generalization.

7.4   Recommendations

The recommendations for researchers and schools include further work based on this study and examination of issues arising from it.

The research findings suggest a broader and more encompassing theory of change and mobility is required to explain some of the complexities of a globalized world. Change management is currently a popular business theme for adults. However, research needs to be extended to other groups.

As Nathanson and Marcenko suggest, 'a difficult experience for an adolescent may not necessarily be a damaging one' (1995: 423). Future work in this area should consider how people can effectively manage a dynamic lifestyle, and might include:

   o the relationship between change and social integration;

- the consequences of a lack of a sense of belonging;

- the relationship between change and other competences.

Additionally, there is a need to reexamine, and perhaps modify, existing theories of intercultural competence and cross-cultural adaptation. Researchers could consider:

- the impact of multiple intercultural experiences;

- the effects on, or relationships between, multiple and continued culture-general experiences and culture-specific learning.

Moreover, it seems the social demands of highly mobile settings may offer opportunities for studying young people, such as:

- the relationship between certain intercultural competences and social bonds, following on from Galinsky *et al.*'s (2005) work;

- further examination of sense of self, and the relationship between this and marginality in managing social situations;

- the complex personal perspective or value that can be called *world view;*

- understandings of the concept of 'friendship' in such settings;

- the ways in which young people define and manage social groups.

The study also raises some questions about processes used by the young people. They relate to:

- the roles of, and relationship between, goal-setting, social skills and internal locus of control in developing competence;

- social integration processes in dynamic settings;

- the experiences of, and processes used by, newcomers in becoming socially integrated;

- the stage of 'casual enforcement', in which perspective taking plays a critical role;

- the role of other critical people or agents (such as parents) in social integration.

As the present study was based on a relatively small group of participants in a particular school, subsequent research should examine other samples. These might include:

- samples in other international schools;

- a matched sample in both national and international schools that could provide comparative data, especially in regard to the social integration processes used by young people.

It is conceivable that the sample in the present study could be revisited as adults to determine their intercultural competences, and explore the relationship between their adult and adolescent perceptions.

There are also recommendations that relate to international school settings. Researchers might consider international schools as a unique microcosm of a diverse and changeable world. In particular, they may offer opportunities to study:

- the development of intercultural competence as it occurs, or fails to;

- the relationship between intercultural competence and operational conditions;

- the contributions that effective international schools can make to national schools aspiring to offer an international education;

- explicit conditions that support the development of interculturalism in an international school setting.

Finally, recommendations for school policy and practice are warranted. International school educators should be aware of:

- the importance of students' need to become socially integrated, and the complexity that accompanies this due to the nature of their experience;

- the need to attend to the social function of education, which may be currently neglected (Hargreaves 1982);

- aspects of school operations that scaffold and promote students' management of challenging environments.

7.5 Closing statement

This thesis has noted the importance of reflection in the learning process. It seems fitting, then, that the closing statement should contain reflections of the research and the researcher.

This thesis represents two accounts. The first is that of the young people who participated in this study. They provided a comprehensive picture of their understandings of being intercultural and international, and also raised important questions about change. I arrived at the research conclusions by working from their language, understanding and concepts. On reading this document, I am satisfied that it represents the young people's perceptions and is, therefore, authentic.

The second account implicit within the document is that of my development as a researcher. Before writing this statement, I reread my research diary, memos and notes and reflected on this process.

I learned to have faith in the methodology I chose, even though it was at times slow and frustrating. Using this approach kept me in constant contact with the data, and compelled me to think about and draw connections between elements of it. This sense of ongoing involvement is evident in my personal notes.

I was reminded of the organizational challenges. It was confronting to go into a school where I didn't work to interview students. The substantial decision-making, from labelling competences to sorting out advice from others, was often considered from an isolated perspective.

I was frustrated by complex and time-consuming analysis, which only seemed to raise more questions. At times I felt I was finding my way through a maze, and guided mostly by a sense that something was missing. I learned to recognize when it was time to step back from my work. In retrospect, as I moved house several times as well as relocating to another country, this allowed valuable reflection and refocusing. I had been warned to expect drudgery and loneliness, and certainly experienced both. I discarded more than I kept, including an unrealistic number of unworkable codes and innumerable attempts at drawing diagrammatic representations. Nevertheless, I was regularly surprised by ways in which meaning and theory evolved from the data.

Despite the tribulations, it was a wonderful opportunity to focus on how people think and behave. This study, in the least, should offer something to like-minded people interested in structure, perception and the experience of others. Although the thesis is finished, I would be keen to follow up on these students at a later time. I hope to publish their contributions to foster understanding of their situation. And of course, I'd like to further explore the relationship between change and competence.

In conclusion, it was fascinating to bear witness to the young people discussing the ways in which they manage their life experiences and seek humanist outcomes. Even as children, they are expert at identifying and using personal and environmental cues. Fundamentally, they espouse

one critical element of Tagore's timeless philosophy of international

education:

> when races come together, as in the present age, it should
> not merely be the gathering of a crowd; there must be a
> bond of relation, or they will collide with each other

> (c. 1921; cited in Chakravarty 1961: 216).

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APPENDIX 1   BIODATA QUESTIONNAIRE

[Size reduced for copying]

Being Intercultural in an International Setting: Student questionnaire

Please complete this background information:

Name:

Age: __   years   Date of Birth: __ / __ / ____
                                                        day/month/year

Sex: Male / Female

Address:

Telephone: (home)   (handphone)

e-mail:

Country of birth:

Nationality/ies (passport country/ies):

Parents' nationality/ies (passport country/ies):
            (mother)

            (father)

At what age did you begin to speak?

Which was your first spoken language?

Language/s you can speak now:

Which of these is your main language?

Language/s spoken at home:

Please list places you have lived, and dates you lived there, working backwards from [Host country]:

            City/country   Dates: (from)   (to)
            [Host country]

Please list schools you have attended, working backwards from [current school]:

Thankyou for completing this questionnaire. Please mail it in the envelope provided.

1.   (Intro.) **Could you start by telling us who you are, where
     you have lived and something you enjoy doing.**

                    prompt   where have you lived?
                                  what do you enjoy doing?

2.   **All of you have moved around and lived in different places.
     Do you remember how you felt about moving to a new
     country?**

                    (or modify to school instead of country)

3.   **Are there any things you really have to work at when you
     arrive in a new place?**

                    prompt   friendships
                                  parent/sibling issues
                                  finding where things are
                                  fitting in at school

4.   **People say that living somewhere is not the same as visiting
     there.
     Think back to a visit you have made to one of the
     places you previously lived. How did you feel when you
     visited there?**

                    prompt   welcome
                                  the same as before
                                  different to before..how?

5.   **How would you compare yourself to your friends who don't
     move around?**

                    prompt   advantage/disadvantage angle. wait for
                                  it....

6.   **What do you have in common with your friends in ███████ H C ?
     How are you different from them?**

                    prompt   same likes/dislikes
                                  hobbies
                                  school

7.   **How do you think living away from your home country and
     going to an international school has affected your life?**

8. (In summary...) So what do you think a person needs to be able
    to adjust to living in a different country?

Final/sweeper Question:
     Before we finish off, is there anything else you want to say
     about this topic that I haven't asked you?

     Is there anything else that you want to ask me?

             *   *   *   *   *

PROBES: may use CONFIRM - CLARIFY/EXPLAIN - EXTEND

    Confirm -
        bounce the question back-repeat part/ all as a q.

    Clarify/explain -
        can you give an example?
        please describe/explain what you mean
        I don't quite understand...
        what makes you say that?
        was that before...?

    Extend -
        is there anything else?
        would you explain that further?
        who else has some thoughts on this?
        anything a little different?
        you've been discussing different ideas....what haven't
        we heard yet?

PROMPTS: WHAT THEY MIGHT HAVE FORGOTTEN TO SAY
        repeat & explain the Q. more fully
        any other reasons/factors/advantages/etc?
        specific prompts...add to list, under each q.

APPENDIX 3:   ANALYSIS CODES

Codes:

E experience / being intercultural

EK	knowledge (incl. practice in similar org. structures)
Etac	tactics/strategies - consciously used to maximize opportunities
EA	attitudes e.g. openness curiosity
EC	critical cultural / political awareness
EI	interprets / relates to events from other culture/s
ED	discovery / interaction

[relate to Intercultural theory?]

I identity

IC	cultural identity	- belonging - marginality: can encapsulate or be constructive (comments such as home nowhere / everywhere)
IP	pool	- cultivating a pool of potential friends - networking (social/parents)
IG	group	- features (what they have in common with others in grp; usually expressed as *we....*)
IS	grp/friend selection	- traits they look for in friends usually expressed as *I....*
IF	fitting in	

[relate to Identity theory?]

INT Internationalization

CHAchange	- comments about internal / external change
WV world view	- includes international & multiple perspectives
HE host environment	

SS school (organizational) structure

SScirc   circumstances   - of school structure such as longer breaks, lunches, class sizes, reorganization of classes at year end, ESL, learning approach, tutor group times (these are given, students have no choice; sometimes marked by comments such as *it just happened* or *because...*)

SSopp   opportunities   - opportunities to make friends such as camps, buddies, orientation (students have a choice)

[relate to themes in International Schools literature?]

294

295 Matt It happens you – well- I guess you talk to people in

296 your class – or sometimes the school gives you a buddy – and

297 you probably might stick with him a bit more – and then you meet

298 his friends and his friends like, expand a bit more like that

299

In vivo
SS circ
_co-d_
_co-d_
buddy-in _SS opp_
Circ → opp ED
Poof
E+oc
ED

300 R Is that what happened to you?

301

302 Matt Yeah – my buddy – he showed me his friends and I

303 got to know his friends a bit more well than him

304

buddy → Kapa
EST ED EO
Eirc IP
Poof
i/v

305 R What happened then – are you still friends with your

306 buddy?

307

308 Matt Yeah – we were all still friends with him until he left

309

_co-d_
man
Poof CHA

310 R Ok So he stayed part of your group of friends?

311

312 Matt Yeah but I got to know someone else besides him

313 more instead of him

314

i/v IP
Poof IS
Cole c

315 R So he was an initial friend, then you made some

316 more?

4.1.1 Change management: knowledge components

The young people know that:

i.   change is inevitable;

ii.   people's change experiences are varied and often productive;

iii. change has some predictable elements;

iv.   change will impact, and be impacted by, their relationships with peers;

v.   the change process can be facilitated by using resources, including social capital; and

vi.   change impacts their ways of thinking about other people and the world.

4.1.2 Change management: attitude components

The young people are:

i.   tolerant of living in a change-laden environment and aware of both advantages and disadvantages in their lifestyles;

ii.   expecting and anticipating more change;

iii. anxious and excited.

4.2.1 Perspective taking: knowledge components

The young people know that:

i.   cultural groups have different values and ways of thinking;

ii.   there are opportunities to learn about and use these within social contexts; and

iii. this knowledge can be used to view and understand issues from multiple perspectives.

4.2.2 Perspective taking: attitude components

The young people believe that:

i.   certain attitudes are essential for integration into an international setting;

ii.   these attitudes can be cultivated; and

iii.   context or environment plays a role in their development.

4.2.3 Perspective taking: behaviour components

The young people:

ii.   use opportunities in social settings to exchange cultural knowledge;

iii.   minimize the importance of cultural differences;

iv.   reflect on others' cultures;

v.   reflect on and relativise their own culture; and

vi.   demonstrate an awareness of, or subscribe to, an international or world view.

4.3.1 Fitting in: knowledge components

The young people know that:

i.   fitting in is a crucial competence, with consequences for longer-term social integration;

ii.   fitting in has both social and academic components;

iii.   in addition to their own endeavor, both the school and social networks can offer useful resources and opportunities for fitting in; and

iv.   fitting in has benefits as an ongoing strategy.

4.3.2 Fitting in: attitude components

The young people:

i.   appear to take an outwardly positive view of themselves and their situation;

ii.   take a positive attitude towards their own group; and

iii.   prefer to take a positive attitude towards other groups.

316

4.3.3 Fitting in: behaviour components

The young people:

i.   consciously adapt and adjust to a group;

ii. are aware of the role of others in their adjustment ;

iii. search for commonalities with others;

iv. tend to maintain marginality in some culturally challenging situations;

v.   try to maintain access to other groups and individuals in the social pool.